REVISITING THE BRITISH IDEALIST THEORY OF RIGHTS:
THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF BRITISH IDEALISTS AND
THEIR INTERNATIONALIST APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS

A Ph.D. Dissertation

by
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Ankara
September 2018

To all those who came before me

REVISITING THE BRITISH IDEALIST THEORY OF RIGHTS:
THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF BRITISH IDEALISTS AND
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The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
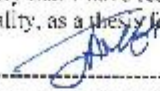
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by

NAZLI PINAR KAYMAZ

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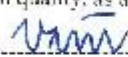DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

September 2018

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science.

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Assistant Prof. Dr. John James Alexander
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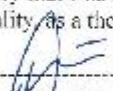Examining Committee Member

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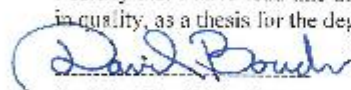Examining Committee Member

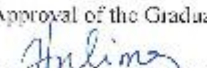I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science.

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# ABSTRACT

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THEIR INTERNATIONALIST APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS

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Ph. D. Department of Political Science and Public Administration

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September 2018

This dissertation aims to put forward a historical account of the younger generation of British Idealists' approach to international relations and human rights. By focusing on pre-Great War and post-Great War periods it reveals the shift that occurred in their approbation of T. H. Green's theory of rights. It argues that the Great War served as a deterrent for the younger generation of British Idealists, as it did for other liberal British intellectuals, from perceiving the empire as a plausible and/or sustainable international order. Realizing the incompatibility of the paternalistic approach to supposedly 'savage' peoples with the basic tenets of British Idealist political philosophy, they redirected their attention to extending Green's understanding of rights to international sphere. Thus, a close reading of their work, especially on the post-Great War period reveals an early attempt of translating Green's theory of rights into a human rights theory. When contemporary attempts to develop a British Idealist theory of human rights is considered, this study not only contributes to a better and 'more nuanced' understanding of British Idealists' approach to international relations

but also draws attention to a pristine British Idealist theory of human rights developed in the post-Great War era.

# ÖZET

İNGİLİZ İDEALİST HAK TEORİSİNİN YENİ BİR DEĞERLENDİRMESİ:
GENÇ NESIL İNGILIZ İDEALISTLER VE
İNSAN HAKLARINA ULUSLARARASICI YAKLAŞIMLARI

Kaymaz, Nazlı Pınar
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Tez Yöneticisi: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi John James Alexander
Eylül 2018

Bu tez, genç İngiliz İdealistlerin uluslararası ilişkiler ve insan haklarına yaklaşımının tarihsel bir değerlendirmesini sunmaktadır. Birinci Dünya Savaşı öncesi ve sonrası dönemlerin ele alındığı çalışmada, Sir Henry Jones, John Henry Muirhead, Richard Burdon Haldane, John Stuart Mackenzie, ve Hector James Wright Hetherington gibi genç idealistlerin T. H. Green'in hak teorisine yaklaşımlarında meydana gelen kayma ortaya konulmaktadır. Birinci Dünya Savaşı öncesi ve sonrası dönemlerde genç İngiliz idealistlerin ortaya koydukları çalışmaların yakın bir okuması, bu dönemlerde uluslararası ilişkilere yaklaşımlarında emperyalizmden uluslararasıcılığa geçişlerini tarihsel olaylar ışığında açıklamaktadır. Bunun yanın sıra, özellikle 1918 sonrasında Green'in hak teorisini bir insan hakları teorisine dönüştürme denemeleri de bu çalışma için önem arz etmektedir. Benzer denemelerin günümüz insan hakları literatüründeki yeri göz önüne alındığında, bu çalışma sadece İngiliz İdealistlerin uluslararası ilişkiler anlayışının daha detaylı bir değerlendirmesini ortaya koymakla

kalmayıp, günümüzde unutulmuş olan öncül bir uluslararasıcı idealist insan hakları teorisine de dikkat çekmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Birinci Dünya Savaşı, Emperyalizm, İngiliz İdealistler, İnsan Hakları, Uluslararasıcılık,

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe a great debt to my friends with whom we shared the long and anxious years pursuing our PhDs. I would like to thank Selin, Esra, Duygu, Betül, Gül, Özgün, Tia, Petra, Koray, Çağkan, Korhan, Uygar, and Abdürrahim fort the past 6 years full of laughter and friendship.

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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

This dissertation aims to put forward a historical account of the younger generation of British Idealists' approach to international relations and human rights. By focusing on pre-Great War and post-Great War periods it reveals the shift that occurred in their approbation of T. H. Green's theory of rights. It argues that the Great War served as a deterrent for the younger generation of British Idealists, as it did for other liberal British intellectuals, from perceiving the empire as a plausible and/or sustainable international order. Realizing the incompatibility of the paternalistic approach to supposedly 'savage' peoples with the basic tenets of British Idealist political philosophy, they redirected their attention to extending Green's understanding of rights to international sphere. Thus, a close reading of their work, especially on the post-Great War period reveals an early attempt of translating Green's theory of rights into a human rights theory. When contemporary attempts to develop a British Idealist theory of human rights is considered, this study not only contributes to a better and 'more nuanced' understanding of British Idealists' approach to international relations but also draws attention to a pristine British Idealist theory of human rights developed in the post-Great War era.

A revival of interest in the British Idealism is self-evident from the ever-expending literature on their moral, political, international, and theological theory in the last thirty years. Although this literature is dominated by a few names who can be perceived to be modern advocates of British Idealist philosophy, it is possible to find

references to well-known British Idealists in historiographies of the long 19th century as well. Especially T. H. Green and Bernard Bosanquet's names are frequently mentioned in the historical accounts of British political thought in the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Yet, with a few exceptions, the 'modern advocates of British Idealism' pay a singular attention to the works of the most prestigious British Idealists. While, such an approach has been useful to explain the philosophical basis of a political theory that has long been perceived as a periodical eccentricity, today, it can be argued, it unnecessarily limits the primary material available to scholars as well as the scope and character of the discussion. Possibly due to the contemporary dominance of analytical philosophy, as well as the very limited time period Green produced his work in, there is a lack of interest in the historical specificity of the era during which British Idealism continued to develop and evolve. The need to locate the British Idealist political and international theory in the larger sphere of British intellectual thought is a task that still waits to be tackled. Arguably, to be able to do so, one firstly needs to broaden the focal point of research to include minor figures in British Idealist school of thought into the discussion. Doing so, automatically expends the time-span one deals with and enables one to observe several British Idealists' changing and varying reactions to major international phenomena. The history of post-Greenian British Idealist political theory remains an understudied field.

This dissertation is an attempt to offer a historical reading of British Idealist approach to international relations from 1900 to 1930s. It starts with British Idealists' reflections on the British Empire and the general question of the legitimacy of imperialism. The Boer War and its ramifications in British intellectual arena constitutes the larger picture in relation to which it is necessary to understand various British Idealists' respective positions on the matter in the pre-Great War period. While F. H. Bradley and D. G. Ritchie are separated from the rest of the school by their almost militaristic imperialism, the remaining names represent a more or less liberal imperialist vein. Thus, the sense one gets from a close reading of the British Idealists' writings during the period from 1900 to 1914 constitutes a striking contradiction to the tone they adopted after the outbreak of the Great War. From 1914 onwards, the remaining British Idealists, strike a unified cord in condemning imperialism and adapting an internationalist approach in general. Especially this era remains significantly understudied and offers important insights into possible British

Idealist answers to contemporary theoretical questions. It is the main argument of this dissertation that a closer look to this era would contribute greatly to a more nuanced understanding of the British Idealist theory of human rights. While, the Greenian theory unarguably supplies the basis for such a theory, minor British Idealists' writings in the post-1914 period reveals how it is translated into a practical plan in a more receptive and internationalist intellectual arena by minor British Idealist thinkers. Thus, this study aims to reveal the ingenuity of this teleological and internationalist understanding of human rights which is not adequately captured in the existing literature on the Greenian theory of human rights. I argue, it seems to be beneficial to trace British Idealism's historical evolution in an era that was marked by international turmoil and reached fruition at a time of intense intellectual endeavor to ensure world peace and cooperation with the end of the Great War. Doing so enables one to trace an organic lineage from Green to his students that reflects on their shared understandings of the individual, the society, the state, and the international arena as well as the role and importance of rights. Furthermore, it reveals an already existing British Idealist theory of human rights that is put forward in the 1920s but still remains unrecognized.

This introductory chapter includes a literature review of the secondary literature on T. H. Green's theory of rights. It also deals with the literature on other well-known British Idealists such as Bernard Bosanquet, F. H. Bradley and D. G. Ritchie and offers an answer to the question why they remain as secondary figures in this dissertation. Following the literature review, minor British Idealists are introduced and the limited literature on their works is evaluated. The introductory chapter ends with a description of the general scope and content of the dissertation.

## 1.1 Secondary Literature on T. H. Green

The existing literature on British Idealists theory of human rights is inexplicably constrained in its scope due to its singular focus on the most well known British Idealists. While works on T. H. Green's theory of rights constitutes the bulk of the existing literature, attempts to defend Bernard Bosanquet from his historical New Liberal critiques still encourages scholars to investigate his approach to rights. Other

well-known British Idealists, such as D. G. Ritchie and F. H. Bradley remains as marginal figures in the literature so far as their work does not offer much to contribute to a theory of human rights. Such limitation of scope reflects on the availability of primary sources on the subject matter considering that the matter of 'human rights' did not have a central place in the writings of T. H. Green or Bernard Bosanquet. Although Green is known with the central place rights constitute in his political theory, he dealt with the matter of broadening the limits of rights beyond nations only in a subsection of his *Prolegomena to Ethics*, titled "Duty to Humanity." Green devoted this part of his work to defending the possibility of extending human community beyond national borders. He maintained that due to the fact that all men is bestowed with reason and thus capable of striving for a common good; capable of communicating with others as 'I' and 'Thou,' one can talk about a *potential* community of all men. He denied any categorical difference between the urban commonwealth and 'universal human fellowship.'[1] The difference was only in terms of degree –the number of members and the vastness of space- and the difficulty in realizing such community was the same with every other community: ensuring preference of common good over private pleasure.[2] In other words, Green argued, to the extent that human beings strive to overcome their selfishness, universal fellowship remained a possibility for mankind. His conviction in the potential of achieving a sphere of common good that encompassed all humanity was supported by the observation that each nation "has maintained alike, under whatever differences of form, the institutions of the family and of property… a sort of common language of right, in which the idea of universal human fellowship, of claims in man as man… can find expression necessary to its taking hold on the minds of men."[3] Thus, every ordinary man already had the idea and the habit of bestowing upon his fellow men certain rights and acting as a duty-bearer for their realisation. For Green, all it would take to go beyond the limits of nations and recognize rights in every human being would be to broaden the scope of the sphere of the common good each individual perceived himself and others to be participants of. He strongly believed that by

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[1] Green T. H., "Duty to Humanity," in *Prolegomena to Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), 250.

[2] Thomas Hill Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, ed. A. C. Bradley, Fifth Edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), 229.

[3] Green, 252.

building upon the already existing notions of rights and duties recognized in communities, it would be possible to extend "one system of law over many communities."[4]

Despite his adamant conviction regarding the possibility of human rights, Green had little to say on the institutional means through which they can be recognized and maintained. In the few pages Green discussed the necessity of increasing familiarity between men from different nations in his *Lectures on the Principal of Political Obligation*, it becomes apparent that for him an international institution with a capacity to maintain universal rights was a possibility, albeit a distant one. Instead, he hoped that, "free intercourse between members of one state and those of another, and in particular more freedom of trade" would enable individuals to be aware that not only their compatriots but all human beings were equal participants in a shared sphere of common good.[5] He maintained, such occasions for intercourse were to be expected more frequently in the future as states –especially European ones- were reaching higher levels of organisation which bestowed their citizens with more freedom to travel and conduct business abroad. For Green, "the dream of an international court with authority resting on the consent of independent states" was realisable only after nations moved beyond their jealousies and egoistic interests through development of cordial relationships among their citizens.[6] Recognition and maintenance of rights among peoples from different states was first and foremost dependent on their willingness to recognise each other as equal right-bearers. For Green, although there was "nothing in the intrinsic nature of a system of independent states incompatible" with the establishment of an international organisation for the protection of rights, he perceived it as a "very remote result."[7]

T. H. Green died at the very young age of 46 in 1882. Thus, he did not witness the heyday of the imperialist sentiment in Britain at the very end of the 19th century that

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[4] Green, 252.

[5] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1895), 178.

[6] Thomas Hill Green, 179.

[7] Thomas Hill Green, 179.

reached a climax with the Boer War in 1900 or the rise of internationalist arguments following the outbreak of the First World War. His reflections on the matter of rights first and foremost addressed the situation in Victorian Britain. As Kelly puts forward in relation with the overall Greenian political theory, his approach to rights was "more concerned with relating a political theory of welfarism to a focus on individual character in the social context of later Victorian and Edwardian Britain, challenging the effects of unequal distribution of wealth and resources."[8] His reflections on the nature of international relations was very much focused on the necessity of developing informal ties among individuals from different nation states which he expected to lead to transcending national boundaries in recognition and maintenance of rights. Deceased before the rise of internationalist sentiment in Britain, Green's approach to international relations was dominated by an ethical cosmopolitanism that clearly reflects in some of the contemporary accounts of British Idealist understanding of human rights. However, the wide range of positions taken by Green's students on the matters relating to international relations led contemporary commentators to attribute various and sometimes conflicting positions to Green himself on the matter. In the past two decades alone, Green has been identified as a liberal imperialist, a Little Englander, and an anti-militarist internationalist.[9] Furthermore his theory has been associated with both communitarian and cosmopolitan approaches to human rights. David Boucher, for instance, related Green's work to the modern communitarian human rights theories.[10] Similarly, Samuel Moyn considered Green to

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[8] Duncan Kelly, *The Propriety of Liberty: Persons, Passions, and Judgement in Modern Political Thought* (Princeton University Press, 2010), 248.

[9] J. Lee Thompson, *A Wider Patriotism: Alfred Milner and the British Empire* (London: Routledge, 2008), 3.

Julia Stapleton, "Political Thought and National Identity in Britain 1850-1950," in *History, Religion, and Culture: British Intellectual History 1750-1950*, ed. Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore, and Brian Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 255.

Duncan Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 245.

Jeanne Morefield, *Covenants without Swords: Idealist Liberalism and the Spirit of Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 24.

[10] David Boucher, *The Limits of Ethics in International Relations: Natural Law, Natural Rights, and Human Rights in Transition*, Reprint edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 298.

be a communitarian.[11] Matt Hann, in contrast, arrived at a 'cosmopolitan human rights' interpretation by drawing on Green's conviction that it was possible and normatively desirable to extend the boundaries of the moral sphere beyond those of the nation state.[12] This study suggests that while Green's work incorporated elements that would support both a communitarian and a cosmopolitan approach to human rights, his immediate followers opted for the middle way position of internationalism in the years following the end of the Great War.

Following a revival of interest in British Idealist political theory in 1970s, several attempts have been made to transform Green's rights theory into a theory of human rights. Rex Martin's *A System of Rights* is the most meticulous attempt to build a human rights theory that is at least partially inspired by the philosophy of Green. Martin notes that, especially his use of the term 'civil rights' and its moral justification with reference to 'mutual perceived benefit' is in close pursuance of Green.[13] Ann R. Cacoullos also traces the origins of her understanding of human rights back to Green's work, arguing that "the subject of Green's theory is natural or human rights" in so far as every individual is a member of a particular community, which qualifies him to be a part of the wider and 'vaguer' community of humanity.[14] Maria Dimova-Cookson aims to reconcile Green's theory of the state with an international conception of duty, which –at least- implies a conception of rights that transcend national boundaries. She argues, to the extent that states' moral values are outward oriented in both format and content they can not focus solely on the well being of its own citizens and, by doing so, ignore the well being of all.[15] Derrick

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[11] Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge (Mass.); London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 31.

[12] Matt Hann, "'Who Is My Neighbour?' T.H. Green and the Possibility of Cosmopolitan Ethical Citizenship," in *Ethical Citizenship*, ed. Thom Brooks, Palgrave Studies in Ethics and Public Policy (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014), 180, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137329967_10.

[13] Rex Martin, *A System of Rights*, First Thus edition (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1997), 366.

[14] Ann R. Cacoullos, *Thomas Hill Green: Philosopher of Rights*, ed. Arthur W. Brown and Thomas S. Knight (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc.,U.S., 1975), 155.

[15] Maria Dimova-Cookson, *T.H. Green's Moral and Political Philosophy: A Phenomenological Perspective*, 2001 edition (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

Darby, in his *Rights, Race, and Recognition* adopts a Greenian approach to rights while evaluating the human rights violations in slave-holding America.[16] The most current attempt to develop a Greenian theory of human rights is made by Matt Hann in his book *Egalitarian Rights Recognition: A Political Theory of Human Rights.*[17] Focusing on Green's rights recognition thesis, Hann claims to develop a middle-way cosmopolitan theory of human rights that is egalitarian and non-imperialistic in its application to non-Western peoples.[18] In an earlier piece title "Who is My Neighbour?," Hann claims that the 'rights recognition thesis' "provides us with the resources for reconciliation between cosmopolitan and communitarian concerns, thus offering the possibility of international ethical citizenship."[19] Evidently, Hann deciphers a strongly cosmopolitan approach to human rights from Green's writings as he claims that "there is no strict requirement for a world state in order to achieve cosmopolitan justice on the basis of rights recognition, but, on the other hand, there is a certain natural movement within rights recognition towards the eventual creation of some sort of world state or at least world federalism; this is the movement towards ever wider spheres of commonality described by Green."[20] It can be discerned that all these works shared the common purpose of reconciling Green's rights theory with one of the cotemporary dominant approaches to human rights: cosmopolitanism and communitarianism.

A still wider literature exists on Green's theory of rights that does not necessarily attempt to link it with human rights theory. Den Otter's *British Idealism and Social Explanation* for instance, is a classic example of a work that designates the place of rights within the theoretical framework of Green's political thinking.[21] Works published before the revival of interest in British Idealism in 1990s, such as *The Social Philosophy of English Idealism* and *The Neo-Idealist Political Theory* can also

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[16] Derrick Darby, *Rights, Race, and Recognition* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[17] Matt Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59597-3.

[18] Hann, 160.

[19] Hann, "'Who Is My Neighbour?," 177.

[20] Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 149.

[21] Sandra M. Den Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation: A Study in Late Victorian Thought* (Oxford England : New York: Clarendon Press, 1996).

be perceived as examples of the effort to understand Green's approach to rights in the wider whole of British Idealist political theory.[22] In contemporary volumes of collected essays, several chapters has also been dedicated to Green's approach to rights and its interconnection with other central concepts of his ethical and political theory.[23] Last but not least, books and articles that aims to convey a general evaluation of Green's thought contains discussions on the place of rights in idealistic political philosophy.[24]

Green's theory of rights has been studied extensively as it offered a consistent whole which aimed to explain the source, justification, and functionality of rights. Green, as many other political theorists did, looked for the source of rights in certain attributes of human nature. He argued that the source of rights was to be found in men's moral nature and his morality was comprised of his rationality and sociability.[25] In this regard, individual as a right bearer existed only within a social context and he truly had rights only when he rationally acknowledged his fellow men as equal right-bearers with whom he cooperated for the realisation of a common good. Green

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[22] Frederick Philip Harris, *The Neo-Idealist Political Theory; Its Continuity with the British* (See notes, 1944).

A. J. M. Milne, *The Social Philosophy of English Idealism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1962).

[23] Rex Martin, "The Metaphysics and Ethics of T. H. Green's Idea of Persons and Citizens," in *Ethical Citizenship: British Idealism and the Politics of Recognition* (Palgrave MACMILLAN, 2014), 13–35.

Avital Simhony, "Beyond Dualistic Constructions of Citizenship: T. H. Green's Idea of Ethical Citizenship as Mutual Membership," in *Ethical Citizenship: British Idealism and the Politics of Recognition* (Palgrave MACMILLAN, 2014), 35–57.

Leslie Armour, "Idealism and Ethical Citizenship" (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 57–79.

[24] Ben Wempe, *T. H. Green's Theory of Positive Freedom: From Metaphysics to Political Theory* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2004).

Tyler Colin, "Contesting the Common Good: T. H. Green and Contemporary Republicanism," in *Common Good Politics: British Idealism and Social Justice in the Contemporary World* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 61–101.

Colin Tyler, "'A Working Theory of Life': T. H. Green on Franchise Reform," in *Idealist Political Philosophy: Pluralism and Conflict in the Absolute Idealist Tradition* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006), 59–101.

Peter P. Nicholson, "Philosophical Idealism and International Politics: A Reply to Dr. Savigear," *British Journal of International Studies* 2, no. 1 (1976): 76–83.

[25] Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation*, 162.

strongly denied the 'natural rights' perspective that attributed rights to human beings in a hypothetical 'state of nature' where he lived solitarily. Still, he used the term 'natural rights' with reference to the moral nature of men, which was apparent in the relations sustained in the social union of reasonable human beings. He maintained that men's moral nature was evident in his willingness to agree on a common good with his fellow men and to recognise the necessity of bestowing each man with certain powers for its realisation.[26] The recognition of these powers constituted the system of rights and duties, which existed in every known human community.[27]

The moral nature of man, according to Green, also constituted the justification for individuals' identification as right-bearers. An individual had rights not only because he was born moral and reasonable but also because his moral and reasonable nature required recognition of certain powers for their full realization. Thus, Green's approach to rights, like his approach to liberty and politics, was not only deontological but also both consequentialist and teleological. The desired end was sustaining a social order in which all individuals had a chance to realize their full potential. This end, often called self-realization by Green, was put forward as a challenge to the hedonistic ethics that designated pleasure as the highest end for human beings.[28] Green maintained that instead of aiming for pleasure, which did not accumulate and/or improve the person but vanish at the instant of its acquirement, men were to aim for 'divine self-realization.'[29] In that sense, rights were justified as the powers that made self-realization possible within a society composed of moral individuals pursuing their individual self-perfection as well as the common good of the social whole.

While the moral nature of men constituted the source of rights and the vitality of guaranteeing necessary conditions for its unfolding supplied rights with justification, in Green's work, the practical aspect of the matter was perceived to be predominantly social and historical. According to Green, rights were constituted first and foremost as

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[26] Cacoullos, *Thomas Hill Green*, 18.

[27] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 238.

[28] Green, 199.

[29] Green, 209.

'right claims' to 'exercise a free activity' or 'acquirement of a certain power' on the condition that the same activity or power would be freely exercised by other members of the society. When members of a community 'socially' recognized this claim, their actions were duly and in a sense 'naturally' organized in pursuance of this common acceptance. A higher step of recognition occurred at the political level when the state took these social rights under protection by incorporating them into the legally acknowledged system of rights and duties. Thus, although rights did not come into existence through state's recognition, their maintenance was mostly dependent on the existence of legal recognition and protection.[30] Though there is a lack of consensus in the literature, the common evaluation of Green's work points to a double-layered process of recognition. Recognition as 'consciousness' directly refers to men's moral character as capable of perceiving others' good in equal weight with his own. By recognising each other as *isoi kai homoioi',* men participate in a society that sustains a just system of rights and duties.[31] Recognition as 'response' or 'appropriate action' on the other hand, deals with the actual process of registering the necessity of having certain rights and acting in accordance with the principle of 'reciprocity of rights.'[32] A decisively large part of the literature on British Idealist theory of rights is marked by a consistent effort to incorporate this specific attribute of Green's rights theory into theories of human rights.[33] While this arguably genuine attribute of Greenian rights

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[30] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 109.

[31] Thomas Hill Green, 110.

[32] Darin R. Nesbitt, "Recognizing Rights: Social Recognition in T. H. Green's System of Rights," *Polity* 33, no. 3 (2001): 427, https://doi.org/10.2307/3235442.

[33] Rex Martin, "Human Rights and the Social Recognition Thesis," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 44, no. 1 (2013): 1–21.

Rex Martin, "Natural Rights Human Rights and the Role of Social Recognition," *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies* 17, no. 1 (2012): 91–115.

Gerald Gaus, "The Rights Recognition Thesis : Defending and Extending Green," in *T.H. Green: Ethics, Metaphysics, and Political Philosophy*, ed. Maria Dimova-Cookson and W. J. Mander (Oxford University Press, 2006).

David Boucher, "The Recognition Theory of Rights, Customary International Law and Human Rights," *Political Studies* 59, no. 3 (October 1, 2011): 753–71, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2011.00890.x.

Matt Hann, "Double Recognition: Persons and Rights in T. H. Green," *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies* 21, no. 1 (2015): 63–80.

theory dominates the secondary literature, the moral source and justification of rights has received limited attention. It is one of the major arguments of this dissertation that, the ideal of self-realization as well as the functional necessity of recognition constitutes an indispensible attribute of a British Idealist theory of human rights. Minor British Idealists' writings in the post-1914 era reveal the centrality of the moral condition of self-realization in the matter of universal human rights in addition to the more practical condition of recognition.

## 1.2 Bosanquet, Bradley, Ritchie and Idealist Theory of Rights

Bernard Bosanquet, Frances Herbert Bradley and David George Ritchie were the very early exponents of British Idealism to which they grew an affinity under the direct influence of Green. While Bosanquet and Bradley were students of Green in the 1860s at Balliol College, Oxford, Ritchie joined Oxford as a tutor in 1878 following his graduation from Edinburgh University. Although, as early converts they faced a certain level of rejection from the established academic environment, later they achieved reputation through their particular contributions to Idealist philosophy.[34] Bradley was known as the best metaphysician amongst the British Idealists, and Bosanquet was deemed to be the most prominent 'defender' of the British Idealist theory of the state, which was not always meant as a compliment.[35] Ritchie was best known as the theorist who achieved a synthesis between the two rivaling philosophical positions of his time: idealism and utilitarianism.[36] While it is possible to find various groupings and couplings of these three names under sub-divisions of idealist philosophy, for the purposes of this dissertation, the historical circumstances

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Darin R. Nesbitt, "Recognizing Rights: Social Recognition in T. H. Green's System of Rights," *Polity* 33, no. 3 (2001): 423–37, https://doi.org/10.2307/3235442.

[34] Melvin Richter, *The Politics of Conscience;: T.H.Green and His Age* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), 14.

[35] Stefan Collini, "Sociology and Idealism in Britain 1880–1920," *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 19, no. 1 (May 1978): 10–12, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975600005105.

[36] David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, *British Idealism and Political Theory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 138.

they witnessed and commented upon constitutes the base on which their work is considered.

Bradley and Ritchie appear to be persons of interest only in the first chapter of this dissertation due to a lack of material on the subject matter from 1900s onwards. In case of Bradley, this lack of interest in political theory in general and international affairs in particular is explained with a general shift of interest he experienced from ethical theory to metaphysics as his work matured. Although Bradley's most well known work remains to be his *Ethical Studies,*[37] his later work mainly focused on the fields of logic and metaphysics.[38] Even in his *Ethical Studies,* Bradley explicitly commented on the matter of rights only in a 5 long-page endnote to one of his chapters.[39] Additionally, his approach to international affairs was mostly discerned from an article he wrote in 1894.[40] A closer reading of this piece while keeping in mind the high-imperialist sentiment that ruled the day offers important insights to a 'less-favorable' version of British Idealism. While, Ritchie's reflections on international relations are considerably more abundant than that of Bradley's, it also ends in 1903 with his passing away.[41] The situation in South Africa evidently attracted Ritchie's attention from 1899 onwards and constituted an opportunity for him to reflect upon and considerably change his perception of an ideal international order.[42] Furthermore, the last comprehensive work Ritchie published before his death

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[37] F. H. Bradley, *Ethical Studies* (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1876).

[38] F. H. Bradley, *The Principles of Logic* (London: Oxford University Press, 1883).

F. H. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1893).

F. H. Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914).

[39] Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, 187–92.

[40] F. H. Bradley, "The Limits of Individual and National Self-Sacrifice," *International Journal of Ethics* 5, no. 1 (1894): 17–28.

[41] David G. Ritchie, "The Principles of International Law, by T. J. Lawrence," *Ethics* 7, no. n/a (1896): 250.

David G. Ritchie, "On the Conception of Sovereignty," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 1 (1891): 385–411.

[42] D. G. Ritchie, "The South African War," *The Ethical World*, February 3, 1900.

D. G. Ritchie, "John Brown's Body," *The Ethical World*, September 29, 1900.

D. G. Ritchie, "The Moral Problems of War-in Reply to Mr. J. M. Robertson," *International Journal of Ethics* 11, no. 4 (1901): 493–514.

dealt with the concept of rights specifically in which he offered a defence of Green's approach to the matter.[43] Although, Bradley's name does not pop up in the contemporary literature on British Idealist Theory of Rights, Ritchie's occasionally does.[44] Yet, Ritchie himself remains to be a sideline figure for those who reflect on a British Idealist theory of human rights.[45] It is one of the minor arguments of this dissertation that it is the almost militaristic imperialism Bradley and Ritchie adopts that prevents their work from contributing to the larger literature on human rights even though they share the Greenian approach to civil rights with the rest of the British Idealist School. In this regard, their approach to international relations in the pre-Great War period is discussed in this work as an example of an alternative version of British Idealism that does not necessarily support a human rights conception due to its overtly imperialistic and Darwinian approach to international relations.

