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DOI:

[10.1177/0022009419896481b](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009419896481b)

Document Version

Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication record in King's Research Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Brydan, D. A. (2020). Review of Daniel Gorman, 'International Cooperation in the Early Twentieth Century'. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 55(1), 210-211. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009419896481b>

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Daniel Gorman, *International Cooperation in the Early Twentieth Century*, London: Bloomsbury, 2017, xvi + 336 pp.; £85 hbk; ISBN 9781472567956

Writing surveys of internationalism and international cooperation is not an easy task. However important and interesting the subject matter, narratives can easily get tangled up in the thicket of international organisations, conferences, networks, and projects which litter the historical path. The acronyms and abbreviations so beloved of international institutions (there are 80 listed at the start of this volume, 30 beginning with the letter 'I') threaten to confuse even the most attentive of audiences. And writers must grapple with the question of how many times they can use the word 'international' and its derivatives on a single page without casting aside all notions of style and readability.

Daniel Gorman's book is more than equal to these challenges. It is one of a number of interesting titles emerging from Bloomsbury's *New Approaches to International History Series*, which offers broad overviews of key topics aimed at both scholars and students. This volume introduces the history of international cooperation from the late 19th century to the Second World War, not primarily from the perspective of intergovernmental structures and international organisations, but by focusing on social movements, NGOs, voluntary groups, and international civil society networks. In doing so it decentres the role of the state, instead emphasising the involvement of individuals, activists, and associations in the international history of the period.

The paradox of the early twentieth century is that an era so dominated by national, ideological and social divisions also witnessed the 'explosive growth of international cooperation' (208). Gorman seeks to map out exactly what this cooperation involved, who pursued it, and for what reasons. His chapters lead us systematically through ideas of international and imperial order, the emerging institutions and groups producing international knowledge and research, the development of international law, the explosion of international humanitarian and social movements, and the impact of technical and functional forms of international cooperation. In doing so, the book

synthesises a dynamic field of scholarship that has expanded rapidly in both volume and scope over recent years.

The volume emphasises some of the key themes which have characterised this new body of research. Rather than concentrating on a narrow model of liberal internationalism, it highlights the 'plurality of human interactions on an international, transnational, and global scale' (207) which emerged during the period. Instead of thinking about 'internationalism' in the singular, it introduces us to 'internationalisms' in the plural. It also reminds us that internationalism was never unproblematically progressive or inclusive, but was 'often Eurocentric, gendered, and racialized in ways that restricted or precluded the participation of many people around the world' (209). Particularly for students approaching the topic for the first time, these ideas are vital.

Perhaps the most welcome aspect of Gorman's book is the prominence it gives to the history of anti-colonial internationalism. The first chapter explores the history of imperial and anti-colonial visions of international order, with a focus on the 'counter-hegemonic' ideas which emerged in response to the power asymmetry characteristic of Western international projects. It introduces us to often-overlooked visions of international and regional order which developed in early-twentieth century India, China, and Japan, to the history of Pan-Asianism, Pan-Africanism, and Black Internationalism, and to the efforts of indigenous peoples to develop transnational connections and projects. Non-western internationalisms too often appear as addenda to a core history of Western liberal internationalism. By choosing to begin his story with these actors and ideas, Gorman identifies the history of international cooperation as one which needs to be approached from a genuinely global perspective.

Any book that strives to synthesise a field will always face questions about the topics which have been rushed past or skipped over. I would personally have liked to read more about the role of non-Christian religions in the history of international cooperation. Other readers may well identify their own lacunae, although there are few obvious omissions. Perhaps more significantly, the demands of

providing such a comprehensive account of a global phenomenon leave little space for analysis of the nature and impact of international cooperation. The introduction and conclusion raise interesting ideas about the relationship between internationalism and globalization, the limits of international cooperation and the opposition it faced, and the significance of such cooperation to the wider period. In a book which is aimed partly at students and will be of such valuable use in the classroom, more could perhaps have been done to embed these themes within each chapter.

But such unavoidable trade-offs do nothing to diminish the quality of the book as a whole. The number of topics it covers and the volume of literature it brings together is highly impressive, reflecting a range found more often in edited volumes (very common in this field), but handled here with an admirable degree of coherence. It provides a teaching resource which has undoubtedly been lacking, and will be the go-to text for researchers seeking an overview of the field. And it covers a topic which is clearly vital to our wider understanding of the period. 'By integrating the history of international cooperation with the conventional diplomatic history of the period', as Gorman concludes, 'we can better appreciate the dual dynamics of nationalism and internationalism that shaped the lives of people around the world in the early twentieth century' (210).

DAVID BRYDAN

King's College London