Contrary to long-standing allegations regarding Bosanquet's deification of the state that rules out any authority above and beyond it, his reflections on the international affairs both before and after the Great War offers significant insight into the possibility of and conditions for a sustainable order of human rights. Although his work is marked by a long-maintained distrust towards supranational entities, his objection is neither unsubstantiated nor unconditional. On the contrary his work, 1917 onwards, reveals his growing support for the League of Nations. It appears to be a significant factor in Bosanquet's increasing internationalism that, unlike Bradley and Ritchie, he continues to reflect on international affairs up until his death in 1923. In 1917, for instance, Bosanquet collects his published articles on the matter of

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D. G. Ritchie, "Another View of the South African War," *The Ethical World*, January 13, 1900.

[43] David George Ritchie, *Natural Rights : A Criticism of Some Political and Ethical Conceptions* (London : Swan Sonnenschein, 1903).

[44] David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, "David Ritchie: Evolution and the Limits of Rights," in *British Idealism and Political Theory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 127–57.

Emeritus Professor of Politics Michael Freeden, *Rights* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 64.

[45] Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 34.

David Boucher, "British Idealism and the Human Rights Culture," *History of European Ideas* 27, no. 1 (2001): 61, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-6599(01)00021-3.

international affairs in a single volume titled *Social and International Ideals*.[46] The contents of this volume, end especially "The Teaching of Patriotism, "A Moral from Athenian History," "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," and "The Wisdom of Naaman's Servants" since constituted the bulk of the literature scholars refer to while dealing with Bosanquet and international relations. Furthermore, in 1919, Bosanquet published a new edition of his monumental work *The Philosophical Theory of the State* with an "Introduction to Second Edition."[47] In this new introduction Bosanquet stated that the unifying activity was not limited within the state borders and the actual growth of the League of Nations was meant to lead to the integration of differences. Although, the accusation of attributing undue importance to the state is directed to Bosanquet in some contemporary work,[48] there exists a larger literature that defies such accusations.[49] When combined with Bosanquet's adherence to Greenian theory of rights with only minor revisions, his long-sustained ethical universalism along with his endorsement of institutional internationalism puts Bosanquet amongst the names whose works inspire this study. Not surprisingly, there already exists a substantial study that specifically reflects on the issue of human rights with reference to Bosanquet's political theory.[50] In the following chapters Bosanquet's work is evaluated with the works of other British Idealists in regards to his comments on imperialism, patriotism, international

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[46] Bernard Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals: Being Studies in Patriotism* (London: Macmillan, 1917).

[47] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, Fourth Edition (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1920).

[48] Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 155.

[49] Nicholson, "Philosophical Idealism and International Politics."

David Boucher, "British Idealism, the State, and International Relations," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 55, no. 4 (1994): 671–94, https://doi.org/10.2307/2709928.

Casper Sylvest, *British Liberal Internationalism, 1880-1930: Making Progress?* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 106.

J. A. Nicholson, "Some Aspects of the Philosophy of L. T. Hobhouse: Logic and Social Theory," *University of Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences* 14, no. 4 (December 1926): 61.

William Sweet, "Bosanquet and British Political Thought," *Laval Theologique et Philosophique* 55, no. 1 (1999): 99–114, https://doi.org/10.7202/401218ar.

[50] William Sweet, *Idealism and Rights: The Social Ontology of Human Rights in the Political Thought of Bernard Bosanquet*, 2nd edition (Lanham, MD: UPA, 2005).

relations, and rights. Surprisingly, his position appears to be the most stable one that did not deviate from the basic tenets of an egalitarian international order even at the heyday of imperial enthusiasm, which appears to be one of the most important conditions for a human rights system,

## 1.3 The Third Generation: Mackenzie, Muirhead, Jones, Hetherington and Haldane

It would have been a far-fetched attempt to deal with all the philosophers who were considered to be British Idealists at some time. It would also not be productive as some of them were interested only in the metaphysics of idealism, while others outgrown idealism and adopted different and even opposing philosophical positions. Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison, for instance, challenged absolute idealism of Bradley and Bosanquet and from than on was considered to be a personal idealist.[51] J. M. A. McTaggart was also an idealist who leaned towards Andrew Seth's personal idealism except his atheism.[52] Samuel Alexander, who was once an idealist and remained lifelong friends with Bradley and Bosanquet, later developed anti-idealist views and he is considered to be one of the progenitors of British Emergentism. Thus, limiting the scope of research to those names who witnessed the Great War – and commented on it- without diverging from the Greenian version of British Idealist political theory, focuses this dissertation on the writings of Sir Henry Jones (1852-1922), John Henry Muirhead (1855-1940), Viscount Richard Burdon Haldane (1856-1928), John Stuart Mackenzie 91860-1935), and Hector James Wright Hetherington (1888-1965). These less known British Idealists were all taught by or worked under the supervision of T. H. Green, Bernard Bosanquet, or the Great British Idealist of Glasgow University, Edward Caird at some point in their lives and made extensive efforts to give Idealism their own interpretation throughout their philosophical endeavor. Yet, the contemporary literature remains mostly uninterested in the particular contributions

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[51] Peter Robbins, *British Hegelians 1875 1925* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1982), 33.

[52] Leslie Armour, "Metaphysics, Morals, and Politics: McTaggart's Theory of the Good and the Good Life," in *The Moral, Social and Political Philosophy of the British Idealists*, ed. William Sweet and Stamatoula Panagakou (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2009), 153–74.

these names made to Idealistic thought especially at a time of great international turmoil and intellectual transformation.

There may be two underlying presumptions that resulted in a lack of interest in the works of Jones, Muirhead, Mackenzie, Hetherington, and Haldane 1) this younger generation of British Idealists were considered to be loyal followers of Green instead of original thinkers on their own capacity. Thus, their works were perceived to be re-statements of Green's political theory that did not made any significant contribution to the overall understanding of British Idealist approach to international relations and human rights. 2) By the time the younger generation of British Idealists started earning their place in the British intellectual circles, the Great War broke out, fatally wounding British Idealism as a philosophical school. The younger generations' reflections on the matter were received as desperate attempts to acquit their pre-Great War convictions and they were deemed to be theoretically insignificant. Surely, both presumptions are reflective of the reality to a certain extent. For the first presumption, the intellectual biographies of the younger generation of British Idealists supply ample evidence. It is repeatedly pointed out that Jones, Muirhead, Mackenzie, and Hetherington were not original philosophers, and Haldane was not, strictly speaking, a philosopher. It was argued that in their works "there was a loss –perhaps it was inevitable- of philosophical power and sheer intellectual excitement. The enthusiasm remained high but it was spread pretty thin."[53] Regarding the second presumption, the common conviction is that the First World War marked the end of Idealist era in British intellectual circles.[54] Especially due to the disillusionment experienced with the state in particular and humanity in general after the Great War, British Idealists' advocacy of the moral character of the social, political and international life was perceived to be dangerously naïve. Furthermore, at least some of the Idealists in Britain were perceived as representatives of Prussian militarism and seen as a

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[53] Robbins, *British Hegelians 1875 1925*, 107.

[54] Morefield, *Covenants without Swords*, 61.

T. Gouldstone, *The Rise and Decline of Anglican Idealism in the Nineteenth Century*, 1st ed. 2005 edition (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 35.

Thom Brooks, "Introduction," in *Ethical Citizenship: British Idealism and the Politics of Recognition* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 2.

Otter, *British Idealism and Social Explanation*, 211–12.

corrupting influence on the long-standing tradition of British empiricism.[55] By the end of the Great War, the remaining British Idealists were side-line figures within the larger community of British intellectuals.

In turn, this perception of insignificance for Jones, Mackenzie, Muirhead, Haldane and Hetherington has led to an overall lack of attention to their works in the contemporary literature that attempts to come up with a novel British Idealist theory of human rights. When less prominent figures among the British Idealists received attention, it was to emphasize the continuity of the British Idealist mind-set even after Green's death, rather than to reveal their particular contributions to British Idealist approach to international relations and human rights. Although Boucher and Vincent draw attention to several Idealist philosophers responses to the Boer War and the Great War, they adopted more or less a holistic approach to British Idealism that downplays the shifts of opinion in the younger generation's works from 1900 onwards.[56] For Boucher and Vincent, "the carnage of the First World War transformed even the most skeptical of the British Idealists towards internationalism," but this shift is interpreted as a sign of British Idealists' "thoughtful and subtle adaptability of British Idealist thought in the way it responded to events." In contrast, this study claims that even though the transformation that occurred within British Idealist School at the beginning of the 20th century was thoughtful, it was not subtle at all. Rather, it was part of a wider movement from imperialism to internationalism in British intellectual circles and it was very significant in terms of creating a favorable intellectual atmosphere for the transformation of Green's right theory into an internationalist theory of human rights by younger British Idealists.

Henry Jones was born on 30 November 1852 at Llangernyw, Denbighshire, Wales. In 1870, he won a scholarship to Bangor normal Teacher Training College and by 1873 he was the head master of a small country school in Brynammam, South Wales. In

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[55] Thomas C. Kennedy, "Public Opinion and the Conscientious Objector, 1915-1919," *Journal of British Studies* 12, no. 2 (1973): 106.

[56] David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, "Nationality, Imperialism and International Relations," in *British Idealism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum, 2012), 130–55.
David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, "Nations and the Imperialism of Moral Ideals" (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993), 134–55.

1875 he won another scholarship to Glasgow University where he planned to study theology. By that time he was already registered as a Calvinistic minister. Under the influence of Edward Caird, however, his interest in theology left its place to an interest in philosophy and metaphysics. In 1884, he became a Professor of Philosophy and Political Economy in University College of North Wales. In 1894 he was appointed to Glasgow University's Chair of Moral Philosophy. Philosophically he was an absolute idealist and his harshest criticisms were often directed at personal idealists like Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison as well as to the critics of Idealism like Hobhouse and Herbert Spencer whom he considered to be "the epitome of the stupidity of English people."[57] During the First World War, Jones delivered a series of lectures at the Rice Institute titled the "Obligations and Privileges of Citizenship." Especially in the second and third lectures he focused on the questions of international relations and war. He also wrote several essays and books during and after the Great War in which he strongly defended the necessity of forming a League of Peace.[58]

John Henry Muirhead was born in Glasgow in 1855. In 1875, he graduated from Glasgow University where he was greatly influenced by Edward Caird. Following his graduation, Muirhead won a scholarship to Balliol College Oxford where he met Green and his student and fellow idealist Richard Lewis Nettleship.[59] In 1888 he became Lecturer in Mental and Moral Science at Royal Holloway College. In 1896 he acquired a professorship in the Philosophy and Political Economy Department of Mason College, Birmingham.[60] His publications during and after the Great War includes *Rule and end in Morals* which is a restatement of Green's ethics, *German Philosophy in relation to War* that defends Hegelian idealism against its critiques, and *Social Purpose: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Civic Society* which he coauthored with Hetherington and includes a chapter on the external relations of states. Muirhead was mostly known as the editor of the 'Library of Philosophy.' According to Boucher,

[57] Stuart Brown, *Dictionary of Twentieth-Century British Philosophers: 2 Volumes* (A&C Black, 2005), 490.

[58] Henry Jones, *Form the League of Peace Now: An Appeal to My Fellow Citizens* (London: The League of Nations Union, 1918).

[59] David Boucher, ed., *The British Idealists* (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xl.

[60] Brown, *Dictionary of Twentieth-Century British Philosophers*, 701.

Muirhead also "exemplified perfectly what Idealists meant by active citizenship" in his collaboration with Bosanquet during the foundation of the London Ethical Society and his active presence in the Worker's Education Association along with Henry Jones.[61] The part on Muirhead in *The Dictionary of Nineteenth Century British Philosophers* ends with the following note: " Muirhead added little that was really new to the idealism he been taught, but he was an important example of and advocate for that worldview, and kept the idealist impulse alive until well into the twentieth century, adapting it to the changed circumstances of the time."[62]

Richard Burdon Haldane's name was not included in the above-mentioned dictionary as there is no consensus on the question of whether he was a practical academic or a statesman with a particularly philosophical mind-set. He was born in Edinburgh in 1856. During his studies in Edinburgh University he got acquainted with Hegelian philosophy and became lifelong friends with the personal idealist Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison. His family, worried by his lack of faith in religion, sent him to Balliol College, Oxford where T. H. Green was a tutor. In 1874, Haldane went to Gottingen where he studied under Hermann Lotze. Upon his return he got involved in politics and was elected MP for East Lothian in 1885. In 1905, after declining the positions of attorney-generalship and Home Office, he accepted War Office and was considered to be very effective in reforming the British army. In 1912 he was appointed Lord Chancellor. He played an active role in the British mobilization for the First World War upon the request of Prime Minister Asquith. Yet his ties to Germany and German nationals fuelled a press campaign that accused Haldane of Prussianism. The campaign proved effective and he was left out of the coalition government that was formed in 1915. A considerable part of his written work was produced during and after the First World War.[63] Although he was not an academic in profession, he was a Hegelian statesman who reflected on the political questions of

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[61] Boucher, *The British Idealists*, xl.

[62] Brown, *Dictionary of Twentieth-Century British Philosophers*, 702.

[63] R. B. Haldane, *The Future of Democracy: An Address by Lord Haldane* (London: Headley Bros. Publishers, LTD., 1918).
R. B. Haldane, *Before the War* (London: Cassell And Company, LTD, 1920).
R. B. Haldane, *The Philosophy of Humanism and of Other Subjects* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1922).

his time at length with considerable philosophical vigor. It was argued "although Lord Haldane's philosophical work formed but a small part of his astonishingly able and many-sided achievements… we are forced to regard it as the centre of his life, of which all his other activities were radiations."[64]

John Stuart Mackenzie was born in 1860, near Glasgow. In 1877 he started his studies in Glasgow University where he was taught by Edward Caird and Henry Jones. Then he moved to Trinity College, Cambridge where he became friends with McTaggart and attracted his attention to Hegel. In 1890 he was elected to a Fellowship at Trinity College.[65] In 1895, he secured a Professorship of Philosophy at University College Cardiff.[66] It would not be an exaggeration to say that he was the most productive name among British Idealists. In a note published in *Mind* after his death, Muirhead wrote "the long list of his books and articles falls into two groups, the earlier Ethics and Social Philosophy, the later on Metaphysics."[67] Especially after 1914 the ethical nature of the state and its rights and duties in international relations covered a considerable part of his writings. Mackenzie defined himself as a "humble follower of the line of idealistic speculation in which I consider my earliest teacher, Edward Caird, to have been on the whole, the safest guide."[68] Although Mackenzie put forward no fundamentally new theses, his reflections on the political questions of his age were exemplary of the British Idealist position especially after the Great War. Additionally his reflections on the basis and scope of human rights in 1920s constitute one of the primary sources of this study.

Hector James Wright Hetherington was born in 1888 in Cowdenbeath, Scotland. Between 1905 and 1910, he studied at Glasgow University where he was a student of Henry Jones. For the following four years he worked as Jones's assistant. In 1936 he became the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Glasgow University and remained in this post until his retirement in 1961. Although Hetherington was an Idealist

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[64] Dr. Rudolf Metz, *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1938), 313.

[65] Boucher, *The British Idealists*, xxxix.

[66] Brown, *Dictionary of Twentieth-Century British Philosophers*, 618.

[67] J. H. Muirhead, "J. S. Mackenzie (1860-1935)," *Mind* 45, no. 178 (1936): 277–78.

[68] Brown, *Dictionary of Twentieth-Century British Philosophers*, 618.

philosopher, writing was not his calling. He preferred focusing his energy on his administrative duties. He was the co-author of *Social Purpose: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Civic Society* with Muirhead. More importantly for the purposes of this dissertation his *International Labour Legislation,* published in 1920 offers important insights into the practical aspect of an internationalist system of human rights envisaged by the younger generation of British Idealists.

Among these lesser-known British Idealists, Henry Jones has been paid the most attention in the contemporary literature on British Idealism thanks to David Boucher and Andrew Vincent's endeavors. They published *A Radical Hegelian: Political and Social Philosophy of Henry Jones* in 1993 and in 1997 Boucher republished some of Henry Jones's articles in his edited volume: *The British Idealists.*[69] This volume also contains Mackenzie's "The Dangers of Democracy," and Muirhead's "What Imperialism Means" along with these philosophers short biographies. A more recent volume by William Sweet, titled *The Moral, Social and Political Philosophy of the British Idealists* includes a chapter on Henry Jones's idealism, and another one on the social and political philosophy of Muirhead, Hetherington and Mackenzie.[70] The only detailed work on Haldane's Hegelian education and political career appears to be *Viscount Haldane: The Wicked Step-father of the Canadian Constitution.*[71] There does not exist a comprehensive study of Mackenzie or Muirhead's work despite the considerably large written material they left behind.

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[69] David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, *A Radical Hegelian: Political and Social Philosophy of Henry Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993).

Boucher, *The British Idealists*.

[70] David Boucher, "Henry Jones: Idealism as a Practical Creed," in *The Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy of British Idealists* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2009), 137–53.

Thom Brooks, "Muirhead, Hetherington, and Mackenzie," in *The Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy of British Idealists* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2009), 209–33.

[71] Frederick Vaughan, *Viscount Haldane: "The Wicked Step-Father of the Canadian Constitution"* (University of Toronto Press, 2010).

## 1.4 The Younger Generation and the Historiography of Internationalism and Human Rights [72]

The younger generations' increasingly marginal position within the sphere after the Great War significantly limited their direct impact upon the later theories of human rights. It was their distant cousins; international idealists like Alfred Zimmern and Gilbert Murray, who dominated the intellectual sphere during the 20 years crisis and who receive much more attention in contemporary historiographies of the era. Still, paying attention to the 'internationalist' adaptation of Green's theory of rights by the younger generation contributes to our understanding of human rights and internationalism by filling a void at the intersection of two literatures: the history of the idea of human rights and the historiography of intellectual thought on internationalism at the end of the long 19th century. While the first literature predominantly deals with the Post-War (connoting the Second World War) period, the second literature rarely pays attention to the concept of human rights during the years following the Great War. Thus, the younger generation's internationalist approach to human rights remains unexamined.

In his study of the recent historiography of human rights, Devin Pendas argues that the field is marked by "a clear lack of consensus… about even the most elementary contours of the subject" and the most basic question in regards to the origins of human rights proves to be the most contested one.[73] The history of the concept f human rights has been traced back to the works of Ancient Greek and medieval philosophers as well as to religious texts such as the Bible and the Koran.[74] Alternatively, the French and the American revolutions and the Enlightenment idea of

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[72] This subsection is included in my article: Nazli Pinar Kaymaz, "From Imperialism to Internationalism: British Idealism and Human Rights," *The International History Review*, June 6, 2018, 1–21, https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2018.1480513.

[73] Devin O. Pendas, "Toward a New Politics? On the Recent Historiography of Human Rights," *Contemporary European History* 21, no. 1 (2012): 95–96.

[74] David N Stamos, *Myth of Universal Human Rights: Its Origin, History, and Explanation, Along with a More Humane Way*, 2015, 12, https://nls.ldls.org.uk/welcome.html?ark:/81055/vdc_100026763645.0x000001.

the 'rights of man' that they promoted, have been considered to be predecessors of the concept of human rights, by those who perceive it as "part of a long and honourable tradition of dissent, resistance, and rebellion against the oppression of power and the injustice of law."[75] An alternative lineage for the idea of human rights has recently been introduced by David Stamos who traced its origins back to the 17th century English Levellers to Locke and to the American and French Revolutions.[76] A more radical break from the accepted historiography of the idea of human rights is offered by Samuel Moyn in *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*.[77] Moyn contends that a more accurate understanding of human rights needs to focus on a "much more recent timeline" going back only to 1970s, during which human rights emerged as the dominant utopian project "to make the world a better place."[78] Although in a later piece, Moyn acknowledges the continuity of ideas from past to present in shaping our understanding of human rights, his reading does not attribute an essential importance to the sources of human rights from "Greek philosophy and monotheistic religion, European natural law and early modern revolutions, horror against American slavery and Adolf Hitler's Jew-killing."[79] Still, the literature on human rights takes the post-war period during which several human rights declarations, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, are articulated, as the decisive point in its emergence if not as its genesis.[80] The post Great-War period on the other hand –with a couple of exceptions- does not receive such attention from the historians of the idea of human rights due to the marginal position occupied by the concern for human rights during the years following the Great War. As Mark Mazower points out in his *No Enchanted Palace,* although intellectuals were thinking about establishing a just

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[75] Costas Douzinas, *Human Rights and Empire: The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism* (New York, NY: Routledge-Cavendish, 2007), 13.

[76] Stamos, *Myth of Universal Human Rights*, 13.

[77] Moyn, *The Last Utopia*.

[78] Moyn, 7.

[79] Samuel Moyn, "The Continuing Perplexities of Human Rights," *Qui Parle* 22, no. 1 (2013): 96.

[80] Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, 2010, 14.

Emilie Hafner-Burton, *Making Human Rights a Reality* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013), 46.

A. W. Brian Simpson, *Human Rights and the End of Empire: Britain and the Genesis of the European Convention* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

international order through a 'world body' long before 1945, protecting human rights was not envisioned to be one of the primary duties of such an organization.[81]

The historians of intellectual thought interested in the history of internationalism, however, find plenty of material to work with in the final decades of the long 19th century as well as during the years that followed the outbreak of the Great War.[82] Especially the final years of the Great War, marked by a boom in the literature on the possible design of a world federation or a league of peace, proves to be of special interest to intellectual historians. Works by the New Liberals such as Leonard Hobhouse and J. A. Hobson, members of the Fabian Society like Bernard Shaw, and the participants of Alfred Milner's Round Table offers insights into the envisioned conditions for ensuring future international peace and order through establishing a stable and cooperative international society.[83] In this literature, internationalist and imperialism are not perceived to be mutually exclusive positions yet their primacy within the intellectual circles are thought to be inversely associated. While imperial internationalists' hopes for a cooperative international order in the pre-Great War period is perceived to be limited within the boundaries of the 'civilized nations,' from 1915 onwards, the vocabulary of civilization experiences a steady decline in popularity, leaving its place to the concepts of national autonomy and self government in accordance with the rising internationalist sentiment.[84] This shift in intellectuals'

[81] Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*, Lawrence Stone Lectures (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 191.

[82] Duncan Bell, *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

[83] J. A. Hobson, *Towards International Government* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915).

L. S. Woolf, *International Government* (New York: Brentano's, 1916).

L. S. Woolf, *The Framework of a Lasting Peace* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1917).

Henry Noel Brailsford, *A League of Nations* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1917).

Gilbert Murray, *The League of Nations and the Democratic Idea* (London: Oxford University Press, 1918).

Viscount Grey, *The League of Nations* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1918).

J. C. Smuts, *The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1918).

H. G. Wells, *The Idea of a League of Nations* (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1919).

[84] Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of the World Order, 1889-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 96.

approach to non-European peoples is not perceived to be a sincere and complete detachment from the imperialist sentiments they entertained only a couple of decades ago. Susan Pederson argues, for instance. The mandates system of the League of Nations under which "mandated territories were not better governed than colonies" was the result of a "potent brew of liberal internationalism, imperial humanitarianism, and sheer territorial acquisitiveness."[85] While it remains impossible to measure the sincerity of the change of sentiment towards non-European peoples among liberal intellectuals, a profound shift can be observed in the way international relations were discussed in the years following the outbreak of the Great War in Britain. According to Casper Sylvest, the most significant characteristic of this change was the move from moral internationalist arguments to institutional internationalist ones in the 1920s.[86] The moral internationalist position, which emphasized the "need for a new international consciousness" that can "assure progress, order, and continuity internationally," was superseded by a growing interest in international mechanisms and international law in this period.[87] This was also the period during which British Idealism lost its prominence within the British Intellectual sphere. In an intellectual environment that focused on the topics of specific 'policy objectives' on the matters of 'disarmament, international law, and peace,' the younger generation of British Idealists continued to work with the highly metaphysical language they inherited from T. H. Green.[88] While this disparity between their moral way of theorizing and the institutionalist turn within the intellectual sphere led to their marginalization in the 1920s, it also enabled them to put forward a unique approach to internationalism and human rights.

Apparently, the post-War writings of the younger generation of British Idealists fall in the blind-spots of the literatures on the historiography of human rights and international relations. Still, their study offers important insights into the political, international, and intellectual circumstances that enabled the emergence of an

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[85] Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and The Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 4–27.

[86] Casper Sylvest, "Continuity and Change in British Liberal Internationalism, c. 1900–1930," *Review of International Studies* 31, no. 2 (2005): 269.

[87] Sylvest, 266–68.

[88] Sylvest, 278.

internationalist approach to human rights. The younger generations' transition from imperialism to internationalism comes with an underlying conceptual shift from cultural monism to multiculturalism. Following a period of 'supposed' monism that perceives differences as a symptom of inadequate compliance with the ideal of civilization, their post-Great War writings show their recognition of the existence and necessity of cultural particularities of communities in a cooperative world order. In their attempt to reconcile these particularities with a universal morality, they go back to Green's theory of rights, which is based on the universal ideal of 'self-realization' that can be pursued in various cultural and political settings. Thus, it can be argued that the 'classical' internationalist position adopted by Mackenzie, Jones, Muirhead, Hetherington, and Haldane in the years following the Great War serves as a "middle ground" between communitarianism and cosmopolitanism.[89] It also constitutes a nuanced approach to human rights insofar as it puts forward a universal moral justification for the recognition of human rights based on the ideal of 'self-realization' while acknowledging the possible variations in its application in each particular community.

The importance attributed to the historical transition from imperialism to internationalism in the evolution of the British Idealists' approach to human rights in this work does not necessarily preclude the universal character of human rights. This study does not aim to offer an alternative point of origin for the idea of human rights nor does it claim that the younger generations' internationalist approach to human rights had a significant impact on contemporary human rights theories. Simply it draws attention to a unique approach to human rights under special political and international conditions. It highlights the conditions which forced a group of thinkers to deal with the newly (re)emerging problem of reconciling cultural multiplicity with moral universality. Considering the same issue still constitutes the bulk of the problem regarding theories of human rights, the international approach maintained by these names offers a significant alternative to prioritizing either the universal or the particular. As internationalism has been offered as a middle-way solution or a third option to the cosmopolitanism-communitarianism dichotomy in recent works, the

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[89] Peter Lawler, "The Good State: In Praise of 'Classical' Internationalism," *Review of International Studies* 31, no. 3 (2005): 432.

example set by the younger generation of British Idealists may contribute to recent attempts to develop an internationalist theory of human rights.[90] Although Moyn argues that internationalism is "merely one form of cosmopolitanism," the central position occupied by the nation-states in recognizing and maintaining a system of rights and duties within their own jurisdictions in an internationalist human rights order constitutes a substantial variation form cosmopolitan approaches to human rights that aim at world governance and world citizenship.[91] Based on the specific example of an internationalist approach to human rights detailed in this work, it can be argued in line with Lawler that while an internationalist order of human rights requires states to act "in a cosmopolitan minded manner" it does not aim to supersede the international system of nation states for a unified world order.[92]

## 1.5 The Scope and Aim of the Dissertation

The primary aim of this study is to reveal how a number of British philosophers adopted the British Idealist philosophy and applied it to the burning questions of their day, before, during, and after the First World War. By paying much-needed attention to their attitudes towards central questions regarding the legitimacy of imperialism, reconciliation of different cultures and religions, nature of international sphere, causes of war, possibility of perpetual peace, ideas on cosmopolitanism and internationalism, arguments about the British Commonwealth, a World Federation and/or a League of Nations, it primarily aims to contribute to the study of British Idealism. Furthermore, it contributes to the larger literature on the long 19th century British intellectual historiography by offering an in-depth reading of British Idealists' works from 1900 to the end of 1920s. A predominantly historical reading of the British Idealists works enables tracing the evolution of their ideas under the influence of international phenomenon that had a transformative impact on the British liberal thought in general

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[90] David A. Reidy, "An Internationalist Conception of Human Rights," *The Philosophical Forum* xxxvi, no. 4 (Winter 2005): 367–97.
Cecelia Lynch, "The Promise and Problems of Internationalism," *Global Governance* 5, no. 1 (1999): 83–101.
[91] Samuel Moyn, "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 in the History of Cosmopolitanism," *Critical Inquiry* 40, no. 4 (June 2014): 371, https://doi.org/10.1086/676412.
[92] Lawler, "The Good State," 431.

in the given period. While not loosing sight of the Greenian origins of their thought, this study reveals how a younger generation of philosophers adapted British Idealism in accordance with the challenges and demands of an international sphere largely in turmoil. The results of the study suggests, greater attention is to be paid to the works of the younger generation of British Idealists who developed Green's theory of rights into an internationalist theory of human rights from 1915 onwards.

The second chapter constitutes a touchstone in exploring British Idealists' approach to international order and imperialism in pre-Great War Britain. This chapter also offers some insight into the pioneering British Idealists' perceptions of the nature of international order from 1870s onwards. While Green and Bosanquet are argued to be 'skeptical' towards the benefits of imperialism, their arguments offer the theoretical background for the internationalist turn British Idealism takes after the Great War. On the other end of the spectrum are located Bradley and Ritchie whose devotion to imperialist cause are strengthened by their appropriation of Darwinian evolutionary arguments as well as the primacy they attributed to the whole in comparison with the parts. It is argued that their almost 'militaristic imperialism' is not shared by a younger generation of British Idealists and it disappears with the death of Ritchie in 1903. The younger generation of British Idealists occupies a middle ground between Green and Bosanquet's imperial skepticism and Bradley and Ritchie's over enthusiasm for imperial dominance. In line with the general 'liberal imperialist' sentiment of the British intelligentsia during the Boer War, they support a benevolent and patriarchal form of imperialism that perceives the inhabitants of the occupied territories as the 'children of humanity' who need guidance to get 'civilized.' It is argued that this position does not create a fertile ground on which Green's rights theory can be translated into a human rights theory with universal application.

The third chapter focuses on the impact of the Great War on the British Idealists' altered attitude towards international order and to the questions of war and peace. Works produced by Muirhead, Viscount Haldane, and Henry Jones supply ample material to perceive the source and nature of this shift experienced by the British Idealists due to their disillusionment with imperialism and Western civilization. Furthermore, British Idealists' quest to distinguish themselves from Prussian militarism forces them to move away from the vocabulary of a benevolent British

empire with a moral duty to civilize 'backwards' peoples and join the ranks of those who reimagine the union of nations under the British Crown as a Commonwealth of equal Nations. They no longer use the metaphor of a linear 'ladder of civilization' that does not leave room for variation. Instead, the British Idealists in this period recognise the value of cultural variation and cohabitation of differences.

The fourth chapter deals with British Idealists' resurfacing optimism at the end of the Great War mostly based on the hope that a League Nations would ensure cooperation of equal and independent peoples. It also reveals to what extend the British Idealists distanced themselves from perceiving an order of Western empires as an ideal international organization and moved towards perceiving non-Western nations as equal members of the international community. By putting emphasis on the compatibility of true patriotism and true humanism, British Idealists try to discern the underlying unity of humanity under the apparent multiplicity of specific cultures. Their reflections in this period create the basis for their internationalist approach to the question of prevention of war as well as establishing a moral basis for a universal order of human rights. Haldane, Muirhead and Hetherington's reflections on the bitter lessons of the Great War, along with Henry Jones's speeches on the urgency of re-ordering the international arena to prevent a similar calamity in the future, reflects the common ground British Idealists shared after the Great War.

The final chapter tries to identify the main tenets of the internationalist theory of human rights that can be discerned from the post-1914 writings of the British Idealists. Special attention is paid to Mackenzie's list of human rights, which is quite comprehensive in its scope. Furthermore, Hetherington's *International Labour Legislation* offers important insights into the applicability of such a human rights order by the newly established international organizations under the umbrella of the League of Nations. In support of the main argument of this study –that the post-1915 works of British Idealists transforms Green's theory of rights into an internationalist theory of human rights- there emerges, a number of supplementary arguments that are not sufficiently recognized in the existing literature. One of the most striking ones is Bosanquet's apparent impact on the younger generation of British Idealists in appreciating the particular contributions of all peoples to the overall experience and development of humanity. In this study, contrary to the allegations that Bosanquet's

approach to international sphere was not conducive of a human rights theory, it is maintained that Bosanquet's emphasis on pluralism constitutes an indispensible part of a British Idealist human rights theory. Another supportive argument this study maintains is that the international phenomenon and its reflections on the British liberal intelligentsia had an overwhelming impact on the works of British Idealist thinkers, especially 1900 onwards. Thus an a-historical reading of their works would mistake the evolution of their thinking under adverse and rapidly changing historical and intellectual circumstances as confusion and inconsistency. Such a reading would definitely lead to an undervaluation of their work as confused restatements of the great British Idealists. Lastly, this study draws attention to the parallels between the larger liberal intellectual positions on the matter of international relations and the British Idealists' changing approaches to the issues of imperialism and internationalism. It argues that, far from being deviant figures from the larger intellectual society, British Idealists were mainly part of the mainstream position as liberal imperialists before the Great War and as internationalists and supporters of the League of Nations following its outbreak. Yet, their compliance with the mainstream intellectual positions does not mean they were unoriginal thinkers as they inherited a very specific theoretical framework through which they continued to reflect on political and international phenomenon. The centrality of rights in their theoretical position made their work unique in the post-1914 period. While the majority of liberal intellectuals were focused on the questions of international arbitration and reduction of armaments, British Idealists' works contained a pristine example of an internationalist theory of human rights.

# CHAPTER 2

# LOCATING THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF BRITISH IDEALISTS: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, IMPERIALISM, AND THE SECOND BOER WAR

> *This is the true justification of our Indian Empire, for though Englishmen may have been guilty incidentally of many acts of violence and treachery in the East, yet our progress there, as a whole, has been the inevitable result of the action of civilization and national enterprize on a people who had forfeited all title to be called a nation, and who, so to speak, were looking out for a master. Our dominion there cannot be blamed, so long as we adapt it to the temper and religion of the people.*[93]

This chapter aims to locate the younger generation of British Idealists, consisting of Jones, Mackenzie, Muirhead, and Haldane within the wider circle of British Idealism in regards to their approach to international relations and imperialism in the pre-Great War era. It is argued that they constituted the middle-ground so far as they did not

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[93] Thomas Hill Green, *Works: V. 5 Additional Writings*, ed. Peter P. Nicholson (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1997), 16.

share Green and Bosanquet's suspicions in regards to imperialism while refraining from supporting the imperial cause unconditionally as Bradley and Ritchie did. Their position was marked by the obvious effect Green's teaching had on their reasoning but also by an enthusiasm for the success of the empire in line with the spirit of the time. Although they were willing to recognize the moral wrongs committed by the British Empire during and after the Second Boer War, they had faith in the British Empire as a tool of spreading civilization and disseminating the European values to the 'savage' peoples of the world. This was a position not conducive of Greenian "moral cosmopolitanism" or Bosanquet's emphasis on the importance of particularities in constituting a coherent unity. Rather, it emphasized the necessity of educating the assumedly savage peoples in the British colonies for their own good as well as the continual progress of humanity. In the beginning of the 20th century the vocabulary of 'civilization' adopted by the younger generation of British Idealists hindered the development of a cosmopolitan or international approach to human rights. Arguably they were affected by Green and Bosanquet's earlier remarks on the superiority of the Christian civilization as well as the dominant public and intellectual support for the empire.

## 2.1 The Boer War

The Boer war was the most popular topic of discussion regarding international relations in Britain until the Great War. It was expected by the British government and population to be a quick and easy victory against an unorganized Dutch army constituted of farmers. While the government estimated at the beginning of hostility that a campaign against the Boers would "involve 75,000 troops, result in –at worst- a few hundred casualties, cost about 10£m, and be successfully completed within three to four months," it turned into a long and costly battle which "lasted for two years and eight months, cost £230m, involved a total of 450,000 British and Empire troops, and resulted in the deaths of some 22,000 soldiers on the British side, about 34,000 Boer civilians and combatants, and an unknown number of the African population which has been estimated at not less than 14.000."[94] The intellectual and political

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[94] Andrew Porter, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume III: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2001), 617.

approaches to imperialism had varied during the length of the War. On the political scene, there was a wide consensus regarding the necessity of ensuring British supremacy in South Africa and "the importance of bringing the Transvaal to heel…"[95] Yet, this consensus was not necessarily maintained when the issue was how to ensure Britain's control over the Boer republics. Joseph Chamberlain, the secretary of State for the colonies in the Liberal Unionist and Conservative coalition under Lord Salisbury, favoured a firm yet patient policy of ensuring supremacy through diplomacy.[96] According to Chamberlain it was of vital importance to ensure that the Boer were put clearly on the wrong in the case of an armed conflict. In his imperial vision Chamberlain did not only have the backing of the Conservative Imperialist government but also of the majority of the parliament. The liberal opposition did not have a firm standing in the parliament and its leadership was mostly ineffective. The most serious challenge to Chamberlain's plans to realise British supremacy in South Africa through diplomacy came from his colonial administrator, Alfred Milner. Although Milner did not openly challenge Chamberlain's soft approach in South Africa, histories of the Boer war agree on his lack of enthusiasm in pursuing a diplomatic solution with the Boer administration. While Milner was not singularly responsible for the outbreak of war in 1899, there seems to be a consensus that "it was Milner who forced the pace in South Africa, sometimes to the disquiet of the government in London, which tried on one or two occasions to restrain him."[97] Especially during the talks in Bloemfontein, Milner's attitude was considered to be uncompromising and the talks' collapse is said to "advance the likelihood of war on all sides."[98] Yet, it was the president of the South African Republic Paul Kruger's ultimatum issued on 9 October 1899, which triggered the Boer War. In this ultimatum Kruger made 4 demands and declared that any action taken by the British other than an affirmation would be considered as 'a formal declaration of war.'[99] This hot-headed ultimatum was received by the British government with a kind of relief as

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[95] Bernard Porter, *The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism, 1850-2004*, 4th ed (Harlow, Essex, England ; New York: Pearson/Longman, 2004), 176.

[96] J. Lee Thompson, *A Wider Patriotism: Alfred Milner and the British Empire* (London: Routledge, 2008), 38.

[97] Porter, *The Lion's Share*, 176.

[98] Thompson, *A Wider Patriotism*, 47.

[99] Ibid., 53.

Salisbury "noted dryly that at least the Boer ultimatum had relieved the British Government of the responsibility of explaining the war to the British public."[100] The war started in a favourable way for the British as ensuring British predominance was considered to happen swifter through war and the ultimatum placed the moral responsibility of the war on President Kruger.

During the initial weeks of the war, public support for the imperial army is noted to be quite high. The literature on the Boer war puts great emphasis on the popular support the British government received from the public as well as the cultural means that created an atmosphere of ardent patriotism and imperialism in the mother country. Public support was demonstrated on the streets especially during the first year of the war, often by peaceful means. One of the most striking displays of patriotic support for the British military in South Africa was the celebrations of the relief of Mafeking after the Black Week that took place in almost every English city.[101] Although the three major defeats the British Army suffered in the black week showed that the victory against the Boer forces was unlikely to be swift or easy, it also had the effect of uniting the public in support of its armed forces. Thus, it is argued "even those who opposed the war had difficulty speaking against it after Black Week in late 1899."[102] Furthermore, public farewells to the soldiers who volunteered to join the army contributed to the creation of a sense of public involvement in a war that was fought in a far land. Politically, president Kruger's ultimatum enabled the British government to depict the war as a "war of imperial defence, a legitimate response to the aggression of the Boer republics."[103] Unionists' victory at the September 1900 election, which is commonly referred to as 'the khaki election,' showed that the public supported their government's response to the Boer ultimatum and approved the

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[100] Ibid., 54.

[101] Porter, *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, 362.

[102] Stephen M. Miller, "In Support of the 'Imperial Mission'? Volunteering for the South African War, 1899-1902," *The Journal of Military History* 69, no. 3 (July 11, 2005): 695, doi:10.1353/jmh.2005.0173.

[103] Chris Williams, "'Our War History in Cartoons Is Unique': J.M. Staniforth, British Public Opinion, and the South African War, 1899–1902," *War in History* 20, no. 4 (November 1, 2013): 493, https://doi.org/10.1177/0968344513494657.

imperialist agenda it pursued in South Africa.[104] Furthermore, the imperialist sentiment in Britain was being reinforced through the use of cultural medium. Miller argued "by the late 1880s to 1890s, the major themes of music hall entertainment in both working and middle class establishments centered on Tommy Atkins, Jack Tarr, and the empire," and "those who were not influenced by the manufactured patriotism of the daily paper, school, music hall, and brass band were subject nevertheless to the spontaneous outburst of patriotism created by the disasters of the Black Week."[105]

Yet, the British Empire's inability to bring about a swift victory and several accusations of hypocrisy directed against it, as well as the methods and strategies it used in warfare sparked criticism towards the end of the Boer War. Scorched-earth policy pursued by the British forces created some opposition both in the general public and the intellectual circles. After all "it was one thing to celebrate the steadfastness of the defenders of Mafeking, or the battlefield heroism displayed at Paardeberg, but quite another to remain comfortable with the burning of the Boer farms…"[106] This strategy adopted later in the war meant destruction of all the things that was essential for Boers' livelihood including their crops, animals, and houses. Public conscience in Britain was further moved when Emile Hobhouse's report on the conditions of the refugee camps was revealed. After her visit to the refugee camps in which both white and black women, children, and elderly were gathered, Hobhouse wrote a highly critical report regarding the mistreatment of refugees which resulted in high rates of death and illnesses. Although the camps were legitimized as protected zones for women and children whose men joined the Boer forces and whose livelihood was destroyed by the British scorched earth policy, the camps were used to force the Boer combatants to surrender. Those refugees who were known to have relatives among the Boer combatants were penalized by reductions in their rations.[107] The adverse conditions in the camps affected thousands of South Africans as there were "roughly 60.000 white, and an equal number of black South Africans at dozens

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[104] Porter, *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, 362.

[105] Miller, "In Support of the 'Imperial Mission'?," 702–3.
Miller, 711.

[106] Williams, "'Our War History in Cartoons Is Unique,'" 494.

[107] Thompson, *A Wider Patriotism*, 64.

of locations" by June 1901, and "by September the number would be 110.000."[108] Though the conditions of the camps were improved following the recommendations prepared by the Committee of Ladies, methods adopted by the British forces in South Africa raised considerable concern. Williams states that "on her [Hobhouse] return to Britain her revelations so shocked the Liberal leader Campbell-Bannerman that in June in the House of Commons he asked the question, 'When is a war not a war?' and answered, 'When it is carried on by the methods of barbarism in South Africa.'"[109] Although the severity of the conditions in the refugee camps did not turn the wave of opinion in Britain, it, at least, showed that British imperialism did not necessarily served the interests of the whole humanity.

The intellectual support for imperialism during the Boer War came from various and seemingly divergent groups. While Shaw pushed Fabians to stand with the imperialists, they were not the only socialists who supported the war. As late as 1902, Hobson explained socialists' position as follows:

> Some liberals with socialistic leanings and a few professed socialists support the South African War and the imperialism it embodies… as follows: if an individual member of society, owning land, neglects to develop its natural resources or so uses it as to make it a public nuisance, or refuses permission to the public to utilise it for fair compensation, it is admitted that society has a right to compel him to refrain from such neglect or abuse and to deprive him of the control of his property if he resists… The Transvaal, it is contended, was such a State; it would not develop its resources properly nor would it let others develop them; its backward civilization was a contamination and a menace to the States around it.[110]

While, some socialists' support for the Boer war strengthened imperialists' hand by being a proof of 'cross-party support' for the war, those leftist who were pro-Boer

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[108] Thompson, 67.

[109] Williams, "'Our War History in Cartoons Is Unique,'" 521.

[110] J. A. Hobson, "Socialistic Imperialism," *International Journal of Ethics* 12 (1902): 44.

were too disillusioned with the political and cultural atmosphere of Britain to put up a strong opposition. Huton argued "though local Socialists and Labour Party were in a weak condition, its members opposed the war and greater fusion between the two could have been enabled a wider dissemination and impact of the anti-war message."[111]

On the Liberal side, the support for imperialism was not scarce either. Although for the post-colonial mind, liberal values constitute a stark contrast with an imperial outlook, the liberal imperialist position was populated by quite many prominent intellectual figures in the 19th century.[112] Those who were called Liberal imperialists usually defended the imperial agenda for they believed it would benefit humanity through spreading enlightenment. Porter argued that "Liberal imperialists' like Richard Haldane, Sir Edward Grey and Herbert Henry Asquith were men whom all but the most hidebound Conservative imperialist could trust..."[113] Reportedly, Viscount Haldane was one of the first liberal public figures who expressed his support to Milner through a private letter when the news of the impending war reached Britain. According to Thompson "On 11 October Milner's Liberal Imperialist friend R. B. Haldane reported from London that the 'Transvaal Ultimatum is published this morning! Do not think that because of Harcourt's and Morley's speeches it is to be taken that Liberals as a whole have misunderstood your policy. On the contrary, I am satisfied that four-fifths of our people really follow and assent to it."[114] Such support from Haldane was consistent with the considerable amount of importance he attributed to maintaining a strong and united British Empire and with the general liberal imperialist position. Even though, the liberal imperialist position that justified foreign rule by the aim of 'liberal reform' was not as strong as it was in the first half of the 19th century, it was still influential. Its ethical legitimacy was traditionally

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[111] Guy Hinton, "Newcastle and the Boer War: Regional Reactions to an Imperial War," *Northern History* 52, no. 2 (September 1, 2015): 293.

[112] Karuna Mantena, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2010).
Thomas McCarthy, *Race, Empire, and the Idea of Human Development* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[113] Porter, *The Lion's Share*, 201.

[114] Thompson, *A Wider Patriotism*, 54.

found in Mill's liberal defence of the empire and with every challenge it faced it developed new defensive argumentations.[115] In "The Crisis of Liberal Imperialism," Mantena argued that the end of the 19th century was marked by several occasions of instability, unrest and resistance in British colonies and posed a challenge for the liberal imperialists who so far justified the empire as a conscious mission to civilize. Their response to this challenge was to reframe imperial rule as a moral responsibility or as an "epiphenomenal construct 'indirectly' ruling through pre-existing native institutions and structures of authority."[116] It will be seen that the younger generation of British Idealists also utilized these manoeuvres in their defence of the British Empire.

It was the 'New Liberals' who directed the strongest criticism to imperialist policies pursued in South Africa in the Liberal camp. New Liberals were a community of intellectuals who distanced themselves from Fabianism and Liberal imperialism. Among them Hobson, as it was mentioned above, was the earliest and the most enthusiastic critic of the Boer War. Others joined him, as they perceived British Empire's failure in delivering the promised outcome: an easy victory that would serve humanity. In a collected edition published in 1900, G. H. Perris argued against the 'arrogance' of British Imperialism, which created an animosity among nations that required each nation to maintain a large navy and army.[117] Additionally, he put forward a materialistic explanation for the imperialist ambitions of the British, similar to Hobson's. He argued that the case of South Africa was an example of "how a privileged class, threatened at home by the growth of mass co-operation, makes new preserves in helpless low-grade countries where it can be a law unto itself…"[118] According to Perris, beneath the sentimental veil of imperialism that justifies its doings with the excuse of extending democracy to far away lends, there were colonies which functioned as a "dumping ground for the greedy plutocrats, the decrepit aristocracy, the parasitic official and military classes who feel their supremacy in

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[115] Duncan Bell, "John Stuart Mill on Colonies," *Political Theory* 38, no. 1 (2010): 34–64.

[116] Karuna Mantena, "The Crisis of Liberal Imperialism," in *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth Century Political Thought*, ed. Duncan Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 131.

[117] G. H. Perris, "The New Internationalism," in *Ethical Democracy* (London, 1900), 54.

[118] Perris, 55.

British life gradually slipping away."[119] In 1905 Hobhouse wrote, "Imperialism was to give us a cheap and easy victory, it gave us nearly three years' war. It was to sweep away the abuses of a corrupt incompetent and over-expensive administration. The present administration of the Transvaal is more costly than the former, and more completely in the hands of the capitalists…"[120] New Liberals' criticism was not directed at British government's incapability but to its hypocrisy in its dealings with the subject races through trade, administration or war. While the claim to extend democracy in the case of Australia, Canada and New Zealand was plausible so far as these were more or less direct duplications of the British way of life, the case in South Africa was the exact opposite of a democratic way of life. While the Dutch settlers and the natives constituted the overwhelming majority of the South African population, the British Empire's claim to rule all of South Africa single-handedly was in apparent contradiction with the ideal of popular government. The mitigating position adopted by 'mainstream' Idealists on the matter of imperialism was not critical enough for the New Liberals either. Hobhouse, who proved to be a persistent critic of British Idealism for decades, argued that when the British Idealist theory was judged not by its profession but by its fruits, it became obvious that it was not more than a fiction, and a dangerous fiction for that matter. According to Hobhouse, Idealists were quite adept at finding excellent reasons for ignoring the wrongs committed by the Empire. The only acceptable position in regards to British Empire was to accept the naked fact "that we are maintaining a distinct policy of aggressive warfare on a large scale and with great persistence."[121] The only outcome that can be expected from ignoring these facts was introducing "an atmosphere of self-sophistication, or in one syllable, of cant into our politics which is perhaps more corrupting than the unblushing denial of right."[122] Still, Hobson and Hobhouse's strong criticisms of the British Empire did not culminate in a total refutation of imperialism in general. And in this regard, the expectations of younger British

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[119] Perris, 55.

[120] L. T. Hobhouse, *Democracy and Reaction* (New York: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, 1905), 41.

[121] Hobhouse, 28.

[122] Hobhouse, 28.

Idealists like Henry Jones or Muirhead from a true empire was not so much different from the type of imperialism the New Liberals were willing to support.[123]

As it will be shown in this chapter, British Idealists did not constitute a unified front on the matter of imperialism and the Boer War, yet there were discernable patterns of argumentation that can be classified into two distinct positions. There was Bradley and Ritchie's position that combined Hegelian idealism with evolutionary ethics and justified a process of natural selection' in the international arena. During the Boer War this position was closer to the popular sentiment in Britain, which was called a 'mass psychology of jingoism' or a 'jingo hurricane.'[124] Both Bradley and Ritchie placed tremendous moral significance on the 'end' that was to be achieved by humanity and by doing so conceded to legitimize individuals' and nations' voluntary or involuntary sacrifice as a means to that end. So far as, Bradley and Ritchie accepted any means towards further unification and progress of humanity as legitimate, their approach bestowed moral plausibility upon such extreme measures as exterminating an inferior nation. Their position was one that Mackenzie identified as a late Victorian attitude that combined a 'renewed militarism' and "racial ideas associated with Social Darwinism."[125] While Bradley supported European domination of savage nations, he did not categorically deny the possibility of their extermination. Ritchie's ideal for an international order evolved from a cooperation of sovereign nations under the moral authority of international law into the rule of a few great empires. Both sanctioned use of military force when it brought humanity closer to its ultimate goal more swiftly.

The second position was the main-stream Idealist position that followed Green's teaching and substituted the grounds on which Idealist perception of international order evolved during and after the Great War. Although Thompson notes in the introductory chapter of his book that Green was "credited with laying down the

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[123] David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, *A Radical Hegelian: Political and Social Philosophy of Henry Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993), 154.

[124] Porter, *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, 362.

[125] J. M. Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1984), 2.

philosophical foundations of Liberal Imperialism," there is no evidence that Green's liberalism was an imperialist one. On the contrary, in his reflections on the international order, Green expressed his distrust towards an imperial mind-set and warned against the militarist nationalism it might lead to in the future. Furthermore, for Green use of military power was always a moral wrong regardless of the end it was supposed to serve. According to Green, a war waged against an inferior civilization would not be morally right even if it resulted in the elevation of all humanity into a higher level of civilisation. Similarly, Bosanquet did not sanction use of military force towards other and 'inferior civilisations' as he put great emphasis on the particular contributions each civilisation was to make to a community of mankind that was to be achieved in the future. And during the heyday of imperialist sentiment, a younger generation of British Idealists did not give unconditioned support to the imperial policy pursued by the government. They rather advocated an alternative called 'true imperialism' that depended on education, communication and cooperation rather than military occupation. Even though Muirhead openly admitted being pro-Boer during the war and Jones and Mackenzie condemned the atrocities committed by the British in the colonies, all of them retained their hopes for a fundamental transformation of the British Empire that would guarantee its success as a 'true empire' in the future. It was not until the Great War that they realised Green was quite farsighted when he warned against the rise of militaristic nationalism in Europe as a side effect of imperialism.

## 2.2 T. H. Green

In his major work *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*[126] Green seldom dealt with popular issues in politics and international relations. Rather, he preferred to stick to an abstract discussion of ethics and politics in his books and lectures. He referred to instances from Greek polis, Roman Empire and English history when he wanted to substantiate his philosophical argumentation with concrete examples but

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[126] Thomas Hill Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, ed. A. C. Bradley, Fifth Edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906).

Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 1999).

avoided passing moral judgment on them as he took them as stages in the unfolding history. In his *Lectures* he stated, "We are not, indeed, entitled to say that it could have been brought about in any other way. It is true to say (if we know what we are about in saying it) that nothing which happens in the world could have happened otherwise than it has."[127] Thus, it is hard to decipher what he thought about imperialism, British Empire and its position in the international arena. In addition to being a very influential professor at Balliol College, Green was also a public figure who took great interest in social subjects, especially at the local level. He was very much interested in the quality of popular education and women's education in Oxford and for a time he served the Oxford Band of Hope Temperance Union as its president.[128] Yet his political activism was limited to the municipal level, and there were only a couple of international matters that he speculated on openly. One of these matters was the position of The British Empire regarding the hostility between Russia and the Turkish despotism.[129] Another topic he speculated on was the British tenure in India and its moral legitimacy. While his reflections on the Turkish despotism offers clues regarding his belief in not racial but cultural superiority of European nations, his criticism of the British Empire's presence in India reveals his contempt for imperial ambitions.

For Green the development of a system of rights and obligations in every society was almost a natural outcome of man's moral nature. Yet he recognized a difference between Christian nations and others in terms of the degree to which they developed such a system in their societies. He argued in his *Prolegomena to Ethics* "however retarded, equality before the law has at length been secured, at least ostensibly, for all full-grown and sane human beings throughout Christendom."[130] There were factors inherent in the doctrine of Christianity that led to this end, the most important of which was a universal interest in the betterment of mankind. In that respect Christianity was different from and superior to the morality of the 'Greek of

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[127] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 126.

[128] A. C. Nettleship, ed., *Miscellanies and Memoir*, vol. III, Works of Thomas Hill Green (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1888), cxv.

[129] Green, *Works: V. 5 Additional Writings*, 299.

[130] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 243.

Aristotle's age.'[131] Although the idea of a society of free, equal, and law-abiding citizens was first formed by the Greeks, "in its universality, as capable of application to the whole human race, an attempt has first been made to act upon it in modern Christendom."[132] Green refused to find the roots of the concept of 'humanity' in any specific school of thought or a set of teachers as he thought the concept itself was inherent in the moral capacity of man, its germs were present in even the most primitive human society, and its fulfillment was a natural phenomenon. Thus, he argued that the fact that "the fabric of European society stands apparently square and strong on a basis of decent actual equality" cannot be directly explained in reference to the hedonism of Hume, the Jacobinism of Rousseau or any other *ism* that sprang from the 'culture' of England. It was rather the outcome of a deeper view of life, which was tied to the revival of evangelical religion.[133] He argued

> The high function claimed for philosophy by Plato, Spinoza, or Hegel, seems ridiculous or blasphemous to an ordinary man, because he thinks of it as a mere intellectual exercise of this or that person's brain…Regarded, however, in their truth, in that fullness of their tendencies and relations which can be seen only in the history of thought, while religion is found constantly interpreting itself into philosophy through a middle stage of theology, philosophy on its part is seen to be the effort towards self-recognition of that spiritual life of the world, which fulfils itself in many ways but most completely in the Christian religion, and to be thus related to religion as the flower to the leaf.[134]

Thus, Green argued, Christianity, especially in the distinct rational it attained through Hegelian philosophy, offered the mind-set in which the particular (individual) had the means to identify himself with the universal (humanity.)[135] An essential point to

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[131] Green, 300.

[132] Green, 321.

[133] Thomas Hill Green, "Popular Philosophy in Its Relation to Life," in *Miscellanies and Memoir*, ed. R. L. Nettleship, vol. III, Works of Thomas Hill Green (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1888), 117.

[134] Green, 120.

[135] Green, *Works: V. 5 Additional Writings*, 182.

remember is that for Green it was not the established church and theology of Christianity that distinguished Christian nations from others in terms of their moral advancement.[136] On the contrary, a singular interest in such dogmatic forms of Christianity tended to overshadow the 'living stream of Christian experience,' which supplied the bases for Christian citizenship.[137] The essential moral significance of Jesus was based on the fact that he as a historical and eternal figure represented the unity of the divine with nature and humanity and in so doing set forth the ideal of Christian life and citizenship.[138] In other words, it was the example of Jesus who embodied the capacity of mankind for moral progress and perfection that set Christian citizens' duty to strive towards that ideal in his own life both as an individual and as a part of the social whole. Such a consciousness of unity of the individual with the universal distinguished the Christian citizen and constituted the basic premises which European communities were founded upon.

Thus, Green's emphasis on the centrality of Christendom in European civilization was not based on a prejudice towards other religions. Rather, he perceived an intrinsic link between Christian creed and the way European civilization evolved to surpass other civilizations. Based on his singular interest in Britain's position vis a vis the Russo-Turkish animosity in the 1870s, it would not be wrong to designate the Turkish Empire as an anti-thesis of European values in Green's mind. In a number of speeches he delivered, Green was highly critical of the possibility of England being "enlisted in a foolish war with Russia in defence of some imaginary British interests, but really on behalf of this Turkish despotism, which was a scandal to humanity."[139] Although Russia itself was despotically governed by the absolute coercive power of the Czar and the habitual obedience of its people, it was still possible to call it a state.[140]

Colin Tyler, ed., *Unpublished Manuscripts in British Idealism: Political Philosophy, Theology and Social Thought*, 2 edition (Imprint Academic, 2008), 6.

[136] See T. Gouldstone, *The Rise and Decline of Anglican Idealism in the Nineteenth Century*, 1st ed. 2005 edition (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). for a detailed account of Green's Anglican Idealism.

[137] Nettleship, *Miscellanies and Memoir*, III:170.

[138] Nettleship, III:xxxviii.

[139] Green, *Works: V. 5 Additional Writings*, 302.

[140] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 67.

Whereas it was not possible to classify Turkish Empire as a state as long as it was merely a power "which denies the simplest personal rights to the greater part of its subjects."[141] And, although Russia itself was counted as a state "by a sort of courtesy on the supposition that the power of the Czar… is so far exercised in accordance with a recognised tradition of what the public good requires as to be on the whole a sustainer of rights,"[142] it was not on the same level of despotism with the Turk. According to Green, Russia was in a process of change and progress, which was exemplified in the emancipation of 40,000,000 serfs 15 years ago. Furthermore, Green argued, it was not only the strategic interests that led Russia to pursue hostility towards the Turk, it was also the demise of the Christian population who lived under their dictatorship.[143] Green did not made any direct inference regarding Russia's relative superiority to Turks in terms of meeting the standards of statehood and the fact that it was a Christian nation. Yet, he made references to the demise of Christian minorities who lived under Turkish despotism. He was particularly concerned about Bulgarians' treatment by the Turk in 1876.[144]

Although he maintained his objectivity towards historical phenomenon, which brought both Turkish despotism and European civilisation into being, he did not ignore that these two specific social and political organisations represented different stages of civilization. Europe itself was still not a thoroughly organised political life, but the Turkish despotism was far from being such a political unity as it denied "the simplest personal rights to the greater part of its subjects."[145] Thus, for Green it was England's responsibility to ignore its selfish interests in the region –weakening Russian power- and to offer support to the rising nations of Eastern Europe against a despotic empire. Green did not perceive this duty simply as one based on Christian brotherhood but as a service to the interests of mankind.[146] The honour and interests of England required the country to stand against a despotic power that continually

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[141] Green, *Works: V. 5 Additional Writings*, 319.

[142] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 99.

[143] Green, 127.

[144] Colin Tyler, *Idealist Political Philosophy: Pluralism and Conflict in the Absolute Idealist Tradition* (A&C Black, 2008), 101.

[145] Green, *Works: V. 5 Additional Writings*, 319.

[146] Green, 319.

violated the rights of its defenceless citizens. He voiced his disappointment when England rejected to act along with other European countries to coerce Turkey and argued that it was a compromise of national honour to leave newly rising Eastern European nations defenceless. Overall, what distinguished the European civilization from Turkish despotism was not a mere religious difference. Rather it was the way society was organized and positioned vis a vis the state. While in Europe states functioned as a means of maintaining and reconciling rights, in Turkish despotism, what was erroneously called a state was not a party to the system of political rights and duties. The relationship was more like the relationship between a slaveholder and his slaves and for similar reasons that prohibited him from considering a slaveholder as a political leader; the power resided over the Turkish despotism was not to be considered as a legitimate state.

Green's criticism of the Turkish Empire was primarily based on the arbitrary authority it hold over its minorities without representing their will. Following Maine's classification of empires, Green argued that there was a categorical difference between the modern empires of the East and the British tenure of India.[147] The Eastern empires were tax-collecting empires that used a most violent form of coercive power without administering or maintaining the customary law of its population. Under such circumstances such an empire remained to be an arbitrary sovereign whose only relation with the populations under its control was in regards of collecting taxes and sometimes recruiting soldiers.[148] To the extent that its 'sovereignty' was based on pure coercive power without any representation of the general will of the peoples it ruled, it was to be considered as a despotic entity. The other category of imperial rule was a law-giving or rule maintaining empire. This category was exemplified by the Roman Empire in history and its legitimacy was based on the support of the general will. Although such empires did not necessarily employ a representative body, they were "firmly grounded on the good-will of the subjects,"

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[147] D. G. Ritchie, review of *Review of Lectures on the Bases of Religious Belief*, by Charles B. Upton, *International Journal of Ethics* 5, no. 3 (1895): 99.

[148] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1895), 100.

and the subjects had a strong interest in the maintenance of the imperial order.[149] Such difference in the relation between the ruling power and its subjects constituted the grounds on which a tax-collecting empire was distinguished from a law-giving/maintaining empire.

Following his discussion on types of empires, Green maintained, British tenure in India was a middle-case between a tax-collecting and a law-giving/maintaining empire. The English government was a law-giving power in India only to a very limited extent; its main role was maintenance of the customary law of the Indian people. Green argued, English government's presentation of itself not only as a tax-collecting military power but also as the maintainer of the customary law, invoked in the Indian people a 'habitual obedience' to its rule.[150] So far as the English government used its coercive power to maintain the customary law, its power was not to be considered illegitimate. Customary law was an expression of the Indian people's general will, and the English government was serving the realization of that general will.  Green perceived the law, like many other Victorian intellectuals, "as a gift that England could bestow on other nations at lower rungs in the hierarchy of civilisations."[151] So long as the imperial government was receptive of the demands of the colonized peoples, Green perceived this paternalistic relation as morally acceptable.

For Green, the British Empire was not a 'scandal to humanity' like the Turkish Empire was. It was categorically different from the Eastern despotism whose modern embodiment was the Turkish rule over Eastern European nations. The British Empire was a law-maintainer empire, which, at least to a certain extent, represented the will of the peoples it ruled over. Yet, even such an empire was not righteous enough to escape Green's moral criticism.[152] In his memoir written by Nettleship, it was noted

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[149] Green, 101.

[150] Green, 101.

[151] Duncan Bell, *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 92.

[152] See Duncan Bell and Casper Sylvest, "International Society in Victorian Political Thought: T. H. Green, Herbert Spencer and Henry Sidgwick," in *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and*

that Green constantly expressed his contempt for "so called 'national-honour' and imperial greatness."[153] It was not necessarily the rule of foreigners over an inferior population that earned Green's contempt for empires. Such a political organization was indicative of a certain kind of patriotism, a patriotism dominated by a 'special military sense.' And surely, that kind of patriotism was not marked by the "temper of the citizen dealing with fellow-citizens, or with men who are themselves citizens of their several states."[154] Such militarist nationalism shared its roots with tribalism that was based on the rule of feudal chiefs or the rule of privileged classes that was 'ultimately' based on force.[155] But, apart from the non-ideal form of rule the inferior populations were subjected to under imperialism, such an international order also prevented 'European mankind' from organizing itself thoroughly into a legitimate political order.

According to Green, militant patriotism that prevailed in Europe both hampered the development of moral and civic national unity in European states and prevented establishment of a peaceful international order. Green, in his *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* identified five primary causes that required European states to maintain standing armies, and thus, barred the establishment of a peaceful international order among states that are organized around a principle of civic nationalism. Two out of these five causes were directly related to the existence of Empires, be it they were tax-collecting Eastern empires or the British "tenure of a great Indian Empire."[156] Such an international order was prone to turn Europe into 'a great camp' for two specific reasons. Existence of empires that were not based on citizenship or *civitas* in close proximity to European states posed a constant threat of violence especially towards the newly arising Eastern European nations. Existence of

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*Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 237–65. for an account of Green's approach to imperialism.

[153] Richard Lewis Nettleship and Charlotte Byron Symonds Green, *Memoir of Thomas Hill Green, Late Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, and Whyte's Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford,* (London, New York : Longmans, Green, 1906), 17, http://archive.org/details/memoirofthomashi00nettiala.

[154] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 176.

[155] Green, 176.

[156] Green, 177.

European Empires, on the other hand, bestowed a military character upon these states that did not originally belong to their nature and brought them into hostile relations with their counterparts.[157] Green thought the unprecedentedly large standing armies of the European States were not to be considered as a sign of their success in national organisation, but as an indicator of their failure in realising a civic form of nationalism.

Green perceived animosity among nations as a sign of their 'incomplete fulfilment of their function.'[158] According to him, until European societies were organized under nation-states, wars were the outcome of dynasties' ambitions. As national consciousness gradually emerged in those societies, ambitions of the few left its place to national vanities and jealousies as causes of war. Still the underlying understanding was the same: the delusion that 'the gain of one nation must mean the loss of another.'[159] Based on this erroneous understanding nations continued to strive to exclude others from its markets and to appear stronger than their rivals. Continuance of such rivalry amongst states did not mean, however, that the international arena was inherently a state of war. Green argued that it was still the ambitions of a few–the privileged class this time- that "spreads the belief that the interest of the state lies in some extension without, not in an improvement of organisation within."[160] Green foresaw that as nations developed a moral system of rights and duties within their own territories grounds for such animosity would vanish. In his *Lectures* he pointed out that "… so far as the perfect organization of rights within each nation, which entitles it to be called a state, is attained, the occasions of conflict between nations disappear…"[161] As nations realised in time, that no particular or universal good was realised through unfair treatment of other nations, they would develop a 'passionless impartiality' in their dealings with each other.[162] In regards to few cases where two or more nations' jealousies lead to conflict, there would always be third parties that would act as mediators. Furthermore, Green held the vision of an international court

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[157] Green, 177.

[158] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 128.

[159] Green, 123.

[160] Green, 127.

[161] Green, 131.

[162] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 179.

as a distant yet realistic goal that would serve the establishment of a moral international order. He argued

> with the abatement of national jealousies and the removal of those deeply seated causes of war which, as we have seen, are connected with the deficient organisation of states, the dream of an international court with authority resting on the consent of independent states may come to be realised. Such a result may be very remote, but it is important to bear in mind that there is nothing in the intrinsic nature of a system of independent states incompatible with it, but that on the contrary every advance in the organisation of mankind into states in the sense explained is a step towards it.[163]

Due to his philosophical dedication to the idea of progress, Green did not dismiss the idea of an international court as an unrealistic vision but as a logical stage in humanity's moral development. He argued, if the human capability for co-operation was not repressed by social classification and separation, it would enable individuals to recognise every other human being as an equal right-bearer. From such a perspective, he stated "… if the dutiful disposition must thus gain rather than lose in strength from the enlightenment before which the exclusive dependence of moral claims on relations of family, status, or citizenship disappears, it would seem that with this disappearance its effect in furthering the social realisation of human capabilities must greatly increase.[164] Evidently, such development of moral capacities was not expected to occur at the individual level. On the contrary, it was dependent on the communal consciousness of nations regarding the unprofitability and more importantly immorality of "dealing unfairly with another nation."[165] As such consciousness would bring a freer intercourse between members of different nations both economically and socially, it would enhance in due time a sense of social unity with the whole mankind. From such a perspective, Green held the hope that the scope

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[163] Green, 179.

[164] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 241.

[165] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 179.

of neighbourly relations would be extended to the whole world if selfish interests and practices such as slavery and war did not retard the natural progress of humanity.[166]

Although Green defended the view that at the root of every international animosity there was a moral wrong committed, for him it was meaningless to speculate how previous wrongs would have been prevented. For him it was rather "idle to speculate on other means by which the permanent pacification of India, or unification of Germany or liberation of Christians in European Turkey might have been brought about than those by which each result respectively has been brought about."[167] These were violations of rights that occurred due to the wickedness of men that could not have been superseded at a given time; "it was a condition of things which human wickedness, through traceable and untraceable channels, brought about."[168] The general tone of his discussion of the wrongs committed in history relates Green's hesitance to judge a certain era, nation, or individual to two interrelated concerns. His first concern directly relates to the idealist position towards morality, which takes it as a process of self-revelation rather than as a set of laws written in stone. To the extent that societies' realisation of morality was strictly dependent on the level of their practical experience and understanding in regards to the means and ends of their actions, it was pointless to judge and condemn an inferior level of morality with our current level of understanding. Secondly and perhaps more importantly, Green perceived human history not as a simple procession of causes and effects that can be easily discerned and classified, but as an overly complicated tangle of human desires, motivations, ideas, and actions. Thus, it was quite hard and sometimes impossible to pinpoint every single condition that led to a conflict or a war among states let alone locating the morally wrong party in such a conflict. Overall, Green perceived selfishness and moral wrong that stemmed from it as a shared future of humanity, and the moral wrongs committed by specific nations were only to be perceived as an actualization of such tendency to commit wrong in pursuance of selfish interests.

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[166] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 241.

[167] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 126.

[168] Green, 126.

There are a couple of points that can be discerned from the issues that are raised so far regarding Green's approach to humanity, imperialism, and international order. Firstly, Green perceived the condition of the international order at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, operated mostly in accordance with national vanities, jealousies, and rivalries as a result of human wickedness that was to be superseded in the future thanks to mankind's inherent morality. Aggression among states was not to be considered as the natural order of the international arena. On the contrary, it was a sign of humanity's failure in going beyond its "less worthy" desires and realising its 'higher' nature. As there was no natural limit to the number of people who can maintain moral relations with each other, a universal fellowship of humanity seemed to be the natural outcome of mankind's cooperative nature. Such universal sentiment was to be achieved as states were organised towards functioning in accordance with their moral end, which was protection and maintenance of their citizens' rights and duties. Green strongly believed that when states were efficiently organised towards realising their moral end, both economic and political relations amongst nations would be transformed in their nature from competition to cooperation. Secondly, Green maintained the belief that the inherent morality of mankind found its highest form of expression in Christianity, or in its restatement in Hegelian philosophy. It surely was not the complete manifestation of the Spirit on earth, yet it was the highest level of moral development humanity was able to achieve towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Green, called this moral sentiment towards self, family, country, and humanity 'Christian citizenship,' and it was this sentiment of moral duty to work towards personal and social progress engrafted in European civilisation that distinguished it from others. Spreading such a form of moral existence to other societies was not perceived to be problematic by Green, although he had serious misgivings about the use of colonisation for that end. Although Green did not place past atrocities beyond the reach of moral judgement, he argued that there was no point in speculating how it could have been done differently. He considered doing so a futile effort so far as it was almost impossible to take into account all the variables that lead to a certain outcome. Furthermore, Green found it 'unjust' to judge an inferior moral order from the vantage point of a higher one. Green identified pursuance of selfish interests at the individual or the national level as the main obstacle to moral development and the main reason of animosity in the international arena. The righteous response was to identify the elements of wickedness that led to them in the past and to strive to overcome them in the future.

## 2.3 Bernard Bosanquet

Bosanquet, the most well known British Idealists following Green and Bradley, rarely commented on the issue of imperialism or the nature and the future of the British Empire. Essentially, it was not until after the Great War that Bosanquet got truly interested in the issues of international relations or the idea of perpetual peace. He rarely dealt with questions of international relations in his masterpiece *The Philosophical Theory of the State* until he wrote an additional part to his "Introduction to Second Edition" in 1919. In 1909, when he originally wrote his second introduction, Bosanquet merely mentioned a movement towards a sentimental unity of mankind, especially effective in European civilisation. He stated " Europe is full today of the ethical and democratic demand for real progress, guided by the actual interests and emotions of mankind; for a future to be moulded by and for humanity,"[169] and moved onto a discussion of the fallacies of pragmatism that was on the rise in English academia. And in the original text of the book, published in 1899, it is possible to find a few pages from which one can vaguely discern his approach to the concept of humanity.

Bosanquet recognized the concept of humanity as an 'inescapable' level of unity which would have a place in any 'tolerably complete philosophical thinking.'[170] But, the following discussion on the matter of humanity's actual existence as a social unity reflected a high level of reservation on Bosanquet's part. Although humanity was necessarily a universal idea, its actuality was very much dubious because "according to the current ideas of our civilisation, a great part of the lives which are being lived and have been lived by mankind are not lives worth living, in the sense of embodying qualities for which life seems valuable to us."[171] In other words, Bosanquet thought, although every human being had the potential to be part of humanity, in actuality,

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[169] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, Fourth Edition (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1920), xl.

[170] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1899), 328.

[171] Bosanquet, 328.

their potential was realised only to a limited extent if it was realised at all. As there was this huge gap among nations in terms of developing a civilisation adequate for realising human potential, it was impossible to talk about a universal human experience or a general will of humanity.[172] Bosanquet recognized the plurality of human experiences in various communities, which developed different and sometimes contradictory moral systems. Yet he also maintained the idea that European civilisation was an adequate expression of human nature and it was superior to other forms of civilisation in which man led lives, which could not be considered fully human.

Like Green, Bosanquet argued that Christianity was the "complete and energetic conception of life which the growth of ages has developed as the civilisation of Christendom".[173] It was a combination of the Pagan virtues that it inherited from Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire such as temperance, courage, and justice, and genuinely Christian virtues of faith, hope, and charity, that made Christian morality superior.[174] For Bosanquet Christian civilisation was the highest step in the ladder of civilization against which other cultures were to be judged. In an article published in 1895, he argued that the savage religions reflected man's impulse to strive towards a civilized religion. Although they were quite inadequate embodiments of such a religion, they became meaningful in what they implied to the civilized man. He stated "But even the relics of genuine savagery, though nothing in themselves, become something to us as first stammering statements of the riddle which, comparatively speaking, we have read."[175] Thus, a considerable part of mankind could not be considered to be on an equal footing with the European man in terms of realizing their human potential. Yet it was of vital importance to bear in mind the fact that all those who were called man were different from animals to the extent that they carried the human potential to realise a better version of themselves. There was no essential

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[172] Bosanquet, 329.

[173] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Civilization of Christiendom and Other Essays*, ed. William Sweet, vol. 13, The Collected Works of Bernard Bosanquet (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1999), 99.

[174] Bernard Bosanquet, *Some Suggestions on Ethics*, ed. William Sweet, vol. 16 (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1999), 224–25.

[175] Bernard Bosanquet, "The Evolution of Religion," *International Journal of Ethics* 5, no. 4 (1895): 433.

difference between "Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, Mussulman and infidel, Christian and heathen…"[176] except the degree to which these civilisations enabled their members to reach their full potential. As the idea of man was not maintained with reference to its lowest common denominator but with a reference to the highest realisation of man's nature, humanity referred not to a brute enumeration of man but to an ideal unity that was to be actualised through man's self realisation.

A nuance Bosanquet introduced to the idealist discussion on 'levels' of civilization was a certain type of relativism regarding the value and effectiveness of civilizations. Clearly, he took the Christian/European civilisation in which he was raised, to be the highest type of civilisation realised by humanity to his day. Yet, he was aware that one's perception towards his own culture was very much dependent on the particular way he experienced and made sense of life. As early as 1899, he acknowledged "the probability that to every people its own life has seemed the crown of things, and the remainder of mankind only the remainder."[177] For Bosanquet, it was quite understandable that individuals' perception of the best possible life was shaped by the culture in which their personalities developed. It was for this reason "every people, as a rule, seems to find contentment in its own way of life."[178] Thus, he was aware of the possibility that his belief in the superiority of the European way of life was based on the particular way he evaluated 'the good' for humanity. So far as he was aware of this possible bias in his own understanding, he was reluctant to argue for an objective superiority of his own civilisation. On the contrary, he advised caution in regards to the 'general theory of progress' and argued that "one type of humanity cannot cover the whole ground of the possibilities of human nature."[179] By acknowledging the inherent plurality [180]of human experience, divided into different nations and civilisations, Bosanquet mildly warned his fellow idealists from committing to a goal of covering 'the whole ground of human nature.'

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[176] Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 1899, 330.

[177] Bosanquet, 331.

[178] Bosanquet, 332.

[179] Bosanquet, 332.

[180] Bosanquet, 332.

Still, Bosanquet did not offer a substantial criticism of imperialism or the British rule over its colonies. He noted the impossibility of forming a general will amongst peoples who do not share a common experience of life, but he did not challenge Britain's claim to rule over other civilisations. He argued in *the Philosophical Theory of the State* the relation between England and India was beneficial in demonstrating the common tissue that unites the whole humanity although there are various ways in which it finds a concrete shape in different communities. He wrote:

> Such a relation as that of England and India brings the matter home.
> Englishmen cannot make one effective self-governed community with the
> Indian populations. It would be misery and inefficiency to both sides. But
> our State can recognise the primary rights of humanity as determined in
> the life of its Indian subjects, and enforce or respect these rights, whether
> India be a dependency or an independent community.[181]

For Bosanquet, a close relation among various civilisations was beneficial not for unifying human experience across the globe but for introducing a common awareness and appreciation of the vast number of values each civilisation developed in their midst. Forming "a universal society including the entire human race" would have been possible only through such insemination of values spreading from each and every human community.[182] From such a perspective, he wrote in 1893 "In the future a real unity of all mankind must surely come to pass; and the task completed by each race or religion will then be appropriated by the others."[183] Yet, to his mind, Christendom as the Western races practiced it, offered something fundamental to humanity that others failed to offer: the belief in development.[184] Although he refrained himself from calling the civilisation of Christendom the highest or the best one, he argued it was something 'essentially different' from others. And this essential difference made the Western races 'history-making races of the world.'[185] This

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[181] Bosanquet, 330.

[182] Bosanquet, 330.

[183] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Civilization of Christendom, and Other Studies* (London : S. Sonnenschein; New York, Macmillan, 1893), 99, http://archive.org/details/civilizationofch00bosaiala.

[184] Bosanquet, 84.

[185] Bosanquet, 72.

quality, which was most clearly expressed in Christianity, was embodied in fine arts, science, politics, social action, and philosophy of the Western races.[186] Bosanquet did not advocate spreading these Western values to other cultures and civilisation by means of colonising them as he thought an organic process of value insemination was preferable. Still, he maintained that it was legitimate to claim ones own civilisation to be the best, at least, until it was possible to talk about a state of mind that is common to whole humanity. He argued,

> the respect of States and individuals for humanity is then, after all, in its essence, a duty to maintain a type of life, not general, but the best we know, which we call the most human, and in accordance with it to recognise and deal with the rights of alien individuals and communities. This conception is opposed to the treatment of all individual human beings as members of an identical community having identical capacities and rights.[187]

Bosanquet's position regarding particular civilisations' relation to humanity as a whole neither justified nor condemned imperialism as a means for the development of mankind. Yet, the fact that human experience was particularized in each and every society and that an unforced form of acquaintance with other civilisation was preferable in forming a common understanding of humanity was an essential point in Bosanquet's argumentation. Though he did not openly reject imperialism's use in the common progress of humanity, it would be fair to argue he preferred a unity of societies around the common values of humanity that was enriched by every society's particular contributions. Maintaining these particular experiences was necessarily threatened by the efforts to spread a certain form of civilization by force. His sentence "the recognition of human rights through communities founded on organic unity of experience may be compared in just these terms to the idea of a universal society including the entire human race," can be taken as a precursor of how Idealists' approached this issue in the post-Great War Britain.

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186 Bosanquet, 72.

187 Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 1899, 331.

The reading of Bosanquet's work on international order and imperialism prior to the Great War suggests not a deviation from Green's position but an improvement of it. Both Green and Bosanquet perceived a tendency in human nature to move towards greater and greater unity that would only end in the unity of mankind. For Green it was a unity of sentiment that would abolish the difference between my neighbour whom I personally know and a human being who lives on the other side of the world, and I do not have a reasonable chance to meet. He thought, the difference between civilizations seemed to be more of a matter of degree than being a particular expression of the human nature. As each state and the nation that formed it cleansed itself from its jealousies and prejudices, Green believed, a cooperative international order would emerge as the basis of the moral and sentimental unity of societies. What Bosanquet added to Green's vision of such an international cooperation was the importance of particular values that was to be added by each culture to humanity as a whole. While Green attached great importance to the shared moral potential of humanity, Bosanquet attributed an equal amount of value to the particular ways each society realised that potential. Yet, such a difference in emphasis did not result in a fundamental discrepancy in the way they perceived the nature or the future of international order or humanity as a whole. Both Green and Bosanquet perceived a 'better' expression of human potential in the civilization of Christendom, they perceived war as a result of individuals' or communities' failure in living up to their moral potential, and they shared, at least, a distrust in the imperial agenda of ruling other nations as a means for humanities' overall progress.

## 2.4 F. H. Bradley

Francis Herbert Bradley, who has the reputation of being the best metaphysician among the British Idealists, was a solitary figure whose work had a great impact on British Idealists. Bosanquet stated that one of the two most influential works on the development of his philosophical thinking was Bradley's *Ethical Studies,*[188] and Muirhead stated that Bradley was "undoubtedly the pioneer in the new development

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[188] Bernard Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals: Being Studies in Patriotism* (London: Macmillan, 1917), 33.

of idealistic philosophy."[189] Bradley was Green's student in Balliol College, Oxford and along side Bosanquet and Nettleship, he was one of the first converts to Idealism.[190] Yet his Idealism is often distinguished from other British Idealists' as he was "far more conservative… very different from the moral zeal apparent in the others."[191] Younger Idealists such as Jones and Mackenzie criticized his work due to his rather harsh restatement of Hegelian metaphysics.[192] Without going into a detailed overview of Bradley's metaphysics, it would suffice to say that Bradley tended to tip the balance between the particular and the Absolute in favour of the Absolute, and this tendency often led him to focus on the perfect revelation of the Absolute and overlook the importance of the dialectical process of development that led to it. Mackenzie perceived such a tendency in Bradley's perception of Reality and argued, "With Mr. Bradley… the process appears to be non-essential, and the self-contradiction is merely something to be got rid of. Mr. Bradley's view, in fact, approximated to that of Spinoza."[193] It was and still a common criticism of idealism that it favours the universal over the particular, and it leads to a partial blindness towards the sufferings of the individual as long as it serves the communal. Such criticism does not hold ground against those British Idealists who perceives a mutual dependence of the particular and the universal, or the individual and the communal. Yet Bradley's position can be distinguished from such idealists to the extent that he overlooked the morality of the process through which progress is achieved as long as it served humanity to approximate to the Absolute. The main difference between his position and that of other British Idealists' regarding imperialism in general and the Boer war in particular seems to originate from such a fractionation in their metaphysics. Bradley's emphasis on the Absolute was reflected in his devoted support

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[189] John H. Muirhead, *John Henry Muirhead;: Reflections by a Journeyman in Philosophy on the Movements of Thought and Practice in His Time,* (G. Allen & Unwin, 1942), 102.

[190] Melvin Richter, *The Politics of Conscience;: T.H.Green and His Age* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), 14.

[191] John Bowle, *Politics and Opinion in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1954), 275.

[192] J. S. Mackenzie, "Mr. Bradley's View of the Self," *Mind* 3, no. 11 (1894): 334.

Henry Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1910), 70.

[193] J. S. Mackenzie, review of *Review of Appearance and Reality*, by F. H. Bradley, *International Journal of Ethics* 4, no. 2 (1894): 247.

of the Empire and his belief in the vitality of its success for the progress of humanity during the Boer War.

Bradley's article *The Limits of Individual and National Self-Sacrifice* was published in 1894. It was a provocative piece, which harshly criticized humanitarian sentimentalism in national and international politics and offered instead to employ all means necessary for the progress of humanity. According to Bradley, humanitarian sentimentalism was "inconsistent, deficient, and in part downright false."[194] It was false because it was based on the false assumption that all men had equal value, that all men should be governed by law, that all men have equal rights. It was a doctrine of 'universal love and self-sacrifice' that originated from an erroneous combination of Christianity and nationalism.[195] Bradley argued that the claim for the unconditional equality of all men was related to a perception of the universe without a moral end. Yet, for Bradley there was an end towards which history was unfolding. Thus, he said "when there is an end and a worth in this world men become unequal, for they must realize the end in different degrees." From his perspective the worth of each man was to be decided by his contribution to the progress towards the end. Of course it was desirable that all men contribute equally to humanity's progress but that was not the situation. When he applied this principle to national politics, Bradley came up with a way to determine when self-sacrifice was necessary and when it was not. According to him, self-sacrifice was necessary and moral when the individual gave up his own existence for the betterment of something that was worth more and it was wrong and sometimes immoral if he sacrificed it for something worth less.[196] For instance, according to Bradley, 'abolishing the existence' of criminals within a country would be morally right for the betterment of the society.[197] After all, they could not be considered as valuable members of the society who contribute to its progress, and their elimination would contribute to the general well being of the society.

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[194] F. H. Bradley, "The Limits of Individual and National Self-Sacrifice," *International Journal of Ethics* 5, no. 1 (1894): 19.

[195] Bradley, 19.

[196] Bradley, 17.

[197] Bradley, 20.

It can be argued that Bradley's fixation with the primacy of the Absolute was reinforced by the quite popular discussions on eugenics in social and political matters. In another article he published the same year, he discussed the merits of Darwinism in its application to society. For Bradley society was an organic whole, and individuals were its parts that can be discarded if they were deemed to be harmful to the whole.[198] He argued there was nothing to be set "against the unlimited right of the moral organism to dispose of its members…" nothing but superstition and prejudice.[199] Mutual assistance and cooperative action were also tools of evolution and they superseded competition as a means of progress only in most developed organisms. So far as society was such a developed form of organism social evolution would be sustained through benevolence, charity and mercy. But such principles of cooperation were not absolute, they were dependent on the conditions and they were only "secondary and subject to the general end."[200] When the general end required it, 'ethical surgery' was the most benevolent form of action. For Bradley, a very simple question was to be asked to determine morality of 'ethical surgery': "on which side lies the balance of harm?"[201] For instance, in the case of the drunkard or the lunatic, Bradley argued, violating their rights was not a great source of harm to the society. Yet letting them stunt the societal progress under the disguise of respecting their rights was harmful to the overall organism. Quite passionately, he stated, "I am disgusted at the inviolable sanctity of the noxious lunatic. The right of the individual to spawn without restriction his diseased offspring to the community, the duty of the state to rear wholesale and without limit an unselected progeny- such duties and rights are to my mind a sheer outrage on Providence."[202] Bradley, in his discussion of the individual self-sacrifice perceived morality as a variational set of rules whose content was to be determined only in reference to the end it served and not to the means it employed. The importance he attributed to the communal was merged with the Darwinian metaphor of the social organism and gave rise to a line of thinking that would legitimate any treatment of the individual as long as it supposedly served the

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[198] F. H. Bradley, "Some Remarks on Punishment," *International Journal of Ethics* 4, no. 3 (1894): 272.

[199] Bradley, 276.

[200] Bradley, 280.

[201] Bradley, 282.

[202] Bradley, 283.

interests of the society. It was H. Rashdall who pointed out the discrepancies between what Bradley claimed to be acceptable treatment of individuals for the betterment of the organic whole in his *Some Remarks on Punishment* and his discussion on punishment that condemned inflicting pain or loss on individuals as long as it was not for their own benefit, i.e., moral desert.[203] Although Rashdall's original criticism was directed at the 'intuitionalist' line of argument Bradley used in his *Ethical Studies,* Rashdall was equally disturbed by Bradley's remarks on 'extinguishing' people "for the good of the organism."[204] His was the only published review of Bradley's 'Some Remarks on Punishment' and it concluded, "at present I can only say that the theory which I criticised is now withdrawn, and that the theory which is to take place is a very different one, and has not been adequately expounded."[205] Lack of future reflection on the matter by Bradley, however, left Rashdall claim of 'withdrawal' unsubstantiated.

We can pretty much discern Bradley's approach to international relations and imperialism if we replace the terms society with humanity and individual with nations in his arguments regarding the social whole. The formula was the same: "the end is general perfection, and for this end, certainly, self-sacrifice may be required."[206] The principle of absolute equality and equal rights was erroneous in its application to individuals as well as in its application to nations. Actually it was even more erroneous in its application to nations according to Bradley. In a community, individuals might have similar rights and duties, as they would perceive each other as partakers of the same ideas and values. Thus, when the necessity occurred he would willingly sacrifice himself so that his "life survives in the whole, and that the common spirit gains" by it.[207] The same principle could not be applied to nations, to the extent that they remained alien races and embodiments of alien ideas to each other. As there was not a higher unity for which self-sacrifice would be morally legitimate, each state was responsible for protecting its own existence, sometimes at the expense of others.

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[203] H. Rashdall, "Mr. Bradley on Punishment. An Explanation," *International Journal of Ethics* 5, no. 2 (1895): 242.

[204] Rashdall, 242.

[205] Rashdall, 243.

[206] Bradley, "The Limits of Individual and National Self-Sacrifice," 24.

[207] Bradley, 22.

Another difference between the individual and the nation revealed itself in the lack of an executive authority in the international arena. A community, being an organized whole, developed institutions that has the authority to decide the morality of eliminating a drunkard or preventing him from having children. Such decisions would be based on law and they would be supported by force if and when it became necessary. Yet there was not an international sovereign and there might never be one. In this lack of authority, Bradley argued, it was the responsibility of the powerful nations to act on their best judgements. For the realization of the end, i.e., 'the development of human nature' nations who had the force were justified in exterminating or 'making any use of both men and nations' when they judge such course of action necessary. Bradley was aware that such an argument could be used to justify almost anything and it would turn out to be harmful for the development of humanity. Still, he argued that it was important to realize in some cases individuals and/or nations would be not only justified but morally bound to take such extreme measures for the attainment of the end. He summarized his point as follows:

> Leaving… abstract considerations, if we take the case of criminals within and savages without the community, it surely may be right to abolish their existence. The principle we act on no doubt can be misused by the immoral. It can furnish a pretext for blind persecution or selfish aggrandizement. And the progress of humanity being furthered by the diversity of its elements, it is desirable in general that individuals should develop their natures. And this shows a presumption against the extinction or hindrance of man or nation. But it does not prove that in some cases we are not morally bound to accomplish it.[208]

Bradley's deviation from the mainstream Idealist position regarding international relations and imperialism seems contradictory to the general perception that places him in the camp of absolutist idealists along with Bernard Bosanquet. Being absolutist idealists, both of them are expected to attribute greater importance to the whole rather than its parts and thus favour the state above the individual and the moral end above

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[208] F. H. Bradley, "The Limits of Individual and National Self-Sacrifice," *International Journal of Ethics* 5, no. 1 (1894): 20.

the means that leads to it. Yet, their divergence in quite a central issue of politics such as imperialism and the Boer War points to a deeper differentiation in their metaphysical and philosophical positions. Such a difference was recognized by Muirhead in his old age as in 1942 he wrote "With all their theoretic agreement there was certainly a deep-seated difference of temperament which, I have elsewhere suggested might be indifferently described as that between rationalistic and mystic, radical and conservative, simple and complex, classic and romantic, and which manifested itself in their attitude to some of the practical problems of daily life in politics and religion."[209] This deep-seated difference revealed itself in their approach to international order quite sharply as Bosanquet attributed great importance to the particularities of every culture that contributes to the progress towards humanity and Bradley attributed great importance to humanity as an absolute end to be achieved through whatever means necessary. A curious lack of response to Bradley's provocative remarks on international order can only be explained by his professed personal isolation from intellectual circles or his manifest authority as a supreme metaphysician.

## 2.5 D. G. Ritchie

It was David George Ritchie, a Student of Green's, an ex-Fabian, and one of the British Idealists who tried to reconcile idealism and evolutionary theory, who adopted an approach similar to Bradley's and applied it to the context of the Boer War. His case can be considered to be of a more curious nature, as his emphasis regarding state's rights on the individual was not on state's capacity to exterminate or punish the criminal, the drunkard and the lunatic.  On the contrary he put much emphasis on state's duty to educate the children, treat the sick, and aid the poor for their own betterment as well as for the betterment of the social organism. In his "Natural Rights," Ritchie argued against the natural right theorists and Spencerian evolutionists regarding the basis of rights and duties. Like Bradley, he utilized the metaphor of the body while commenting on the nature of the relation between the individual and society. He argued that society like a healthy body was established on the pursuance

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[209] John H. Muirhead, *John Henry Muirhead;: Reflections by a Journeyman in Philosophy on the Movements of Thought and Practice in His Time,* (G. Allen & Unwin, 1942), 102.

of the common good and the common good could not be thought apart from the good of all the parts that constituted the whole. But unlike Bradley, he seldom dealt with the harm wicked individuals inflicted on the society. He was much more interested in the social causes that led to the emergence of such wicked individuals. Ritchie was highly critical of the way Spencer adopted evolutionary theory to social matter, especially due to the emphasis he put on the necessity of natural selection. According to him natural selection was present in the British society, especially among the poor. But it was not an effective way of pursuing the common good of the society as it meant permanently injuring a certain part of the body while giving free reign to another. Regarding the argument that free education would stale national development by preventing natural selection, he noted that "this argument contains a certain element of fallacy: for anything that helped to give the new generation a lift up in respect of proper nourishment, intelligence, and standard of comfort, might do more than counterbalance any weakening…"[210] Still, as Collini notes "he was probably more sympathetic than any other Idealist to some kind of evolutionary science of society," and it reflected on his approach to international relations.[211]

In a book chapter published in 1883, Ritchie ended his piece by expressing his hope for the recognition of an international law based on international morality. According to him the order of the world made the existence of independent nations necessary, yet their interrelation were to be developed further in time. His last sentence was "In any case we must recognise that the civilisation of the world is not now entrusted, as of old, to one keeper only; and history should teach us that no nation has the right to say, 'Surely we are the people: and wisdom will die with us.'"[212] In this statement resonated Bosanquet's emphasis on the value of each particular civilisation and undesirability of creating a monolithic humanity. Yet in another article published in 1891, after dealing at length with the possibility of a complementary relation between national sovereignty and international law, he applied the principle of natural

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[210] David George Ritchie, *Natural Rights : A Criticism of Some Political and Ethical Conceptions* (London : Swan Sonnenschein, 1903), 131.

[211] Stefan Collini, "Sociology and Idealism in Britain 1880–1920," *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 19, no. 1 (May 1978): 15.

[212] David George Ritchie, "The Rationality of History," in *Essays in Philosophical Criticism*, ed. R. B. Haldane and Andrew Seth (New York: Burt Franklin, 1883), 158.

selection to nations. He argued in that article, international law was not –at least yet-
*Lex* but *Jus* as the community of nations was merely an idea. It had the potential to
turn itself into *Lex* when international order emerged from its pre-political state of
existence. In its pre-political form, the community of nations had "no legal or political
existence. But it is an idea, and as such it forms the basis of international law."[213] In
this pre-political yet closely-knit international order every nation was responsible to
the future of humanity and to other nations. At this point, instead of making emphasis
on the necessity of cooperation among nations, Ritchie preferred to make emphasis on
the 'sanctions' that waited a nation when it failed to live up to its responsibilities.
According to Ritchie –and in parallel to Bradley's argumentation- the sanction for a
nation that failed to serve the progress of humanity was death. It was "the penalty of
perishing by internal dissensions or by the foreign conquest."[214] When it is considered
in relation with the fact that almost all British Idealists, including Ritchie, took
internal dissension as a natural outcome of a non-functional political system,
inclusion of foreign conquest in the list of sanctions becomes more meaningful. From
his perspective, although the international order was not merely a "state of war"
anymore, foreign conquest was a natural outcome when a nation was not strong
enough to ensure its existence. Ritchie ended his discussion with a reference to
"natural selection" which he did not find fit to apply to the internal dynamics of a
society: "Natural selection determines in the last resort which nations shall survive,
what groupings of mankind are most vigorous, and what organisations are most
successful."[215] Although Ritchie perceived the international order as something more
than a "state of war" with a law that is to be considered as *Jus* if not *Lex,* it was the
vigorousness of the nations that ensured their survival. Yet his identification of
vigorousness as the condition of a nation's survival brought with it the possibility of
submerging into a militarist form of nationalism that Green warned about in his
discussion of imperialism.

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[213] David G. Ritchie, "On the Conception of Sovereignty," *The Annals of the American Academy of
Political and Social Science* 1 (1891): 262.

[214] Ritchie, 263.

[215] Ritchie, 263.

Ritchie's oscillation between the ideal of international law based on international morality and the conception of international order functioning through "natural selection" came to an end with the start of the Boer War. Starting from 1900, he wrote several articles on South African War. Most of these articles were meant to serve as answers to John Atkinson Hobson's criticism of the British Empire and its materialistic passions that led to war in South Africa. Hobson was a journalist who spent several months in South Africa during the summer and autumn of 1899 and closely watched the political environment in Transvaal and Cape Colony.[216] His writings had a great impact on the pro-Boer sentiment in Britain during the war as he argued that English men was fighting in South Africa not to serve humanity but "to place a small oligarchy of mine-owners and speculators in power at Pretoria."[217] According to Hobson the war was brought about by a handful of mine owners and it was made popular by a kept press in Britain. The argument that the British were trying to free the 'Kaffir' from Dutch oppression was not reflective of reality. It was only the Christian missionary who had a "view of the native, as a man and a brother with a soul and body of his own and a right to determine his own destiny."[218] But such a perception of the native races was not popular among British settlers any more than it was popular among their Dutch counterparts. The humanitarian argument was a cover for the capitalistic passions of the white races in South Africa. It was so not only in the case of South Africa but in all the lands British Empire seized control. The real driving force behind the Empire, Hobson argued, was "the organized influences of certain professional and commercial classes which have certain definite economic advantages to gain by assuming this pseudo-patriotic cloak."[219]

From Ritchie's perspective freeing South African colonies from the inferior ways of Dutch administration and production was a service to humanity as well as a natural outcome of the Dutch civilization's inferiority. He argued that British Empire was "a far healthier 'organ of humanity' than the independent domination of a backward

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[216] J. A. Hobson, *The War in South Africa: Its Causes and Effects* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1900).

[217] Hobson, 197.

[218] Hobson, 283.

[219] John Atkinson Hobson, *Capitalism and Imperialism in South Africa* (New York: The Tucker Publishing Co., 1900), 28.

race."[220] Thus, the moral responsibility in South Africa rested on Mr. Kruger and his friends; they were not to stand on the way of Great Britain "for the future of democracy and for the growth of the idea of Federation –the only means of diminishing wars in the world and of securing peace."[221] Against this argument Hobson's position was clear, a single nation was not authorized to judge the efficiency of other nations and act on its own judgment of the matter. Such an action would only be ethical if and when an International Court as representative of the general will of nations deemed it inevitable. When such an authority was absent, only the 'clearest evidence of necessity' would force a nation to take arms against another nation. [222] Against Ritchie's claims that widening the British Empire was the best course of action to reach a World Federation, Hobson argued that Imperialism by breaking the nationalistic spirit of small peoples was destroying "the means of attaining in the future that solid federation of civilized peoples which is the only hopeful security against the recrudescence of barbarism in the shape of war."[223] It seems rather surprising that, it is Hobson who is a critique of Bosanquet's philosophical work and not Ritchie who approximates to Green's and Bosanquet's position on the importance of creating a sentimental unity among nations through a moral process of unification rather than military action.

There is fair ground to argue that Ritchie's unshakable belief in the righteousness of the British Empire in the South African conflict and its leading role on the way to a World Federation, led him to move away from British Idealists' position on key matters. For the British Idealists, war was always a sign of states' incomplete fulfilment of their function, a sign that there was a defect in the way they were maintained. [224] They all perceived that there was always a moral wrong committed in the act of war although it was not always possible to pinpoint the party or the parties in the wrong. In his reflections on the Boer War and especially in his replies to Hobson, Ritchie distanced himself from this position considerably. In his comment on

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[220] D. G. Ritchie, "The South African War," *The Ethical World*, February 3, 1900, 71.

[221] D. G. Ritchie, "Another View of the South African War," *The Ethical World*, January 13, 1900, 20.

[222] J. A. Hobson, "Socialistic Imperialism," *International Journal of Ethics* 12 (1902): 48.

[223] Hobson, 55.

[224] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 1999), 131.

Hobson's *The War in South Africa,* Ritchie asked "Mr. Hobson thinks federations can only arise in peace and from within. Has any federation in the history of the world, except the still incomplete Australian federation, ever come into existence save through the shock of war, or been composed of members none of whom have ever fought against each other?"[225] He argued that war was better than a 'long period of scheming' as it had a constant cleansing effect. From such a perspective he was thankful to Mr. Krueger whose ultimatum had ended the possibility of further Conventions and made war inevitable in South Africa. Ritchie had increased hope in the future of the empire as he expected that after an arduous struggle, The British Empire would found a unified South Africa under British rule. Ritchie's comments as the war progressed became more forceful in its support of war as a means of progress. In another article published in September 1900, he wrote "the 'soul' that 'goes marching on' is not the spirit of state-rights and of a narrow local and racial 'independence,' but the spirit of progress and consolidation asserting itself, where necessary, by blood and iron."[226] The internationalist sentiment that dominated the intellectual mind only 15 years later both in Britain and the world proved Ritchie's forecast that the 'soul of time' necessitated foundation of Empires rather than ensuring national independence quite groundless.

By 1901, Ritchie also changed his mind about the international order being something more than a state of nature. In *The Moral Problems of War,* he argued "nations are to one another in the same position as individuals who have no state over them."[227] As they were in a state of nature there was no moral order by which to pass judgement on individual nations' actions. The only criterion was –in a similar fashion to Bradley's point- whether a specific action was serving the good of humanity through taking humanity closer to the ideal of a world federation. With a reference to Hebrew prophets' Divine Justice and Hegel's motto that "the real is rational," he argued that the rise and fall of nations was part of a larger movement, which we cannot discern

[225] D. G. Ritchie, *Collected Works of D. G. Ritchie V.6: Miscellaneous Writings*, ed. Peter P. Nicholson, vol. VI (Bristol, 1998), 146.

[226] Ritchie, VI:213.

[227] D. G. Ritchie, "The Moral Problems of War-in Reply to Mr. J. M. Robertson," *International Journal of Ethics* 11, no. 4 (1901): 495.

through our limited understanding.[228] Thus, he stated, "I do not think we are entitled to pronounce on the right and wrong of particular wars in the light of abstract and arbitrary intuitionalist."[229] According to Ritchie it was necessary to recognize wars as a 'harsh form of dialectic' or as a 'rough means of solving hard problems.'[230] War, after all, was sometimes the only means of effective action against reactionary and antiquated types of rule. Regarding the acquisition of lands that were already inhabited by 'lower races,' Ritchie defended the motives of the European civilization which he identified as "to suppress the slave trade, and to defend fellow-citizens."[231]According to Ritchie, the lower races were already living under the tyranny of African despots, and although such acquisition usually brought with it some harshness and ill treatment of the natives, it also created considerable problems for the Empire. Ritchie maintained that the abstract principles of national sovereignty and non-intervention sounded nice, but they were not tenable maxims in international arena.

In *War and Peace,* Ritchie's ideal international order was transformed again, from a World Federation of States to the rule of 'a few Great Empires.'[232] He argued that, a federation of civilized nations was a desirable order of international relations, but, world was inhabited by races who were 'unfit for constitutional government.'[233] When these races were left to their own devices they quickly turned into black anarchies, and although these races had the potential to develop themselves, it was happening in a rather slow pace. It was "as inevitable that vigorous and enterprising white races should overflow into their lands, as it is that water should run down hill."[234] From such a perspective Ritchie asked "may not a few great 'Empires,' in which self-governing federated communities control the less advanced races, represent a higher stage –more likely to be stable, less exposed to war and preparing

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[228] Ritchie, 505.

[229] Ritchie, 505.

[230] D. G. Ritchie, "War and Peace," *International Journal of Ethics* 11, no. 2 (1901): 149.

[231] Ritchie, 153.

[232] Ritchie, 150.

[233] Ritchie, 157.

[234] Ritchie, 153.

the way for a federation of the world?"[235] His answer was in the affirmative: "Our federation of 'free states' will have territories under it, which must be governed more or less despotically by a trained and capable service. This is a federation of the world, which is not an altogether visionary ideal."[236] It was Ritchie's 'War and Peace' article that incited John M. Robertson, a new liberal, to publish a fierce review of Ritchie's arguments and started a war of replies and rejoinders in the coming issues of *The International Journal of Ethics.* In his original review, Robertson accused Ritchie of remarking on the Boer War without naming it and that his position on the issue contradicted the moral criteria he applied to the internal functioning of a community.[237] His rather direct language on the matter is worth quoting at length:

> Professor Ritchie, in the name of ethical science, argues… that a special restriction must begin when we pass from the relations of individuals within a state to the relations of states… One might have thought that it was mere careless rhetoric, in an ethical discussion on war, to argue that a war is a form of natural selection; for that ostensibly means, if anything, that it is outside the purview of ethics. But as Professor Ritchie is expressly repudiating careless rhetoric he must be taken to be arguing seriously and, in his own view relevantly. One must then put the obvious question, Is not a private struggle a form of natural selection? And if I murder or rob my enemy, am I admitted to have made any defence if I plead that his extinction or spoliation is a form of natural selection? Further, if it may be good for civilization to let one state confiscate another, may it not be good for civilization that one man should 'rob' another? In all seriousness, I do not see how Professor Ritchie can answer off-hand in the negative, though he seems to assume that 'a person' is subject to an absolute moral law and that a nation is not.[238]

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[235] Ritchie, 150.

[236] Ritchie, 157.

[237] John M. Robertson, "The Moral Problems of War," *International Journal of Ethics* 11, no. 3 (1901): 273–90.

[238] Robertson, 281.

As an alternative to Ritchie's moral criterion which judges wars' morality by the desirability of the end it served, Robertson proposed the criterion of reciprocity which requires an answer to the question "is the aggressor doing as he would be done by?"[239] According to Robertson, so far as Ritchie ignored the most basic law of ethics, which is the law of reciprocity, he surrendered his reasoning to "superstitions about posterity" which cannot be examined or proven today as they are mere theorems regarding undetermined future of humanity. Thus Robertson argued, "a theorem which justifies the negation whether as between individuals,… or between nations, of the moral principle of reciprocity, on the score that such negation may somehow make for 'civilization,' is to my thinking as truly a superstition as any barbaric cult which ceremonially sacrifices human victims to appease the unknown gods."[240] In his reply, Ritchie dismissed the law of reciprocity as he argued it was not a maxim applicable to states which were in a state of nature in their relations to each other.[241] He also repeated his support for "everything that helps towards the ideal of a federation of the world (not in mere sentimental sense but in the stricter political sense of the term 'federation.)"[242] In a 'Further Reply to Mr. J. M. Robertson,' Ritchie dismissed his criticisms as unimportant and further discussion with him to be unprofitable. He added "after reading his two papers of criticism I have re-read what I wrote in the January and in the July numbers, and I see nothing in my arguments that I should wish to alter –except that my statement of views is perhaps too condensed and that I have trusted too much to every word being read."[243] This rather heated argument between Ritchie and Robertson was finalized with Robertson's 'A Further Rejoinder to Professor Ritchie', which showed that the discussion was succumbed to a squabble about the trivialities of the matter.[244] Yet it is beneficial in showing that Ritchie continued to support the moral legitimacy of fighting against the Boers on the

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[239] Robertson, 279.

[240] Robertson, 290.

[241] Ritchie, "The Moral Problems of War-in Reply to Mr. J. M. Robertson," 495.

[242] Ritchie, 495.

[243] D. G. Ritchie, "A Further Reply to Mr. J. M. Robertson," *International Journal of Ethics* 12, no. 1 (1901): 114.

[244] John M. Robertson, *A Further Rejoinder to Professor Ritchie* (International Journal of Ethics, 1902), http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdfplus/10.1086/intejethi.12.2.2376316.

ground that it would serve humanity as a stepping-stone for the establishment of a world federation or an order of great empires.

The empires that were to rule the world in Ritchie's ideal of an order of great empires was different from what Muirhead, Mackenzie, and Jones called a 'true empire' to the extent that it was not to be based on the general will or consent of the peoples it ruled and it did not have any intention of learning their values and ideas to come up with a nuanced approach to their transformation. They were to be forced to accept the higher order of European nations and it was only indirectly expected to serve their interests. The main goal was to ensure humanity's progress towards a higher unity and such progress was expected to serve all the peoples, at least those nations that survived until its realisation. Such a world order was to be based on brute force rather than on law or the general will of the nations. In that sense, Ritchie's conceptualisation of the empire fall short of what Green expected a 'law-giving' or 'law-maintaining' empire to be, as it did not take into consideration the established customs and rules of the peoples it ruled. It was rather considered to be an authority that ruled peoples for their own good but against their will when necessary. It was a position that was hard to reconcile with the basic presumptions of idealistic political philosophy as it severed the vital link between the legitimacy of a political authority and its dependence on the general will and consent of the peoples it ruled. It would not be unfair to claim that Ritchie was aware of this discrepancy and that is why he called such a rule 'more or less despotic.'

Ritchie and Bradley were not deviant figures in British Idealism when their work on political philosophy is concerned. Yet their approach to international relations in general, and their understanding of imperialism in particular were not representative of the British Idealist position. Jones, Muirhead, and Mackenzie who followed maxims set forward by Green in his two substantial works exemplified the middle-ground Idealist position on imperialism during the Boer War. They recognized the past-mistakes that tainted the history of the empire, but still they thought a reform in the right direction would make Britain an example of 'true imperialism.' Jones wrote in 1910 "The blatant imperialism and reckless greed which helped to bring about the conflict and the sane and far-sighted imperialism which, so far as possible, removed

its evil effects, will stand upon the pages of our history in a contrast which nothing can mitigate."[245]

## 2.6 The Younger Generation: Muirhead, Mackenzie, and Jones

Obviously the British Empire was around for quite a time by the end of the 19th century, yet the sentiment of duty on the part of the English nation woke quite recently according to this younger generation of British Idealists. For Mackenzie, Muirhead and Jones, a sudden realization that England was not a small island anymore, fundamentally altered the way British people perceived their relation to the colonies and dependencies of the mother country. Mackenzie expressed this sentiment in his article when he wrote "so we woke up, almost on a single day, to realize, as we had never realized before, that we have ties and obligations that carry us round the world…"[246] Muirhead argued that this awakening was a result of a general change in the way British people perceived social and political phenomenon. Utilitarianism both in its philosophical and practical application shaped the way citizens of the mother country perceived its colonies until the end of the 19th century. From a utilitarian point of view, colonies were significant so far as they provided material wealth for the mother country, and Adam Smith showed that they actually did not supply such wealth. Thus British people lost their interest in their colonies.[247] Muirhead argued, the change of mentality that occurred at the end of the 19th century on the part of the British people was part of a larger phenomenon, 'nothing less than the Spirit of the Century.'[248] For Muirhead, Goethe was the first prophet of this new sentiment, the sentiment that in industry, organisation, and civilisation lay the future of humanity and it was the mission of Europe to spread those values in the world.[249] Germany at that time was not ready to act on Goethe's message, but England was.

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[245] Henry Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1910), 184.

[246] J. S. Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," *International Journal of Ethics* 10, no. 4 (1900): 469.

[247] J. H. Muirhead, "What Imperialism Means," *Fortnightly Review* LXVIII (1900): 81.

[248] Muirhead, 83.

[249] Muirhead, 84.

Muirhead, Mackenzie, and Jones were the exponents of the main line of thinking in British Idealism regarding imperialism and the British Empire at the end of the 19th century as T. H. Green was no longer alive, and Bosanquet did not comment on the matter. They recognized the atrocities that were committed by the British especially during the expansion period. But they also recognized a perceived capability in terms of civilizing the subject races, spreading European values, and consequently bringing humanity together in the pursuance of progress. For them, education was the primary responsibility of the empire. It was followed by the Empire's responsibility to provide a just government in all dependencies and free and profitable commerce among all nations. They felt that, they were members of a generation that carried great responsibility all around the globe due to the circumstances they could not control, circumstances that arose out of actions that were not morally justifiable. Yet, they also believed that "there was always room for repentance," and in their situation "to retire from tasks it has undertaken, however thoughtlessly at the time, [was] the poorest sort of corporate repentance."[250] It was their duty to strive towards civilising the subject races. Although their success in this mission would not have cancelled all the wrong committed by the Empire, it would have bestowed the empire with a moral identity without which it would remain to be an exploitative colonizer of the world. Their emphasis on the inescapability of the moral duty to prevent "disintegration" of 'native societies' through responsible and responsive government was completely in line with the Liberal imperialist position.[251]

Though they believed in the imperial mission of the British people, they thought substantial reform was needed in imperial administration that would make it more responsive and conciliatory to the peoples they governed all over the world. After all, force was only a temporary and non-ideal solution for imperial hardships. Muirhead quoted Burke in his article to press this point: "A nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered."[252] The 'true empire,' in addition to being a tool for the

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[250] Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," 477.

Muirhead, "What Imperialism Means," 88.

[251] Karuna Mantena, "The Crisis of Liberal Imperialism," in *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth Century Political Thought*, ed. Duncan Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 131.

[252] Muirhead, "What Imperialism Means," 91.

civilization of the subject races,' was also to be a moral unity of all the peoples that constituted it. It was –or ought to be- something more than a 'fiscal unit,' or a financial partnership. The unity of the Empire, according to Henry Jones, was "represented as consisting of two strands –unity of sentiment and a unity which privileged commercial relations expected to bring; good feeling *plus* sound business."[253] Thus, downplaying the sentimental aspect of the Empire was an injustice to the potential of the British Empire in furthering the sentimental unity of mankind. It was thanks to this sentimental unity that the colonies were no longer perceived as "fruits that drop off when they are ripe," but as "leaves and branches that nourish while they spread the influence of the tree, or, better still, of the banyan tree, whose branches root themselves in the ground and add support to the parent system."[254] Their conceptualization of the 'true empire' resembled Green's definition of a 'law-maintainer' or a 'law-giver' empire. Both were to be founded upon the general will and consent of the peoples they ruled over and they were to serve the interests of these peoples and not a remote exploitative race. Yet, the younger generations' anticipation of the moral service an empire was capable of delivering greatly exceeded Green's. While Green expressed his concern regarding imperialism's tendency to give rise to militarist nationalism and international jealousies, the younger generation was convinced a 'true empire' would be not detrimental to humanity's progress towards a larger unity. And though the British Empire was not a 'true empire' as of yet, it was its citizens' duty to ensure it transformed itself into one.

According to Muirhead, the attempt to civilize the subject races of the Empire was an improvement on the part of England. Muirhead argued in his article *What Imperialism Means,* the history of the British Empire can be divided into two phases in terms of its approach to subject races. There was the first phase in which the English nation did nothing for the development of the 'negro or Indian.'[255] It was interested solely in the material wealth it derived from their territories without a regard for the condition of the native peoples. Yet England's attitude towards these peoples changed at the beginning of the 20th century as they "began to think of the negro as a fellow-

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[253] Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays*, 131.

[254] Muirhead, "What Imperialism Means," 87.

[255] Muirhead, 92.

Christian…"[256] For Muirhead as well as for several other British Idealists the task of the Empire in regards to colonies was clear yet challenging: it was a task of immensely wide extent. It was so, because "it is concerned not with the government of a few million Europeans in accordance with European traditions, but the reconstruction of the moral, industrial, and political ideas of some four or five hundred million of souls of every race and religion and at every stage of civilisation except our own."[257]

There were impediments to the execution of this civilizing mission of the Empire that was adopted in the second phase of British Imperialism. It was vital, for its future success, to ask, "are these nations fit for the education we are giving them? Have they capacity enough to make it worth our while to give it? Granting that they have the capacity, are we setting about the task of developing it in the right way?"[258] British Idealists' answer to the first question -whether or not the subject races have the capacity to understand and adopt European values- was a confident yes. After all, at the heart of their philosophy was the conviction that every man had the moral and rational capacity to realize himself if he is given the necessary powers. Differences in race and religion were not indicators of inferiority or superiority of groups of people in a permanent sense. It was rather a sign of their position in the evolutionary ladder of civilisation, and it was possible to progress or regress on this ladder. European nations were obviously at the top in the ranking of civilisation, and with persistent education and administration other nations had the capacity to follow in their footsteps. According to Muirhead, Egypt was the shining example of what British Empire could do to improve a whole nation. He argued, the example of Egypt was a success story so far as "the good of the subject" was perceived to be the "first object of government."[259] When the best intelligence of the British people were deployed to the pursuance of this moral end, success was ensured in foreign as well as in home policy.

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[256] Muirhead, 92.

[257] Muirhead, 89–90.

[258] Muirhead, 92.

[259] Muirhead, 95.

Still, two obstacles were to be overcome by the English people if they wanted to get any results in this huge endeavour. The first one was to accept the fact that the highest degree of civilization cannot be taught to the savage in a short period of time. According to Henry Jones "few things have entailed such waste of ethical force, which is man's very life-blood as the neglect of this practical maxim… We seek to engraft straightaway the elevated thoughts of the Christian religion upon crude and barbarous civilisations."[260] A sudden rupture in the way a people lived, thought, worked, and believed would lead to adverse consequences the reformer did not aim for and it would most probably end in violence.[261] Thus, it was necessary not to fight against the current of the order of things and accept that "morality, whether personal or social, can be acquired only step by step."[262] Instead of forcing subject races to adapt the European ideas and values overnight, the empire was to educate its peoples so that they themselves would recognize the desirability of adapting to them.

The second obstacle was strongly related to the first one and it was a limitation on the part of the English nation. Muirhead argued that it was a mistake for the Empire to not trouble itself to understand its subject races. The most serious impediment to the mission of civilizing subject races was the fact that there was no organic link between their established customs and the European ideals, which they were expected to adopt. Imposing such ideas and values to a race that could not assimilate them into their way of life was not only ineffective but also disruptive. According to Muirhead this was the main reason why the Empire failed so far in its civilising mission although it provided all the necessary materials for the children of the Empire. As European values and ideas were not naturally assimilated by the subject races, two distinct reactions to such education emerged among the natives: they either totally rejected the legitimacy of European ideas and developed a hostility towards it, or they strived to adopt these ideas to no avail. While the problem with the first group was clear enough, the second group posed an even greater challenge to the civilising mission:

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[260] Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays*, 26.

[261] Jones, 27.

[262] Jones, 26.

Education in the case of the latter class consists of a thin veneer of European ideas sufficient to destroy the beliefs and sentiments that gave the mind a hold on the realities of life, but wholly insufficient to provide it with anything that can take their place. [263]

Such a superficial adaptation of European values did not endow these individuals with the teachings of civilization and it severed their organic connection with the society they lived in. It was an outcome of England's inaptitude in dealing with 'more delicate tasks' such as "education and social reconstruction, requiring higher refinements of insight, tact, and sympathy" that prevented them from educating the subject races in European values.[264]

British Idealists, especially the younger members of it, were openly admitting the incapabilities of the British Empire in realising the moral end it was supposed to serve. But it does not mean that they perceived the Empire as a failed attempt or as an impediment to peace or moral progress. On the contrary, they were quite confident in Empire's ability to transform itself in order to meet its obligations to its daughter states such as Canada and Australia and to its colonies such as India. It was, after all, natural to stumble on the way to the realisation of a great Empire the like of which was never founded before. The English nation itself was in a process of development in which it was learning the heavy duty of civilising the world. To that end Mackenzie wrote in 1900 "we need not be surprised that the consciousness of the obligations of empire does not at once come upon us as a matured and sobered sense of duty."[265] For Mackenzie, Muirhead and Jones the duty of the British Empire was an obvious one: transforming itself from a coloniser to a true empire and to serve humanity by elevating other races to the level of European civilisation. In that sense, they overlooked Bosanquet's contribution to the discussion of civilisations which put emphasis on the singularity of every society and the impossibility and undesirability of creating a monolithic human civilisation. For them, the moral duty of advancing humanity as a whole by spreading the ideas and values of a higher civilisation

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[263] Muirhead, "What Imperialism Means," 94.

[264] Muirhead, 95.

[265] Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," 470.

overshadowed the particular contributions each society can make to humanity on its own terms. Their approach to the 'subject races' reflects not a racist prejudice that located these people at a sub-human level, but their belief that they were not developed enough to know how to pursue their self-realization. In other words, although they did not differ from the European peoples in terms of potential, their level of civilisation was not enabling them to pursue higher ends. Thus, they were perceived as only potential right-bearers like children, who can be entrusted with full rights and duties only after they are educated enough to know how to use them morally.

Muirhead, Jones, and Mackenzie agreed that the history of the Empire contained ample evidence of wrongdoing on the part of Britain. The Empire itself was grown "out of actions often thoughtlessly, perhaps imprudently or even wickedly, undertaken."[266] The imperial mission in its totality was not singularly guided by the love of humanity; it was tainted by the vanity and greed of individuals. Although the British Empire was not the only party which committed itself to the lower passions of the human nature, from time to time it "relapse[d] to lower standards –by the contention, for instance, that empire is empire, and that such an end sanctifies almost any means."[267] Thus, Mackenzie contended that "we have, no doubt, like others, had great faults, made great mistakes, even, I am afraid, committed what can hardly be called less than great crimes."[268] But, Muirhead, Jones, and Mackenzie inherited from Green, the idea that there was no point in questioning what could have been done differently in the past, for the answer was simple: "They could have done so if they had been better."[269] Yet, they were not better and the moral wrong they committed was not alterable by any form of action adopted today. Thus, they argued, "How did the circumstances in which we find ourselves arise?" was not a relevant question. The question to be asked was "What do these circumstances require of us?"[270] According to Muirhead, forfeiting imperial responsibilities and duties would be the greatest

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[266] Muirhead, "What Imperialism Means," 88.

[267] Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," 470.

[268] Mackenzie, 477.

[269] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 126.

[270] Muirhead, "What Imperialism Means," 88.

crime against humanity. The situation in which Britain found itself at the end of the 19th century required the mother nation to embrace its duties all over the world and advance itself towards what they called 'true imperialism.'[271] The spirit of true imperialism was to be found neither in 'Little Englandism' nor in 'Jingoism.' It rather meant the solemn acceptance that Britain have its "part to play with others in the great task of advancing humanity… in the promotion of peace, liberty, justice, and enlightenment."[272]

So long as the citizens of the mother country carried the imperial crown, which, to some seemed more like a 'crown of thorns,' Britain was fulfilling its duty to its dependencies and colonies.[273] It was not an easy task but it was a moral obligation, and the future of the empire was not so bleak according to Mackenzie and Muirhead.[274] Muirhead believed, Britain had the capacity and the determination to prove that it was equal to the challenge at hand. He stated "when it has the courage to grasp and undertake all that the situation requires for this object, when it is prepared to bring the best intelligence of the nation to bear on the task it has undertaken, and when, without flinching from the policy the circumstances dictate, it uses every opportunity to conciliate the better elements of European opinion"[275] Britain would become a 'true empire.' Furthermore, they thought, when the opposition against this new form of political unity subsided, the positive outcome of the empire in terms of unifying humanity and spreading European values would become clear even to the most fervent critic of the Empire. From such a perspective Mackenzie reflected on the future of the Empire:

> If we truly grasp the situation before us, if we see clearly where our
> obligations lie, we shall, I am convinced, find nothing but good in the
> breaking down of our insularity, in the widening of our horizon, whether
> it be in Africa, in India, or Australia, or, it may be, nearer at home, in

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[271] Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," 477.

[272] Mackenzie, 477.

[273] Mackenzie, 477.

[274] Mackenzie, 477.

[275] Muirhead, "What Imperialism Means," 96.

Ireland. If we seize the situation in the right spirit, there is every hope for us still, that when 'the tumult and the shouting dies' there will be some fruit of our labours that is not wholly vain, an honor that is not rooted in dishonour, a flag that is something better than a 'commercial asset.'[276]

In his memoir Muirhead noted that the Boer War (1899-1902) was an imperial war that did not unite the nation for the cause of the empire. Muirhead himself was openly critical of the imperial policy that led to the Boer War.[277] And, in the memoir he wrote for Bosanquet, he noted, "Bosanquet, like Edward Caird, the master of Balliol, and other leading British idealist philosophers, was strongly 'pro-Boer.'"[278] Similarly, Henry Jones recognized that Britain was not free from 'blatant imperialism' and 'reckless greed', which caused conflict with the subject races.[279] Yet, their misgivings regarding the empires' motivation to go to war with the Dutch in South Africa did not result in a general mistrust of the empire. While some of them, mostly in private occasions, expressed discontent with the aggressive attitude of the government in this particular case, they continued to foster hopes for the evolution of a better and more efficient imperial organisation.[280]

## 2.7 Conclusion

The British Idealists' position vis-à-vis the Boer War in particular and imperialism in general are significant as it shows their position on international relations before the Great War. Although the Boer War was fought against another European nation and not against the 'savages', it was a long and expensive imperial war and thus it attracted Idealists' attention to the issue of international morality. Williams rightly claimed in his article "although it is appealing to see the war as a 'test case,' whether support for or opposition to the war may be equated more broadly with support for or opposition to empire as a whole seems doubtful," and the fact that "the Boers, as

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[276] Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," 477.

[277] Muirhead, *John Henry Muirhead;*, 112.

[278] J. H. Muirhead, *Bernard Bosanquet and His Friends: Letters Illustrating the Sources and the Development of His Philosophical Opinions* (Routledge, 2014), 95.

[279] Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays*, 184.

[280] David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, *A Radical Hegelian: Political and Social Philosophy of Henry Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993), 147.

white protestants did not fit the usual stereotype of imperial enemies" strengthens the validity of his claim.[281] Furthermore, support of native South Africans to both British and Dutch military forces greatly complicates the matter. Still, when the limits of international law in the 19th century is taken into account, it becomes easier to understand how it was possible to circumvent the universal dictates of law when it prevented civilizing the assumedly savage peoples.[282] Furthermore, the inferior status of 'small' nations within the family of European states that went mostly unchallenged until the First World War helps to explain how the Dutch constituted an imperial enemy for some of the British Idealists during the Boer War.[283] After all, the 'rights of small nations' was a principle defended by a handful of pro-Boer intellectuals and[284] evidently, Bradley and Ritchie were not within this group as they supported the use of any means in the imperial progress towards humanities' development. For this line of idealism, the native South Africans were 'savages' whose worth was not esteemed to be very high and the Dutch were representatives of a lower civilization who prevented a higher civilization from advancing humanity materially and morally. The other camp of British Idealists rarely commented on the Dutch presence in South Africa yet some of them were self-proclaimed pro-Boers and perceived the Dutch settlers as representatives of European civilisation that was unjustly attacked by another European nation that was superior to them only in terms of military power. For them, the native Africans were representatives of a civilisation that was temporarily inferior

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[281] Chris Williams, "'Our War History in Cartoons Is Unique': J.M. Staniforth, British Public Opinion, and the South African War, 1899–1902," *War in History* 20, no. 4 (November 1, 2013): 492, https://doi.org/10.1177/0968344513494657.

[282] Jennifer Pitts, "Boundaries of Victorian International Law," in *Victorian Visions of Global Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[283] Paula M. Krebs, *Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire: Public Discourse and the Boer War*, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture 23 (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 5.

Georgios Varouxakis, "'Great' versus 'Small' Nations: Size and National Greatness in Victorian Political Thought," in *Victorian Visions of Global Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 154.

[284] John S. Ellis, "'The Methods of Barbarism' and the 'Rights of Small Nations': War Propaganda and British Pluralism," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 30, no. 1 (1998): 49–75.

to the European one and thus they were to be protected and educated as future fellow subjects of the empire.

Towards the end of the 19th century the position of the British Empire in the world became a hot topic of discussion in the political, intellectual as well as scholarly circles of England. Not only British Idealists from their seats at various universities but also members of intellectual societies and journalists through out the country were engaged in a fierce argument about the nature and aims of the British Empire.[285] While Fabian Society supported the British Empire as a way of competing with other nations in a very competitive international market, the Rainbow Circle –which was formed as an alternative to Fabianism- challenged the imperial agenda mainly due to its tendency to create Jingoism at home and capitalistic exploitation abroad.[286] Except D. G. Ritchie and R. D. Haldane, British Idealists did not take part in these intellectual societies and preferred to reflect on the question of imperialism via their academic work. Furthermore, they did not put forward a unified approach neither to the question of imperialism in general nor to the British Empire in particular. While Bradley and Ritchie showed an almost unrestrained support for imperial ambition and expansion of the British Empire; Bosanquet, Jones, Mackenzie and Muirhead followed a more nuanced line of argument. A common ground of inspiration for the reflections of this latter group of Idealists on the matter can be found in the description of a moral international order that is presented in T. H. Green's philosophical work. In line with Green's teaching and the common perception that prevailed in the late 19th century Britain, they believed in the cultural, intellectual, and moral superiority of the European nations. They, furthermore, agreed that the British were distinguished from other European nations in their special aptitude in 'statecraft.' Yet a slight difference of degree in their suspicions towards the goal of 'imperial greatness' distinguished Green and Bosanquet from the younger generation. While Green's position towards the British Empire was one of support with reservation during his undergraduate years, his later work revealed a 'distaste' of

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[285] Rodney Barker, *Political Ideas in Modern Britain: In and After the Twentieth Century* (Routledge, 2013), 27.

[286] James Alexander, *Shaw's Controversial Socialism* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), 155–66.

imperialism especially in the case of the British tenure of the Indian Empire. This was probably related to his growing distaste for 'Disraelian Imperialism' and his growing support for Gladstone during the Turko-Russian crisis. The fact that he was a member of the 'Jamaica Committee' that demanded punishment for the Governor Edward John Eyre's abuses of the Jamaican people also shows that he was aware of the 'non-benevolent' practices of spreading the Christian civilization in imperial colonies and its immoral consequences.[287] His students however, remained loyal to the imperial project and advocated the necessity of transforming Britain into a 'true empire' that would justify the existence of British territories overseas. This was mostly due to the emphasis they put on the 'benevolent' nature of a true empire that would be instrumental in spreading the higher civilization of Europe. Such a position was evidently in line with Green's contention that 'Christian citizenship' constituted the highest moral consciousness achieved by humanity and that moral progress was in the nature of humanity. Yet, they ignored Green's warning that imperialism was prone to give rise to international jealousies and militarisation. Evidently, they were not isolated in their support for the empire; they were part of a large and fragmented front that consisted of liberals, socialists and conservatives that "differed over the forms of empire they defended, the intensity of support they offered, and perhaps most significantly, the justificatory arguments that they articulated."[288] By the end of the 19th century, the younger generation of British Idealists put forward arguments that neatly fitted in what Duncan Bell called the 'ideal typical justificatory strategy' of the 'civilising argument.' Yet, when the Great War proved Green right, they gradually distanced themselves from their previous imperialist position and adopted a position, similar to Bosanquet's, by focusing on the importance of peoples' particularities in the formation of a cooperative human unity.

Isaiah Berlin offered one of the most substantial criticisms towards British Idealism in regards to its defence of 'positive liberty' at the expense of 'negative liberty,' and thus enabling paternalistic interventions into the individual sphere of freedom. Although Berlin repeatedly stated that Green was a 'well-meaning liberal,' he maintained that

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[287] Karuna Mantena, "The Crisis of Liberal Imperialism," 122.

[288] Duncan Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 19.

his reflections were open to exploitation based on the metaphysical doctrine he based his political theory upon.[289] Berlin argued that the main problem with Green's position was the 'dualistic fallacy' he used to substantiate the primacy of positive liberty.[290] So far as individuals' capacity for freedom was conditioned upon their embodiment of a 'rational' self that was superior to their animal self, Green's position was prone to be exploited by paternalistic and\or despotic interpretations. Berlin argued with a concealed reference to Green and his students:

> We have wandered indeed from our liberal beginnings. This argument, employed by Fichte in his latest phase, and after him by other defenders of authority, from Victorian schoolmasters and colonial administrators to the latest nationalist or Communist dictator, is precisely what the Stoic and Kantian morality protests against most bitterly in the name of the reason of the free individual following his own inner light.[291]

Contemporary scholars of British Idealism have taken Berlin's criticism of paternalism quite seriously. Avital Simhony and D. Weinstein argue for instance that Green's "liberalism has been tainted by Isaiah Berlin's condemnation of positive freedom as illiberal."[292] Similarly Gerald Gaus takes issue with Berlin's accusation of Green of offering a paternalistic political theory. While Simhony refuses that Green's political theory does not lead to a "totalitarian conclusion" although it employs a "metaphysics of a split self," Gaus maintains that both Green and Bosanquet escapes the totalitarian and paternalistic pitfall so far as they strongly rely on the "argument against coercion" just like other modern liberals such as Mill, Dewey and

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[289] Isaiah Berlin, *Liberty: Incorporating Four Essays on Liberty*, ed. Henry Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 41.

Berlin, 53.

[290] Berlin, *Liberty: Incorporating Four Essays on Liberty*, 42.

[291] Berlin, 198.

[292] Avital Simhony and D. Weinstein, "Introduction: The New Liberalism and the Liberal-Communitarian Debate," in *The New Liberalism: Reconciling Liberty and Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 8.

Hobhouse.[293] Still, Gaus acknowledges that Berlin's argument is significant so far as "it points to an important way in which the idealist conception of the self lends itself to paternalistic projects."[294]

The imperialist position adopted by British Idealists, be it the 'militaristic imperialism' of Bradley and Ritchie, or the milder form of 'civic imperialism' endorsed by Mackenzie, Muirhead and Jones substantiates the criticism that Green's endorsement of positive liberty is open to be distorted into paternalistic projects. Although most of the British Idealists maintained the primacy of individual freedom in designating the moral end towards which they would work towards at the national level, at the international level they forfeited the individual as well as the national capacity of peoples to determine their own good in the pre-Great War period. A significant contributor to this paternalistic approach of British Idealists towards other peoples was the vocabulary of civilization that dominated the British intellectual sphere. The monolithic understanding of civilization that dominated this era perceived any deviation from the 'European civilization' as a failure to comply with the dictates of universal morality. It was this apparent paternalistic approach to non-European peoples that prevented the younger generation of British Idealists from translating Green's theory of rights into a theory of human rights in this period. The younger generations' failure to recognize the inhabitants of dependent colonies as subjects of human rights was based on their contention that these peoples did not have the capacity to know their 'true' good towards which they were to use these rights and thus they were dependent on the guidance of the European peoples until such time that they complied with the standards of European civilization. This paternalistic approach to non-European peoples was to be challenged and defeated by the intellectual shift that took place with the outbreak of the Great War.

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[293] Avital Simhony, "On Forcing Individuals to Be Free: T.H. Green's Liberal Theory of Positive Freedom," *Political Studies* 39, no. 2 (June 1991): 303, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1991.tb01369.x.
Gerald F. Gaus, *The Modern Liberal Theory of Man* (London : New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1983), 178.

[294] Gaus, *The Modern Liberal Theory of Man*, 178.

# CHAPTER 3

# FROM EMPIRE TO COMMONWEALTH: BRITISH IDEALISTS' TRIAL WITH THE FIRST WORLD WAR

> *What right have we, it may be asked, to condemn the German nation? What they have done is to reduce our ways to a theory, in disregard of ordinary views of morals, and to seek to apply it in their thorough way to ourselves. I answer that our right, such as it is, springs from the fact that we are emerging. We are learning to respect the rights of small nations and seeking, little by little, to nurse into liberty all the peoples over whom we rule.*[295]

This chapter aims to reveal, the political and theoretical roots of the disillusionment experienced by the younger generation of British Idealists' with imperialism and the British Empire during the Great War. Like many liberal imperialists of the 19th century, Jones, Muirhead, Mackenzie, and Haldane were forced by the Great War to investigate the roots of European militarisation. But unlike other British Intellectuals, they were also burdened with the task of proving that their position was not inherently linked to 'Prussian state-worship and militarism.' Thus, during the war they made

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[295] Henry Jones, "Why We Are Fighting," *Hibbert Journal* XIII (1915 1914): 56.

several attempts to negate the accusation that Hegelianism in Germany was responsible for the Great War. Instead they argued, it was the distortion of Hegelianism through its contamination with materialistic arguments that gave rise to Prussian militarism and the Great War. Von Bernhardi and Treitschke's works were the most obvious examples of this distorted version of Hegel's work and evidently they were not similar to the works of British Idealists, the true heirs of Hegel's political philosophy. Yet, their recognition of the materialistic roots of German militarism that is fuelled by the enthusiasm for the establishment of a German World Empire brought with it the necessity to exercise self-criticism. Starting with Henry Jones –and with the exception of Viscount Haldane- they all recognized the materialistic and immoral nature of imperialism and distanced themselves from the language of civilization and progress they used in defence of the empire. Rather, they moved onto defend the necessity of transforming the empire into a commonwealth composed of free and equal nations. By the end of the Great War, they were again in line with the general liberal sentiment in Britain that abandoned the goal of sustaining a vast empire with the purpose of 'civilising' subject peoples and moved on to emphasize the necessity of establishing a commonwealth consisting mainly of the settler colonies of Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand. In this period, future of dependent colonies constituted an unsavoury discussion topic and it was glossed over through voicing an unqualified intention to liberate them as soon as possible.

## 3.1 British Intellectual Arena and perception of the Empire during the Great War

Scholars and intellectuals from Britain and the United States of America increasingly reflected on the relation of morality and international relations during the length of the war. In the first years of the war, the discussion focused on the moral justification of Britain's involvement in the war and the sources of militarism in German philosophy and public opinion. Only, pacifists who were inspired by Tolstoi's doctrine of non-resistance challenged the legitimacy of Britain's engagement in war. Bertrand Russell was mentioned as one of the most well-known advocate of the doctrine in his endeavour to "raise the principle of non-resistance from the realm of emotion to that

of reason…"[296] As Perry maintained in his answer to Russell, Britain's involvement in the Great War was challenged merely by a handful of defenders of non-resistance.[297] Even those who argued for the absolute immorality of war, like British Idealists, maintained that under certain circumstances it became a moral duty. In his memoir, Muirhead noted that the Great War constituted an occasion around which the whole nation was united, unlike the fragmented attitude towards the Boer War in 1900.[298] In the initial months of the war, it was usually perceived as a defence of the British Empire, and a way of guaranteeing the supremacy of the British Navy that was the Empire's safeguard. In 1915, Field Marshall Earl Roberts, forcefully expressed this sentiment in an article. He wrote, "let there be no mistake on this head: if Germany wins in this war, it means the downfall of the British Empire," and added "no single State shall be allowed to upset the balance of power and to dominate the western half of Europe. As soon as any State attempts this, and then gains possession of, or tries to establish itself in, the Low Countries, then England is compelled to take up arms."[299] Evidently, some intellectuals continued to maintain their belief in the unquestionable legitimacy of Britain's superiority in terms of naval force and possession of territories in "places under the sun."

Yet, others started to perceive the war as an inevitable catastrophe caused by the imperialistic and materialistic world order that preceded it. Although the attention paid to these matters did not culminate in a forceful repudiation of imperialism and the British Empire, they still perceived the necessity of envisioning a novel international order that is based on moral principles. In 1915, Professor Gilbert Murray argued that Britain was no longer seeking territorial expansion and indeed it was only necessary for Britain to grant independence to some of its dependencies if it wanted to avoid recurrence of such a war. He wrote, "in general, we must try to arrange, even at considerable cost, that territory goes with nationality… Every nation

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[296] Wilbur M. Urban, "Is Mankind Worthy of Peace?," *International Journal of Ethics* 27, no. 3 (1917): 295.

[297] Ralph Barton Perry, "Non-Resistance and the Present War--A Reply to Mr. Russell," *International Journal of Ethics* 25, no. 3 (1915): 307–16.

[298] John H. Muirhead, *John Henry Muirhead;: Reflections by a Journeyman in Philosophy on the Movements of Thought and Practice in His Time,* (G. Allen & Unwin, 1942), 112.

[299] " Henry Jones, "Why We Are Fighting," *Hibbert Journal* XIII (1915 1914): 56.

which sees a slice of itself cut off and held under foreign rule is a danger to peace, and so is every nation that holds by force or fraud an alien province."[300] According to Murray, the current war was a direct result of the territorial passions and jealousies that had constituted the nature of relations among European states before the Great War. According to him, the attempts to prevent war had failed because "either some Powers came into the council with unclean hands, determined to grab alien territory or fatally compromised because they had grabbed it in the past."[301] He agreed with the imperialists that the fight was morally legitimate and it was fought for the survival of Britain. But, for him Britain meant the British national life and not the British Empire.[302]

The majority of articles published in the *International Journal of Ethics* on the matter of the Great War from 1915 to 1918, maintained that the war was the outcome of Great Powers' imperial ambitions that had been hidden behind a veil of false morality before 1914. In those articles, the Great Powers were no longer spoken of as benevolent forces of civilization but as aggressive forces that pose a considerable threat to the health and security of smaller nations.[303] The imperialistic claim of civilising the barbarians was no longer accepted as a legitimate reason to claim dominion over other nationalities. The British Doctrine of 'white man's burden' was decreed as intolerable as German's "conviction that *Deutschtum* is to be the salvation of the world."[304] As the 'dominant race' became ready to "sicken at the talk of 'the white man's burden,' as nothing but so much tyrannical cant," British as well as American intellectuals began to envision a new world order.[305] The new order, be it a World-Parliament, a European consort or a League of Peace, was expected to put an end to the pre-Great War practice of forming alliances and counter-alliances to maintain a balance of power among the Great Powers. Further, in this new order, the

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[300] Jones, 77.

[301] Jones, 78.

[302] Jones, 73.

[303] H. T. Weeks, "An International War Chest," *International Journal of Ethics* 29, no. 1 (1918): 27.

[304] Harry Allen Overstreet, "Ethical Clarifications Through the War," *International Journal of Ethics* 28, no. 3 (1918): 333.

[305] F. Melian Stawell, "Patriotism and Humanity," *International Journal of Ethics* 25, no. 3 (1915): 299.

dominant values of the civilized nations after which they had been striving, were to be redefined so as to enable formation of increased organization among independent nation-states. The goal was to ensure that, at the international level, values of 'self-direction' and 'equality' replaced the imperialistic "line of superior-inferior class rule."[306]

Not only the British Idealists, but also their fiercest critics were part of the newly popularised anti-imperialistic sentiment and the quest to envision a new world order. In *The World in Conflict,* Hobhouse wrote, "the catastrophe of 1914 was not for the observer of currents of public life in any way a bold from the blue. It was the climax of a time of stress and strain, the final eruption of forces that had been shaking the world for two decades."[307] The forces that shook the world were generated by the "ideas of world domination based on racial superiority" and they were not specific to the German mind-set. With reference to the Boer War, he argued against the notion that only German imperialism was militaristically aggressive and noted "that any such suggestion is possible in England only shows how short are the political memories of men. It is less than twenty years since very similar notions enjoyed a brief but disastrous ascendancy in this country, under the name of Imperialism."[308] As Hobhouse perceived the Great War as a potential turning point in the European mind-set, he extensively reflected on the future of internationalism during and after the Great War.

Similarly, Hobson, a committed critique of Imperialism since the days of the Boer War, condemned all the Great Powers in their 'cravings' for 'places in the sun,' and asked "can we confidently assert that no other State [then Germany] has in the past harboured such designs, or may not harbour them again?"[309] According to Hobson, the international order before the Great War that was defined by the 'pursuit of the

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[306] James H. Tufts, "Ethics and International Relations," *International Journal of Ethics* 28, no. 3 (1918): 311.

[307] L. T. Hobhouse, *The World in Conflict* (London: T. Fisher Unwin LTD., 1915), 15–16.

[308] Hobhouse, 52.

[309] J. A. Hobson, *Towards International Government* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915), 14.

Balance of Power' was "seen to be nothing else than an idle feint."[310] It also did not present any potential for the formation of a true and stable balance, as "the sole and constant aim of such group and Power" was

> not to achieve or to maintain the balance but to weight it on one side. Such an alternating and oscillating balance gives the maximum of insecurity, and thus plays the most effectively the game of war and armaments.[311]

Thus, Hobson recognized the end of the Great War as a critical junction for the realization of a wider and ethical international order. In 1916 he wrote, "I believe that, as the product of the war, there will exist a greatly strengthened common will for peace, for peace at almost any price" in its aftermath.[312] He argued that if each state had a strong conviction regarding the necessity of forming an international organization for its own security as well as the security of other states, a world federation would survive and strengthen the common will of humanity. [313]

The secondary literature agrees on the fact that, the First World War blew a deadly strike to British liberals' faith in the imperial project as a means of civilizing the world although the British Empire itself emerged from the war with larger territories. This was the result of a combination of factors that were experienced not only by the intellectuals but also by the general public, the peoples in the dependent colonies, and the soldiers who fought the war. For the British soldiers it was a first time experience to see the territories they ruled and to fight alongside with soldiers from these distant lands; to put a face on their 'imperial subjects.'[314] To the peoples who fought for Britain, the war revealed the importance of their contribution to the war effort and led

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[310] Hobson, 23.

[311] Hobson, 23.

[312] J. A. Hobson, "Is International Government Possible?," *The Hibbert Journal* 15 (1916): 200.

[313] Hobson, 203.

[314] Hugh Tinker, *Race, Conflict and the International Order* (London: Macmillan Education UK, 1977), 39.

them to seek equality in government, as they were equal on the battlefield.[315] Concessions were already made to certain colonies during the war and there was a general trend of demanding more and more autonomy from the mother country in all the colonies.[316]But most importantly, the rhetoric adopted during the war in condemnation of Germany put unparalleled emphasis on nations' right to freedom and self-determination. And the common dissemination of these liberal values made it impossible to defend the empire through illiberal arguments. Thus, a considerable part of liberal imperialists, instead of totally abandoning the imperial project and demanding de-colonization, devoted their allegiance to the idea of a "British Commonwealth" that was imagined as a family of free nations.[317] According to Porter, supporters of the commonwealth in Britain were "antediluvian imperialists, romantics, humanitarians and Fabian socialists; people who in former times had positively welcomed the Empire for what they believed to be its contribution to the good of mankind, or else wished at least to see its successor making up for the bad it had done."[318] Such a conceptualisation of the empire necessitated one further alteration in the way liberals understood and condoned imperialism. Re-branding the empire as a commonwealth, a family of free nations, necessitated paying increased attention to settler colonies, and ignoring so far as possible the dependent colonies that did not easily fit in the picture. Although the tendency to focus on the settler colonies while thinking about the empire is argued to be present even in the last quarter of the 19th century, the dominant vocabulary used by the liberals in the aftermath of the Great War, made overlooking the existence of dependent colonies a practical necessity.[319] Although the British Empire survived the First World War and even widened its territory, it lost British liberals' support that had been justified by the civilizing mission of the British nation. The pre-war imperial vocabulary of

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[315] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 12.

[316] Bernard Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain* (Oxford [England] ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 256.

[317] Porter, 276.

[318] Bernard Porter, *Empire Ways: Aspects of British Imperialism*, International Library of Historical Studies 97 (London ; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 25.

[319] Duncan Bell, *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 281.

civilization, progress, educating the 'savages' or the 'barbarians' was replaced by a new set of values such as self-determination, national-sovereignty, international cooperation and community of nations. Thus, reflections on the future of dependent colonies focused on the distant goal of granting national liberty to the peoples who achieved a certain level of maturity. The end of the commonwealth was no longer keeping the colonies under British rule, but to set them free to become equal and cooperative members at the international level.[320] This, obviously, did not mean that British liberals totally abandoned their belief in the civilizational superiority of their people. It rather meant that, colonizing and ruling foreign peoples was no longer perceived to be a feasible or defensible method of civilizing the rest of the world. As it will be shown in the rest of the chapter, the younger generation of British Idealists were almost totally in line with the liberal sentiment during and after the Great War.

## 3.2 Mackenzie, Jones, Muirhead and Haldane from 1900 to 1914

The previous chapter aimed to show that prominent British Idealists were 'imperialists' to varying degrees at the beginning of the 20th century. F. H. Bradley, a source of inspiration for every British Idealist in metaphysics and D. G. Ritchie, professor of Logic and the writer of *Natural Rights* were the fiercest advocates of the imperial cause amongst this school of thinkers. They perceived the British Empire –or the rule of great empires- as an effective way of unifying nations on the road towards humanity's overall progress. As progress was the supreme good, any means for its realisation was recognized as 'morally legitimate.' Their position was greatly affected by the evolutionary theories that dominated social studies at the end of the 19th century. Although they occupied a marginal position in the overall British Idealist approach to the issue of imperialism, it was a great example of what Idealism was transformed into when the link of mutual good between the parts and the whole was severed. When the whole was constituted not as an aggregate of its parts but as an independent and Supreme Being, its parts became expendable. For both Bradley and Ritchie sacrifice of individuals or nations was morally acceptable if not preferable, when the overall good of the humanity required it. This hard-line 'militarist'

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[320] Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, 282.

imperialist British-Idealism faded in the years following the Boer war as D. G. Ritchie deceased in 1903 and F. H. Bradley was no longer interested in international politics.

For the rest of the British Idealists, the empire was acceptable so far as it served the good of all the peoples it ruled and to be able to do so, its unity was to be ensured not by military force but by the common will of its subjects. From their perspective, a 'true empire' became morally legitimate not only with reference to the end it served but also the means it employed for its realisation. As early as 1898, Bosanquet argued against the contention that a plausible end justified the means used in its pursuance. He argued a unification achieved by the 'rule of blood and iron' was doomed to be a fragile and short-lived one and its morality was questionable to say the least. The desirability of an end was not a satisfactory criterion in judging the morality of an act because "all ends are laudable to those who desire them, it would be held to follow simply and absolutely that might is right."[321] Thus, Bosanquet valued the empire to the extent that it served the betterment of the peoples it ruled, i.e., so far as its means were moral in themselves. In the concluding paragraph of the "A Moral from Athenian History" he explained why and under which circumstances an empire was morally acceptable:

> If men cannot work out the obvious problems of the time for themselves, owing
> to the inadequateness of their mental machinery, some one else must and will do
> it for them. But they learn in time, to deal with their own affairs, and I trust that
> our conclusion, therefore, is not so bad as it might seem. We accept, indeed, the
> priceless gift which Athenian statesmen gave us, without turning up our eyes and
> regretting that they won it by force; but we understand for ourselves that the
> alternative to violence is education, and that absolutism becomes progressively
> less justifiable as men's minds become capable of expressing themselves
> effectively in the forms which constitute true political unity.[322]

A younger generation of British Idealists also embraced the ideal of a 'true empire', which was to found its unity on the educated will of the nations and their economic,

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[321] Bernard Bosanquet, "A Moral from Athenian History," *International Journal of Ethics* 9, no. 1 (1898): 267.

[322] Bosanquet, 269.

technological, and moral cooperation with each other. The Boer War was a sign of the British Empire's failure to constitute a 'true empire,' yet it was not a reason to dismiss the possibility of reform in the future. If the British proved capable of fulfilling their duty to the mankind and formed a 'true empire,' all of the nations living under its flag were to benefit from such an enormous achievement. Although, following the Boer War, the issue of imperialism and the British Empire lost its popularity in public and scholarly discussions, British Idealists continued to reflect on the matter in their books, lectures, and speeches.

In 1906, J. S. Mackenzie delivered a series of lectures as the Dunkin Lecturer in Sociology at Manchester University on the issue of 'Humanism.'[323] It was one of the most extensive studies on the concept of humanity as a larger unity than the particular nations, conducted by a British Idealist. It was also significant as it provided a wider understanding of the idealist perception of humanity without dealing at length with the issue of imperialism. In a prefatory note to the book in which the lectures were collected, Mackenzie stated, "the subject of 'Humanism' was selected, as having a special interest at that particular time and place."[324] That special interest in the issue was due to what can be called the spirit of the time they were living in because the "modern conception of the political life is so completely international as to make the precise form of earlier accounts almost entirely inapplicable."[325] According to Mackenzie the modern outlook was so international that it was possible to perceive all European nations as a single unity and as distant and unique a country as Japan was becoming an intrinsic part of the international community.[326] Yet, Mackenzie argued, the concept of humanism that dominated the modern life was not similar to Comte's 'religion of humanity.' While Comte's humanitarianism necessitated individual's complete reverence for humanity, it was not realistic to expect such love towards a concept, which was not a real unity.[327] Instead, the object of love and devotion was to be understood as a humanity of the future that could only be achieved through human

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[323] J. S. Mackenzie, *Lectures on Humanism* (London: Swan SONNENSCHEIN & CO., Lim., 1907).

[324] Mackenzie, v.

[325] Mackenzie, 89.

[326] Mackenzie, 89.

[327] Mackenzie, 181.

endeavour. Furthermore, such an understanding of humanity did not constitute a fallacious antagonism between humanitarianism and nationalism. According to him, it was erroneous "to think of a real humanism as obliterating the significance of national distinctions."[328] Instead, humanity was to be understood as a brotherhood of nations, which were intertwined through their social, economic, intellectual, and sentimental relations. He noted, "the nation cannot properly be regarded, any more than the individual, either as an independent atom or as something that may be mechanically moulded by external forces."[329] Yet, he also recognized the possibility of "help" for the development of a nation from the "larger life of the world" even with an element of compulsion.[330]

Although the overall emphasis of his discussion on humanitarianism was on the 'brotherhood' of nations and their participation in a larger unity, Mackenzie did not rule out the option of accelerating some nations' pace at development through force when necessary. His reasoning largely depended on his understanding of democracy. For him, understanding democracy as the requirement that each individual should have an equal voice in the ruling of his country was a deficient one. He argued that the essential nature of democracy was that "each may be at once sovereign and subject…"[331] A political order was to be considered democratic so far as everyone found "a place as an organic member in the progressive life of humanity" and became sovereign *"in those things in which he has insight"* and subject "in those in which he is dependent on the insight of others."[332] Such a conception of democracy required not subjection of races to other races or classes to other classes but "of the inferior elements in all to the superior."[333] Yet, if a whole nation or race were to be perceived as inferior in the ladder of civilisation, it might have been possible to form a defence of "democratic imperialism" from Mackenzie's point of view.

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[328] Mackenzie, 103.

[329] Mackenzie, 104.

[330] Mackenzie, 104.

[331] Mackenzie, 99.

[332] Mackenzie, 98–99.

[333] Mackenzie, 99.

Muirhead also embraced the attempt to reconcile the democratic ideal with imperialism in his book *The Service of the State.* Following an imperialist interpretation of Green's teachings, Muirhead concluded his book by equating 'the true democratic' faith with 'the true imperialist faith' and argued if Britain failed to live up to that faith it would not be "owing to any fault in its theory, but to some defect in ourselves or our instruments, some inability to enter into the common purpose of all civilisation, and to embody the spirit of the best political teaching in our actual administration."[334] Muirhead's evaluation of the 'true empire' and his assessment of Britain's approximation to it was very similar to the one he put forward in "What Imperialism Means" eight years earlier. He merely altered the word reconstruction with development in defining the true aim of the empire and argued that the empire was to develop what was "best in the instincts and traditions of these races themselves."[335] So, instead of planting foreign ideas and values into the subject races, the empire was to untangle their good values from those that were not so good, and develop them. This principle was based on the belief that "there is latent in the laws, institutions and ritual observances of even the most backward societies the aspiration after a form of life which, while in its details it is adapted to the particular instincts and experience of the people who have developed them, yet in its broad features as human and universal."[336] Although, he acknowledged the value of the particular expressions of the universal ideas and values in subject races, Muirhead still believed that the British civilisation had much to teach them. It was Britain's duty to capture not only the imagination but also intelligence of the subject races by showing them "what good government *means"* and that they were dependent on the good governance of the British "for peace and security of person and property, for command of the resources of science in the control of nature, for freedom of thought and speech, for their territorial homes, and for the graves and worship of their ancestors."[337] From Muirhead's perspective, non-British subjects of the empire as

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[334] John Henry Muirhead, *The Service of the State: Four Lectures on the Political Teaching of TH Green* (J. Murray, 1908), 112–13.

[335] Muirhead, 106.

[336] Muirhead, 107.

[337] Muirhead, 109–10.

rational human beings were expected to realize the beneficence of the British rule, if that rule was conducted justly.

Yet, at the very end of his discussion, Muirhead introduced a new condition for being a 'true empire', which he did not mention in "What Imperialism Means." With reference to Green's unconditional defence of self-government and active citizenship, Muirhead argued the ideal of the empire was to bestow self-government over its subject races. By quoting Green's contention that being a direct or indirect part of law-making and having the "higher feeling of political duty" was the basic condition of being a loyal and responsible subject, Muirhead argued any steps taken in including the native races in political deliberation were steps taken towards the realisation of the ideal.[338] Although he acknowledged, "to the distant administrator contending with the superstition, the petty jealousies and the stupidities of communities scarcely emerged from barbarism" such a theory may seem aloof of the situation at hand, he maintained his belief in the moral requirement of including every subject in the decision-making processes that rule his own conduct.

In 1910, Henry Jones delivered the Dunkin Trust Lectures at Manchester College that were delivered by Mackenzie 4 years earlier. Jones's lectures were published under the title *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer* and it included a lecture on "The Moral Aspect of the Fiscal Question" which dealt with the issues in the international arena. As it can be deduced from the title, for Jones, the most pressing issue in Britain's relations with other countries was economical by 1910. Yet the economic nature of the problem did not change the necessity of discussing it on the foundation of moral principles. Jones, like all other British Idealists was a fierce opponent of Chamberlain's 'tariff reform' and his opposition was based on the idealist contention that any form of adversary between nations' interests was a delusion. According to Jones, the theoretic basis on which a protectionist fiscal policy was advocated was highly erroneous as it was based on a proposition as follows: "a man cannot, at least so far as concerns material things, be a citizen of the world without neglecting, or at times violating even, his duties to his own country. We are entitled to suspect the

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[338] Muirhead 112.

patriotism of the humanitarian."[339] Jones argued, from reformers' perspective, the only moral duty that constrained states' actions was its obligation to provide larger territories, more powerful military power, and higher economical returns for the benefit of its own citizens. Such a perspective naturally resulted in perceiving the international order as a state of perpetual conflict. Jones expressed the inherent contradiction in this position by stating that "now, as all States have ideally the same obligations to their citizens, and therefore the same unlimited rights, they are natural rivals; and the normal relation between them is that of mechanical strain."[340] This was a direct application of Hobbesian 'individualism' to states in their relations with each other.[341]

Instead, Jones defended the necessity of an international order based on the perception of a common good for the benefit of all states. As progress meant moving beyond purely natural concerns with the use of reason and introduction of moral principles, rivalry and hostility was to leave its place to friendly competition and cooperation. As Mackenzie before him argued, humanity was not, as of yet, a concrete unity as the particular states were. He clearly stated, "the larger society of mankind is a far more empty and impotent universal than any single State in its relation to its members."[342] States, being embodiments of a unity that are "much more rich, concrete, and strong than that of any private person" were to be considered as building blocks of the unity of mankind.[343] Realization of this larger unity was dependent on particular nations' understanding that "the good which is exclusive is a false good," that a strong state is not a threat but a blessing to its neighbours.[344] When such an understanding of the international order was applied to the particular case of the British Empire, Jones argued that free trade revealed itself to be an irrevocable principle. He argued

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[339] Henry Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1910), 141.

[340] Jones, 140.

[341] Jones, 142.

[342] Jones, 145.

[343] Jones, 145.

[344] Jones, 147.

> The British Empire, by its political and social progress, by its science and
> inventions and industrial enterprise, has benefited every country with which it
> has held intercourse. And other nations have done the same to us. Their good is
> ours, and ours theirs. Even in international trade, where self-seeking seems to be
> at the same time both evident and most justifiable, our best neighbour is our
> strongest neighbour; for it buys from us to supply its own needs, and sells most
> to us so as to supply ours. We cannot profit by its decay, nor it by ours.[345]

Jones argued acting in contradiction to this moral principle was expressing antagonism to other nations and it was to be considered as a 'wrong against humanity.'[346] It was British Empire's compliance with the moral law that made it great and that ensured its future contributions to the progress of humanity.

Clearly, by 1910, the British Empire was 'great' according to Henry Jones. It was a beneficiary to humanity sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly. In 1908 he embarked on a long journey to Australia and delivered a series of lectures at the University of Sydney. With reference to Australia's success as a daughter nation of Britain he said, "Australia, in spite of its vast extent of rich soil and its mountains veined with gold, was a poor continent, of no account in the world's mart, so long as its inhabitants were savage."[347] Thus the empire was working for the benefit of humanity directly when it made the natural resources of Australia available for production and indirectly when it accelerated the progress of Australian 'savages.' British presence in Australia was a service to this country, which was largely inhabited by 'savages.' He argued that "no society is so conservative as the society which is crude, and no traditions are so inexpugnable, or can live so long after all their meaning has been lost, as those of a savage people. Progress is a force that gathers acceleration as it goes; and in early society it is for ages together quite indiscernible."[348] In addition to humanity's progress as an absolute end to which every state was to be striving towards, a state's moral worth was determined with reference to its service to those peoples it ruled. For Jones, it was a clear-cut formula:

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[345] Jones, 147.

[346] Jones, 149.

[347] Henry Jones, *Idealism as a Practical Creed* (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1909), 53.

[348] Jones, 55.

"any government is good whose purpose is to serve the permanent interests of the governed."[349] Yet, every single individual's inclusion in the political decision making processes was not a condition to be a legitimate state for Jones. He maintained that democracy was the best form "only because the political wisdom of the many is capable of being much greater than the wisdom of the one."[350] His defence of democracy was conditioned by the question of whether many actually had a political wisdom or not. When this condition was not met, when the many was ignorant and selfish, democracy was the worst kind of government because "the political folly of the many brings with it more irretrievable disaster than the folly of one."[351] Under such circumstances, even a country, which granted a say to every single adult citizen was sure to be a corrupt and degenerate one. Thus, the moral criteria to be applied to a state was not whether or not it let its citizens take part in politics without considering their capacity to fulfil this role. Rather, the criteria was whether or not a state used its power to educate and evolve its citizens so that they can realize their full potential and earn the right to have a say about how they are ruled. Although Jones did not discuss the concept of democracy in relation with the rule of colonies by British bureaucrats, his understanding of democracy approximated greatly to Mackenzie and Muirhead's. To the extent that he defended democracy only when its subjects had the intellectual and moral potential to decide in line with the best interests of the whole society, it may be discerned that he would not have defended granting Australian and other 'savages' political rights until they proved to be 'evolved.'

On his way to Australia, Jones visited his eldest son Hal who was an official in Burma. This occasion supplied ample opportunity for him to reflect on the moral qualities of the 'savages.' In his biography, written by Hetherington, it was stated "what he saw made a deep impression on his mind. He was firmly convinced of the beneficence of British rule in Burma; that there, at least, England sought and secured not her own advantage but the safety and welfare of the native population."[352] In his

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[349] Jones, 114.

[350] Jones, 115.

[351] Jones, 115.

[352] H. J. W. Hetherington, *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Jones* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1924), 104.

letters, Jones wrote about the native Burmese with great affection and praise. They were evidently good-natured and their children surely had an advantage over "the poor creatures either over-nursed or under-nursed in Glasgow" as they were "fat and free and easy and confident."[353] Yet, they were not to be trusted with the rights of citizenship until they internalized the Western 'genius for statecraft' or a strong 'impulse towards political freedom.'[354] It is remarkable that it was Henry Jones who paid the least attention to the particular values of the subject races among the British Idealists until the Great War broke out. With the war, he became the most explicit critique of the imperialist sentiment that led European civilisation to greed, ambition and a war of unprecedented magnitude.

Lord Haldane's address to the American Bar Association in 1913 was the last extensive reflection by a British Idealist on the international order before the outbreak of the Great War. The text was published under the title "Higher Nationality" and it was significant both due to Haldane's official position and the shift of emphasis it showed in his discussion of the future of international cooperation. By the time Haldane delivered "Higher Nationality" to an audience composed of American and Canadian lawyers, he was the High Chancellor of Great Britain. Haldane was a student of T. H. Green and he was known to be a liberal imperialist in political and intellectual circles.[355] During the Boer War, unlike many British Idealists, he supported Milner's preference of a military solution in South Africa. Yet, in his address Haldane did not deal with Empire's responsibility towards its 'less-civilised' subjects or the necessity of ensuring the British rule where it was threatened by other European nations. He was rather interested in the nature of the union among 'the Anglo-Saxon group', which was constituted by the daughter nations of Britain such as Canada and Australia; and the United States of America. According to Haldane, the USA's separation from the British Empire following a war between them, and the peoples of Canada and Great Britain did not prevent the formation of an Anglo-Saxon

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[353] Hetherington, 205.

[354] Jones, *Idealism as a Practical Creed*, 69.

[355] J. Lee Thompson, *A Wider Patriotism: Alfred Milner and the British Empire* (London: Routledge, 2008), 54.

group with shared ideals and ends.[356] For Haldane, such a unity among the Anglo-Saxon peoples was not only racial but also moral. It was based on what he called "Sittlichkeit" for the lack of a counterpart in English, and meant "the system of habitual or customary conduct, ethical rather than legal, which embraces all those obligations of the citizen which it is "bad form" or "not the thing" to disregard.[357] The USA was a natural part of this unity, as it was not based on the administration of a common positive law but on the traditional and voluntary following of a common moral law.

As "Sittlichkeit" had been hitherto used as the signifier of a moral law within a nation, Haldane asked "can nations form a group or community among themselves within which a habit of looking to common ideals may grow up sufficiently strong to develop a General Will, and to make the binding power of these ideals a reliable sanction for the obligations to each other?"[358] According to Haldane there was nothing that prevented the formation of 'Sittlichkeit' that applied to multiple nations in the nature of things. Yet it was an ideal to be followed and there was "a long road to be travelled" until such an ideal was realised.[359] For Haldane, the moral unity of the 'Anglo-Saxon group' was significant due to the era they were living in and the opportunity it supplied for constituting a starting point. He observed that almost every nation was starting to realise the necessity of forming favourable relations with each other. Haldane expressed what he considered to be a recognisable tendency among nations as follows:

> There are signs that the best people in the best nations are ceasing to wish to live
> in a world of mere claims, and to proclaim on every occasion "our country, right
> or wrong." There is growing up a disposition to believe that it is good, not only
> for all men but for all nations, to consider their neighbours' point of view as well
> as their own. There is apparent at least a tendency to seek for a higher standard
> of ideals in international relations.[360]

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[356] R. B. Haldane, *The Conduct of Life and Other Addresses* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1915), 131.

[357] Haldane, 115.

[358] Haldane, 127.

[359] Haldane, 128.

[360] Haldane, 129.

Such a tendency to follow a higher moral standard in matters concerning nations' relations with each other was highly observable among developed nations as they were leaving the ambition of conquest and war behind them. The significance of the 'Anglo-Saxon group', which was the outcome of British peoples' dispersion to new territories, was due to the already existing sentimental unity among the members of several nations. Haldane believed that development of a Sittlichkeit among nations was "certainly still easier and more hopeful in the case of nations with some special relation, than it is within a mere aggregate of nations."[361] Canada, Great Britain and the USA were part of such a group of nations, which already had a special relation and shared not only a common morality but also very similar judicial systems.

Possibly due to the special occasion for which Haldane prepared his address, he did not discuss the nature of Great Britain's relation with its dependencies with which it did not share a common morality. He focused on the Anglo-Saxon group, which he perceived to be a valuable example of international cooperation and a starting point for larger unity. He called his vision for a peaceful international order 'the group system' in his address. Although the promises of a future group system was only mentioned in passing, it reminds the reader Ritchie's vision of 'federations of free states.' There were already a few examples for Haldane's 'groups' in the international arena; he mentioned Germany and Australia, and France and Russia as examples of groups that were willing to cooperate with each other although their sentiment was not based on formal conventions. For Haldane a cooperation of such groupings was highly desirable for strengthening a mutual acceptance of international obligations. Although such cooperation was "still young," Haldane was highly optimistic of its future success and his reference was European nations willingness to cooperate recently:

> Recent events in Europe and the way in which the Great Powers have worked
> together to preserve the peace of Europe, as if forming one community, point to
> the ethical possibilities of the group system as deserving of close study by both
> statesmen and students. The "Sittlichkeit" which can develop itself between the

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[361] Haldane, 129.

peoples of even a loosely connected group seems to promise a sanction for International Obligation which has not hitherto, so far as I know, attracted attention in connection with International Law. [362]

If an inference is to be made from Haldane's later writings, it can be assumed that Haldane, like Ritchie, assumed that the Great Powers of Europe, which were to cooperate with each other and ensure international peace, were entitled to hold dependencies and colonies of their own. Furthermore, Haldane's vision of cooperation among great powers also implied a peaceful exchange of colonies when it was deemed fair and necessary. In his book *Before the War*, published in 1920, he did not condemn Germany's ambition to have colonies of its own, but the aggressive policies it pursued to invade other Great Power's territories. He thought

> She [Germany] had, it is true, the misfortune for so strong a nation to have been a hundred years too late. She had got less in Africa than she might have had. We were ready to help her to a place in the sun there and elsewhere in the world, and to give up something for this end, if only we could secure peace and contentment on her part.[363]

Unquestionably, Haldane was unique among the British Idealists in his disinterest in the question of legitimacy of British rule over its colonies. He was before the war, and remained to be long after it, a believer in Britain's right to have "a place in the sun." He seemed to be unaware of the fact that colonies of the Great Powers were also inhabited by native peoples and their rule by foreign powers constituted a dilemma when considered in relation with the European values of freedom and democracy. But he was also a pioneer among the British Idealists due to the importance he attributed to the former and current settler colonies of Britain as a precursor of a family of equal nations. His position can be taken as an early example of 'Anglo-American' commonwealthism that did not attract much attention before 1914.[364] It was not, for instance, until after the Great War that Mackenzie and Muirhead diverted their

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[362] Haldane, 130.

[363] R. B. Haldane, *Before the War* (London: Cassell And Comapny, LTD, 1920), 102.

[364] Duncan Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 196.

attention from the dependent colonies and focused on the idea of a "British Commonwealth."

Before the Great War, Mackenzie and Muirhead were evidently aware of the moral problem imperialism posed and they endeavoured more and more to reconcile the ideal of democracy with the apparent lack of it in British colonies. Their answer to this dilemma was that the nations who lived under the British rule were not yet ready to rule themselves, and the idea of democracy did not require the rule of an ignorant majority. It was Empires', British or otherwise, duty to develop those nations to their full potential before trusting them with the heavy duty of maintaining a state of their own. As the question of legitimacy was thus answered, Mackenzie, Jones and Haldane interested themselves in the relation between civilised countries. It was a general contention among British Idealists, including Lord Haldane, that mutual recognition of international obligations and a sentiment of common good was revealing itself to be in the spirit of the coming era. For them it was part of the evolution of humanity; of transformation of egoism into an 'enlightened egoism' which "recognises that the good which is exclusive is a false good."[365] They maintained that especially European nations were starting to realise that those things that were truly 'good' could only be achieved through cooperation rather than hostility and conflict. Furthermore, the wrong or misfortune of a state was starting to be understood as a problem that affected its neighbours and its solution was transformed into a common responsibility. There was an emerging sentiment that valued humanity as a whole not in contradiction with the interests of particular nations but integral to the summation of all their interests. It was based on the growing recognition of a moral principle, which Henry Jones summarised as follows:

> The failure or the prosperity of a particular State has always communicated itself
> to its neighbours precisely in the same way. Every wrong deed on the part of an
> individual State is a wrong to humanity, and every action that is right and good
> for itself is in the last resort a contribution to the stability and prosperity of its
> neighbours.[366]

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[365] Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays*, 147.

[366] Jones, 146.

Yet the British Idealist optimism regarding the future of the international order, hopefully as an arena of cooperation and mutual respect especially among the civilised nations of Europe was proven wrong by the outbreak of the Great War.

## 3.3 Initial Response to the Great War

Mackenzie, in a book he published in 1918, expressed the sense of shock experienced by the cultivated men of Europe when the Great War broke out: "When the War actually broke out, those who had placed confidence in any of the existing bonds of unity had a rude awakening; and many felt almost as if the foundations of their world had been completely wrecked."[367] Although he admitted that there were clear signs of preparation for a war of unprecedented scope, the apparent growth of communication and cooperation among nations created a sense of false security. He expressed that attitude of mind as follows:

> In the early years of the century, although it was well known that preparations
> for war on a scale of unprecedented magnitude were being made in all the
> leading European countries, and though its imminence had been emphasized by
> many competent observers, yet there was in most men's minds an ineradicable
> disposition to believe that such a calamity was 'unthinkable'… Friendly
> intercourse between the different peoples was probably more general than it had
> ever been before. Cultivated men in different parts of Europe appreciated one
> another's work, and were often in relations of cordial friendship with those who
> shared their special interests in countries that were regarded as their rivals.[368]

As it has been discussed above, British Idealists were not amongst those 'competent observers' who warned against the possibility of a great war. On the contrary they were quite content with the level of civilization achieved in Europe and they only advised furtherance of friendly relations in the continent. Their primary concern in regards to world order was ensuring peace through elevating non-European nations to the level of European civilisation. The source of their trust in a peaceful Europe was not only based on the friendly relations amongst the cultivated segments of European

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[367] J. S. Mackenzie, *Ultimate Values in the Light of Contemporary Thought* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1924), 329.

[368] Mackenzie, 327.

peoples but also developing interconnections at multiple levels. Muirhead noted, back in 1897, "we have the growth of international sympathy, industrial cooperation, and a community of intellectual interests, symbolised by such modern phenomena as international boards of arbitration, labour conferences, industrial exhibitions, postal unions, laws of copyright and of extradition."[369] And Muirhead was not the only Idealist who attributed a great deal of importance to the developing media that enabled European nations to have easier and more frequent communication. In 1901, Ritchie specifically mentioned "international postal and telegraph bureaus" as a proof of the emerging union of European nations, and Milner was noted to recognize the developing 'postal and telegraphic communications' as an important contributor to international cooperation.[370] This was again not uncommon among the British intellectuals at the end of the 19th century. Technological advancements, especially in communication and transportation were taken as revolutionary factors that would enable not only a true unity of the British Empire but also create a sentimental harmony among the European nations.[371]

Based on the good omens of intellectual relations, developing means of communication and newly emerging fields of cooperation, British Idealists pretty much ruled out the possibility of a war among the great powers of Europe. According to Mackenzie European nations were on a steady path to ensure a unity that approximated to the unity within a nation. Thus he was cautiously hopeful that war amongst civilized nations would disappear in the future. He noted in 1901, "The civilized nations of Europe already form in some respects a unity, even in some respects a more coherent unity than some nations have been able to secure; and we may fairly hope that in time this larger unity will form a court of appeal almost as

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[369] John S. Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, Fourth (New York City: HINDS, HAYDEN & ELDREDGE, INC., 1901), 221.

[370] D. G. Ritchie, "War and Peace," *International Journal of Ethics* 11, no. 2 (1901): 157; Thompson, *A Wider Patriotism*, 109.

[371] Duncan Bell, "Time, Space, Empire," in *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of the World Order, 1880-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 63.
Duncan Bell, "The Victorian Idea of a Global State," in *Victorian Visions of Global Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 174.

satisfactory for the nations as the law of the land is at present for individuals."[372] When he cast such an optimistic vision for the future, he was not unaware of those who warned about the rise of militarism. In 1900, he acknowledged the presence of such 'pessimistic' visions:

> They fear that we are losing our old anchorage before we have found any new moorings, and that a general decay of moral purpose is to be anticipated, giving rise to a recrudescence of barbarism. Some even point to recent events as showing already the beginnings of such a decline both in this country and in others… They point to the increase of armaments in Germany, the dominance of militarism in France, and the growth of the imperial spirit in both the great Anglo-Saxon peoples.[373]

For him, those who foresaw the danger of an imminent war among the European nations were "mistaking the turmoil of the moment for the spirit of the age."[374] Long after the break out of the Great War, British Idealists continued to point to the sentiment that led European nations to gather at the Hague Conference as a sure sign of future peace in Europe.[375]

For the British Idealists, the Great War was not only a source of unprecedented tragedy but also an awakening call to the inconsistencies in their line of thought. Although, as Bosanquet noted, the war did not "revolutionise" all their ideas, it "refreshed" their "view of some things" and forced, at least some of them, to move

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[372] J. S. Mackenzie, "The Use of Moral Ideas in Politics," *International Journal of Ethics* 12, no. 1 (1901): 20.

[373] J. S. Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," *International Journal of Ethics* 10, no. 4 (1900): 467.

[374] Mackenzie, 468.

[375] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life: An Essay on Citizenship as Pursuit of Values*, Library of Philosophy (London: Allen & Unwin, 1928), 318; H. J. W. Hetherington and J. H. Muirhead, *Social Purpose: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Civic Society* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD., 1918), 286.

away from their imperialist position.[376] The impact of the war on their intellectual endeavours is apparent from their constant reference to the Great War as a landmark that altered the way they reflected on international relations. In addition to that, there was a clear change in what they perceived to be the potential causes of war and an increased importance attributed to the rights of nations whether great or small. They were aware of the tragedy that was taking place at the battlefields in Europe and elsewhere in the world, and some of them were personally affected by it. Henry Jones had three sons who fought in the war, one of whom was killed and another one taken hostage in Turkey. In his letters Bosanquet mentioned one of his nephews who served during the war: "an open exhibitioner of Balliol, first in Moderns last year, applied for a commission in the new army, and will go out with the Army Service Corps in February; a very fine young fellow; would have sat for the Indian Civil next year."[377] It was the loss of great potential of the youth who died in the battlefields as well as the disillusionment with the European civilization that marked the Great War as a tragedy for them. Still, they retained their optimism along with some of their contentions regarding the nature of international order. In another letter Bosanquet relayed "We shall, I hope, be quite a new people after the war."[378] For them, the war was an evitable evil, and yet with it came the opportunity to learn from the past mistakes and to prevent recurrence of such evil in the future. According to Jones, two questions gained unparalleled importance with the beginning of the Great War: "The first is: How has the present condition of affairs been brought about?... The second question is: What can we do to prevent the recurrence of the present situation."[379] Other British Idealists, including those who argued for the redundancy of fixating on the past mistakes, were also in favour of going to the root of the problems that made the Great War inevitable. Muirhead recognized the inevitability of a retrospective questioning of individuals and nations' actions with reference to their moral obligations yet noted that "it was not at any rate till after the disturbance of the War

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[376] Bernard Bosanquet, review of *Review of The Group Mind: A Sketch of the Principles of Collective Psychology with Some Attempt to Apply them to the Interpretation of National Life and Character*, by William McDougall, *Mind* 30, no. 117 (1921): 67.

[377] J. H. Muirhead, *Bernard Bosanquet and His Friends: Letters Illustrating the Sources and the Development of His Philosophical Opinions* (Routledge, 2014), 163.

[378] Muirhead, 171.

[379] Jones, "Why We Are Fighting," 54.

that the significance of the questions it raised came to be perceived, and the answer it had given to be seriously debated."[380]  British Idealists' willingness to question the ethical misgivings of the European civilisation was partly due to their contention that the greater part of the past evils that culminated in the Great War belonged to Germany and not to Britain.

In their condemnation of Germany, British Idealists had to thread a fine line in defending the legitimacy of their philosophical position and yet not appearing to be defenders of German militarism. Both the "ardent Hegelians from Glasgow" and Green's and Nettleship's students at Balliol College with their leanings towards Kantianism were under the suspicion of being secret supporters of Germany in the war against the forces of civilisation.[381] Hobhouse was the flag-bearer of the condemnation of British Idealism through his very influential books *The Metaphysical Theory of the State* and *Democracy and Reaction.* While the former of the two books was a refutation of Bosanquet's *Philosophical Theory of the State,* the latter aimed to reveal idealism's retrograde influence on European humanitarianism. For him German idealism's penetration into the British thought was a direct source of conservatism and irrationality in Britain. He wrote in 1905 "For thirty years and more English thought has been subject, not for the first time in its modern history, to powerful influence from abroad, The Rhine has flowed into the Thames, at any rate into those upper reaches of the Thames, known locally as the Isis, and from the Isis the stream of German idealism has been diffused over the academical world of Great Britain."[382] With the outbreak of the Great War, Hobhouse's distrust of Germany and German philosophy turned into an outward hostility towards British idealists and especially to Bosanquet. He perceived his intellectual onslaught towards idealism as a war fought with the 'weapons of the spirit' against German barbarism and its representatives in Britain. The preface of *The Metaphysical Theory of the State* was addressed to his son Oliver who was fighting against the German forces, and it served as a justification of his attack towards German Idealism and its adaptations in Britain:

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[380] John H. Muirhead, *Rule and End in Morals* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 18.

[381] Muirhead J. h, *Contemporary British Philosophy Personal Statements*, 1924, 310, http://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.46370.

[382] L. T. Hobhouse, *Democracy and Reaction* (New York: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, 1905), 77.

In the bombing of London I had just witnessed the visible and tangible outcome of a false and wicked doctrine, the foundations of which lay, as I believe, in the book before me. To combat this doctrine effectively is to take such a part in the fight as the physical disabilities of middle age allow. Hegel himself carried the proof-sheets of his first work to the printer through streets crowded with fugitives form the fields of Jena. With that work began the most penetrating and subtle of all the intellectual influences which have sapped the rational humanitarianism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in the Hegelian theory of the god-state all that I had witnessed lay implicit. You may meet his Gothas in mid air, and may the full power of a just cause be with you. I must be content with more pedestrian methods. But "to make the world a safe place for democracy," the weapons of the spirit are as necessary as those of the flesh.[383]

According to Hobhouse, the founder of the theory of the 'State-god' was Hegel; and Bosanquet was "his most modern and most faithful exponent."[384] The danger of idealism, Hobhouse argued, was that it cancelled the value of human effort towards the realisation of the ideal by equating the state with the Absolute. To the extent that the state was represented to be the 'incarnation' of the objective mind through "laws, traditions, customs of the society," the idealist social philosophy required individuals to obey the state regardless of what their reason dictated.[385] Thus, there was something intrinsic in the idealist philosophy that gave rise to the Prussian state and legitimized its demands from the individual and other states. With reference to his undergraduate years at Balliol College, Hobhouse wrote:

In older days we passed by the Hegelian exaltation of the state as the rhapsodical utterances of a metaphysical dreamer. It was a mistake. The whole conception is deeply interwoven with the most sinister developments in the history of Europe. It is fashionable to conceive German militarism as a product of the reaction against a beautiful sentimental idealism that reigned in the pre-Bismarckian era. Nothing could be more false. The political reaction began with Hegel, whose

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[383] L. T. (Leonard Trelawny) Hobhouse, *The Metaphysical Theory of the State : A Criticism* (London : G. Allen & Unwin ; New York : Macmillan, 1918), 6, http://archive.org/details/cu31924014749539.

[384] Hobhouse, 18.

[385] Hobhouse, 20.

school has from first to last provided by far the most serious opposition to the democratic and humanitarian conceptions…[386]

For Hobhouse, the Great War signalled the inevitability of revealing the inherent, if not readily apparent falsities of idealism as a social and political philosophy. First and foremost it was necessary to destroy the 'state-God' cult that prioritized states' interests at the expense of the rights of individuals in particular and humanity in general. It was essential to combat the "doctrine of the state as an incarnation of the Absolute, a super-personality which absorbs the real living personality of men and women," so far as it was no longer Green's humanitarian social idealism, but a genuine Hegelianism that became an academic orthodoxy in Britain.[387]

Yet, British Idealists did not perceive their position as an orthodox one in the 1910s. On the contrary, they felt that their position was under attack from various quarters and that they had to defend their theory of the state without appearing to be defenders of German militarism. In this endeavour they formed a unified front and followed a common strategy. First and foremost, they condemned Germany's ideological position as a country and refuted all their claims to be a 'superior race' or a 'kultur' without an equivalent. They argued that it was the German state that indoctrinated its citizens in the belief that they were racially superior and that they had a natural right to everything on the surface of the earth. Yet, German people too were to be held responsible for the atrocious committed by their state, considering that the German state was an embodiment of their collective will. Although they were deceived by their state and by some of their intellectuals into believing that Germany's cause was right, it was the German society that provided a suitable incubator for the doctrines of racial superiority and militarism. Thus, it was impossible to make a distinction in terms of the moral responsibility of the German state and the German people in the wrongs committed during the Great War. After their direct condemnation of the German state and indirect condemnation of the German people, British Idealists offered a defence of German idealism as it was put forward by both Kant and Hegel. They defended the idealist tradition starting from Plato and Aristotle, but argued that

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[386] Hobhouse, 23.

[387] Hobhouse, 24.

both Hegel's followers and opponents in Germany distorted his philosophy. For the British Idealists the intellectual culprit of the Great War was mainly Treitschke and von Bernhardi. The culmination of their position regarding the moral responsibility of the German state, people, and philosophy was a complicated one, mostly shaped by their dislike of German militarism and their endeavour to ensure the continuing legitimacy of their philosophical position. Furthermore their personal links with Germany, mostly developed during their research visits to the continent required them to be cautious not to be identified as Prussian supporters. Yet their attempts to tread the fine line did not always succeed. Lord Haldane, who served as the War Minister between 1905 and 1912 and as Lord Chancellor from 1912 to 1915 was not included in the newly founded cabinet after his German affiliations attracted attention in the media. He wrote a detailed account of his diplomatic attempts to prevent the coming war and his reflections on the German attitude before and during the war in an address titled *The Future of Democracy*[388] and his book *Before the War.*[389]

## 3.4 British Idealism on German State and Philosophy

Haldane started his address to the 'auspices of the workers' educational association' with an acknowledgement of his long-standing admiration for German philosophy. And then he identified the distortion of this great philosophical tradition by the military forces as one of the major causes of Germany's submergence in international aggression. He said:

> I have admired, in days that are passed, and I admire not less now, the splendid triumph of thought which the great Germans of a hundred years ago brought before the world. But the efforts for peace of Kant, Goethe, and Schiller of a century ago –who thought mankind what was meant by the wonderful power of thought- those efforts have been perverted and turned to base account in the hands of the military caste who, within a very short time of the outbreak of this war, at last gained real domination into this enterprise against the liberties of mankind.[390]

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[388] R. B. Haldane, *The Future of Democracy: An Address by Lord Haldane* (London: Headley Bros. Publishers, LTD., 1918).

[389] Haldane, *Before the War*.

[390] Haldane, *The Future of Democracy: An Address by Lord Haldane*, 2.

According to Haldane, it was a distorted version of German philosophy that intoxicated not only the German people but also the German government. The success of German military caste was unexpected according to Haldane, as he thought that the German nation was not "so very different" from his own nation and yet they were so easily convinced to go into a war of domination.[391] He offered a detailed justification of his condemnation of the German military caste long after the war was over and he felt himself obliged to reveal the details of his personal dealings with the German state in his capacity as the Lord Chancellor. He argued that both the German Emperor and Chancellor Bethmann desired to preserve peace among the great powers of Europe yet "to that end they took inadequate means."[392] They surrendered the reigns of the state machinery to the military leaders in 1913 and from then on "the military party" in Germany "began to talk of a 'preventive' war" against the Entente powers whom they thought aimed to "ring round and crush Germany."[393] Haldane believed that it was due to the nature of the militaristic mind, which ruled Germany at the time that the public mind was surrendered to the unsubstantiated fears of foreign aggression. According to him, Germany lacked a democratic system, which would have kept the militaristic mind under control, and it resulted in the uncontrolled rule of soldiers: "The military mind when it is highly developed is dangerous. It sees only its own bits, but this it sees with great clearness, and in consequence becomes very powerful. There is only one way of holding it to its legitimate function, and that is by the supremacy of public opinion in a Parliament as its final exponent."[394] To the extent that German nation and the German state failed in sustaining a democratic system, the military caste filled the power vacuum and took the initiative in deciding the future of the country. Unfortunately, its decisions affected every country it dealt with, be they friend or foe. Haldane argued that if it was not for the 'fascinating glitter' of the German army, "Austria would not have acted as she did, nor would Turkey, nor Bulgaria."[395] Haldane was insistent on the view that apart from some

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[391] Haldane, 4.

[392] Haldane, *Before the War*, 149.

[393] Haldane, 56.

Haldane, 85.

[394] Haldane, *Before the War*, 90.

[395] Haldane, 75.

minor eccentricities there were not many differences between the British and the German peoples. Yet, he recognized one vital variance in the German mind set, which allowed the military to easily seize control of the country prior to the Great War. He described this variation with reference to his personal observations during his stays in Germany. About the German people he stated, "they were very much like our own people except in one thing. This was that they were trained simply to obey, and to carry out whatever they were told by their rulers… What impressed me was the little part that they had in directing their own government, and the little they knew about what it was doing."[396]

The German State's power to shape the minds of its citizens was recognized by other British Idealists as well. Henry Jones used it as an example of states' capacity to direct its citizens to collectively adopt certain matters as an absolute end. According to Jones, this capacity in itself was not evil; on the contrary it was impossible for states to "avoid educating its citizens."[397]  What mattered was the moral worth of the goal that was designated as the ultimate end. He wrote in 1918
"Germany has given the world an obvious example, which it would do well never to forget, of the power of the State to form the character of its citizens. That it has turned that power to an evil and most destructive use is in itself no proof that it could not have been turned to a good use."[398] In the German example, the state evidently encouraged its citizens to take the good of the German Empire as the highest end towards which they were to strive. Such a supreme end naturally required exaltation of 'military force and aggressive domination' to subdue other states. Designating the good of the German Empire as the ultimate goal of a nation was immoral as it automatically implicated hostility between the German Empire and other states so far as international relations were understood to be a zero-sum game. Such a perception did not only made the gain of the German Empire dependent on the loss of other nations but also precluded the possibility of collective effort towards the common good of humanity. Based on this understanding Jones argued, "a State which is itself

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[396] Haldane, 25.

[397] Henry Jones, "The Obligations and Privileges of Citizenship - a Plea for the Study of Social Science," *Rice Institute Pamphlet - Rice University Studies* 6, no. 3 (1919): 122.

[398] Jones, 122.

inspired by nobler, that is, by moral ends, or ends which are as universal as rational life, broad and deep as humanity, could lead its citizens to adopt these ends as their dominant motives."[399] Yet, according to Jones, states' responsibility to direct its citizens towards wider and nobler ends, did not remove its citizens' duty to use their own reason and question the state's guidance regarding the most vital matters of life. The German people were guilty of their "passivity and slight love of internal freedom for the present carnage."[400] They had been ruled for some time according to the distorted ideology of a military caste in a political system that lacked democratic procedures of decision-making. Still, all these adverse conditions were not enough to cancel their duty towards humanity and the highest moral values of this largest unity, as these duties were a direct result of the fact that they were rational beings that had learned from history and their great philosophers that wars of aggression were morally wrong and unacceptable. Jones' condemnation of the German people was harsh and in a way reflective of his disappointment in one of the most advanced members of European civilization:

> The Germans have deserved their Emperor and their Nietzsche… It is the nation that has willed the war; and we must expect that the strength to make it successful. Thorough in this as in other matters, the German people as a whole, statesmen and generals, scientific men and philosophers, merchants and working men have little by little but year by year educated one another into the belief that while Slavs are barbarous, and the French are shallow and frivolous, and the British people effete, they, themselves, in the heyday of their national strength, stand for the highest civilisation yet attained by the human race, and have not only the right but the duty of imposing it, if necessary, by force, upon mankind.[401]

A more seasoned British Idealist, Bosanquet, also shared the view that the German people was not exempt from the moral responsibility of the war no matter how much they were misguided by their state. After all, they adopted the militaristic mind-set without any real resistance. In a letter in which he reflected on the chances of further

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[399] Jones, 122.

[400] Jones, "Why We Are Fighting," 60.

[401] Jones, 60.

collaboration with Germany following the end of the war, Bosanquet stated "*If* the German people would take a disgust to their military system, and erect a true democracy, I think we should fraternise; but of course that can't be 'octroye' by strangers, to them."[402] From the British Idealist perspective, German people were to blame so much as they let their state 'intoxicate' them with a false ideology of racial superiority and the immoral end of world domination. Yet, the greater responsibility rested on the state and the intellectual circles that produced and disseminated such false ideology. Furthermore, the harm they inflicted was doubled by their distortion and defamation of the great tradition of German idealism, which taught the world the moral worth of perpetual peace with Kant and the centrality of the state in its realization by Hegel.

Most of the British Idealists' were reluctant to recognize several central differences between Hegel's perception of international relations and that of Green's, even under the adverse conditions of the Great War during which Hegel was depicted as the philosopher of war. On the contrary, they had a tendency to follow back their genealogical roots directly from Green to Hegel and Kant; and sometimes to Aristotle, and Plato.[403] Before the Great War, the British Idealist defence of Hegel was focused on two central matters: the limits of state power and the prospects for progress in Hegelian philosophy. While the question of state power became inflamed from time to time, mostly due to the attacks from Hobhouse, the accusation of an inherent conservatism was a constant one to which British Idealists returned briefly yet constantly in their books and articles. In regards to the criticism of the superiority of the states' interests over the interests of the people in Hegelian political philosophy, British Idealists argued, there was an organic unity between the state and the individuals, and it was conceptually impossible for the state and individuals' goods to

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[402] Muirhead, *Bernard Bosanquet and His Friends*, 166.

[403] J. H. Muirhead, *The Elements of Ethics*, Revised and Enlarged (London: John Murray, 1897), Preface.

Bernard Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 17 (1916): 275.

Jones, *Idealism as a Practical Creed*, 12.

John S. Mackenzie, "Rights and Duties," *International Journal of Ethics* 6, no. 4 (1896): 439.

Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, vi.

contradict each other. The good of the state was its healthy functioning and its success in hindering the hindrances to the good of its citizens and it was totally dependent on its citizens' will to pursue a moral life. The good of the citizens, on the other hand, was realisation of their potentials in every aspect of their lives in accord with their natural abilities. Their good was dependent on the states' willingness and ability to fulfil its moral duty, which was maintaining an order in which individuals were not hindered but supported in pursuance of their individual development.

With the outbreak of the Great War, the focus of criticism towards Hegel and his followers changed direction. It was no longer Hegel's political philosophy that was under fire but his reflections on the nature of international order. He was now called the philosopher of militarism and the mastermind behind German aggression towards other states. The British Idealists were aware of this new wave of criticism towards Hegel and their response was to show, it was not Hegel's work but its distortion by his followers in Germany that constituted a philosophical justification of German militarism. In his autobiography, Muirhead recalled the increased interest in anything "that touched on German mentality and threw light on the depths from which the portent Prussian militarism had sprung…"[404] He also noted the dominantly negative attitude towards German Idealism that came with the Great War and wrote that his attempt at "disposing… of a total misunderstanding of what that whole movement meant" was an attempt in vain.[405] Still, Muirhead's book *German Philosophy in Relation to War* was the most extensive attempt to vindicate Hegelian tradition and reveal how it was turned into an atrocity in Germany after Hegel's death. In the preface of his book, Muirhead explained the purpose of his book with reference to the increasing paranoia towards anything Hegelian:

> Most people have a general idea of what is meant by "German Philosophy";
> most people, moreover, in this country believe that philosophical ideas have
> played a decisive part in recent events. But only those familiar with the history
> of modern thought are aware of the changes that have taken place in the course
> of the three generations that have passed since the death of Hegel. There is thus a

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[404] Muirhead, *John Henry Muirhead;*, 172.

[405] Muirhead, 172.

danger of doing grave injustice to what was in essence a great constructive effort of thought by associating it with the present orgy of violence and ruthless destruction.[406]

According to Muirhead, the story of German Idealism was "not of a continuous development, but of a reaction –a great rebellion and apostasy."[407] In his endeavour to prove Hegel's innocence, Muirhead started with the Kantian bases of German Philosophy and moved on to explain Hegel's theory of the state. He acknowledged, like other British Idealists did before him, that the state constituted a large part in Hegelian political philosophy, and explained the importance attributed to it by showing that the state was not an oppressor but the provider of justice. According to Muirhead, Hegel attributed great importance to the existence of a central state, as he was witness to "the enthusiasm of the French Revolution, and, like Burke, had come to realize the element of individualism and anarchy it contained."[408] Yet, the state as Hegel conceived it was neither an authority based on the rule of force, nor its end was to instrumentalize such force against other states. The state was the exact opposite of a brute force so far as it was the embodiment of the will of the people and the highest expression of that will in its totality. Muirhead stated "there is no ground to ally his political teaching with militarism as we are learning to know it today… The keynote to militarism is the doctrine of the State rests upon force. But this is precisely the view against which Hegel contends in the *Philosophy of Right.*"[409] Bosanquet, who was accused of being "the most modern and the most faithful exponent" of Hegel in Britain, also wrote a book chapter in which he defended the Hegelian roots of British Idealism. He started his chapter with the following statement: "we shall see how the splendid political philosophy of Germany a hundred years ago has passed on the one hand into her intoxication of today, while on the other hand, elsewhere, in face of a more liberal experience, it has found a decisive completion in a human and democratic sense."[410] According to Bosanquet, the true inheritance of Hegel was

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[406] J. H. Muirhead, *German Philosophy in Relation to the War* (London: John Murray, 1915), v.

[407] Muirhead, 3.

[408] Muirhead, 35.

[409] Muirhead, 35–36.

[410] Bernard Bosanquet, "Patriotism in the Perfect State," in *The International Crisis in Its Ethical and Psychological Aspects* (London: Oxford University Press, 1915), 132.

received and praised in Britain by philosophers and intellectuals and yet the situation in Germany was drastically different. The same words that Hegel left behind were "degenerated into the creed of violence and self-interest" in Germany due to the "passage of a large and many-sided philosophical doctrine into the hands of ignorant and biased amateurs, soldiers, historians, politicians."[411] A very basic yet vital concept's miscomprehension was mainly responsible for the distortion of the whole Hegelian system: the good. According to Bosanquet, the military and political elites of Germany understood from the good of the state, merely a material self-interest that totally excluded its moral capacity within itself and among other states. When the concept of 'the good' was reduced to a selfish interest in material wealth, "a great idea" was turned "into the meanest of worldly maxims."[412] The good, from this distorted perspective, no longer referred to a state's role in constituting a moral order in which individuals and families had the means of working towards their particular betterment and the common good of the community. As this central concept in Hegelian philosophy was distorted by 'mere omission and exaggeration,' the German mind-set was "brought to the point that what a man desires for his country is military supremacy to be used without scruple in the promotion of its exclusive interest."[413] Such an ideology did not only exalt the state for the military power it accumulated but it also equated the good of a state with its capacity to expand which implied its willingness and capacity to subdue other states. Its justification was an unsubstantiated belief in racial superiority and its driving force was a crude materialism.

British Idealists, being true heirs of German Idealism, held in contempt the German intellectuals who distorted Hegel's work into a shallow materialism. Heinrich von Treitschke and Friedrich von Bernhardt were the main culprits from their perspective, and although they very much disliked Nietzsche's work, they did not quite know whether he was responsible for the demise of idealism or not. In his examination of German philosophy after Hegel, Muirhead argued that there was only one and very basic similarity between Hegel and von Treitschke: both believed that the state was

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[411] Bosanquet, 140.

[412] Bosanquet, 141.

[413] Bosanquet, 143.

"primeval and necessary."[414] Yet, following their agreement on this very basic point von Treitschke set on to challenge the totality of Hegelian philosophy. Muirhead quoted from *Selections from Treitschke's Lectures on Politics* to reveal a very simple yet vital difference between Hegel and Treitschke's conceptualisations of the state:

> The State is in the first instance power, that may maintain itself; it is not the totality of the people itself, as Hegel assumed in his deification of the State –the people is not altogether amalgamated with it; but the State protects and embraces the life of the people, regulating it externally in all directions. On principle it does not ask how the people is disposed; it demands obedience…[415]

From Treitschke's position the highest duty of the state was to maintain so much power as necessary to ensure unquestioning obedience at home and forceful expansion abroad. Apart from his unfaltering concern about the extant of power the state possessed, Treitschke was not concerned about the duties a state had to ensure 'the good life' of its citizens. Yet, according to Muirhead this was the exact opposite of the idealistic justification of a state. He thought, "with Aristotle, Hegel held that the State came into existence for the sake of life, its abiding purpose was the good life, - the life of science and literature, of art and religion."[416] In *The Elements of Constructive Philosophy,* Mackenzie referred to "the danger" of ignoring the end a state was morally bound to serve in idealistic theory and put undue emphasis on the power it yielded. It was possible only through a distorted reading of Idealism, to conceptualise a state with the authority and the power of a divinity. Whether such a state was organized under the supreme rule of a monarch or the *vox populi* its power and deeds would remain unchecked by the moral responsibility of ensuring the good life of its citizens. Mackenzie pointed out that the real problem with such an understanding of the state was that "such a will would seem to have individuality without responsibility" and he added that "this way of thinking of it leads naturally to

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[414] Muirhead, *German Philosophy in Relation to the War*, 84.

[415] Adam L. Gowans, *Selections from Treitschke's Lectures on Politics* (London and Glasgow: Gowans & Gray, LTD, 1914), 12.

[416] Muirhead, *German Philosophy in Relation to the War*, 85.

its enthronement as an unaccountable power, after the manner of Treitschke."[417] When 'the good of the state' was no longer in close connection with the good of its citizens in terms of creating and maintaining a good life in pursuance of higher ends in science, arts, religion, etc., there emerged the necessity for an "ultimate end" towards which the state and the nation were to strive. The war in itself was not an end but only a means in Treitschke's line of thought. The end was "the spread of the German idea of civilization –German Culture."[418] Friedrich von Bernhardi's dictum "world-power or downfall" was a condensed expression of the German ambition to spread German *kultur* and dominance worldwide.

According to Henry Jones the voice that shouted "world or downfall" was heard clearly by all the German people and it was this belief in the inescapable necessity of becoming a Great Power along with Britain and France that "forged the machinery of the war."[419] The same voice was also heard in England and it was received with a sense of alarm and recognition of an imminent threat from Germany. Muirhead wrote "The works of General von Bernhardi are by this time fairly familiar to English readers… his aim is to convert the vague aspirations of his master for a larger Germany into a call to be prepared to 'stake all in all' in the cast for 'world-power or downfall.'"[420] Yet, British Idealists maintained that Germany did not desire to be a Great Power only for the sake of the power it would acquire. Surely, it was a concern on the part of Germany that among the Great Powers of Europe it needed to become an equal if not superior power to ensure its own survival. Von Bernhardi made his concern apparent in his book *Germany and the Next War* by stating that

> In this struggle of the most powerful nations, which employ peaceful methods at
> first until the differences between them grow irreconcilable, our German nation
> is beset on all sides. This is primarily a result of our geographical position in the
> midst of hostile rivals, but also because we have forced ourselves, though the
> last-comers, the virtual upstarts, between the States which have earlier gained

[417] Bernard Bosanquet, review of *Review of Elements of Constructive Philosophy*, by J. S. Mackenzie, *Mind* 28, no. 110 (1919): 334.

[418] Muirhead, *German Philosophy in Relation to the War*, 88.

[419] Henry Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1920), 14.

[420] Muirhead, *German Philosophy in Relation to the War*, 91.

their place, and now claim our share in the dominion of this world, after we have for centuries been paramount only in the realm of intellect.[421]

From the German perspective it was not only the territorial superiority of Britain and France that threatened Germany's success in becoming a world power. Especially, Britain's position as a world-empire in the spheres of culture and commerce was being received with disdain in Germany. According to von Bernhardi the future of the German Empire did not depend simply on the military invasion of new colonies, but on the successful dissemination of its language and its increased capacity to do commerce in those colonies. With reference to Lord Rosebery's comment that the world "so far as it can be moulded by us, should receive the Anglo-Saxon and not another character," von Bernhardi wrote "If we count the nations who speak English at the present day, and if we survey the countries which acknowledge the rule of England, we must admit that he is justified from the English point of view."[422] And then, he moved on to a comparison of the English and German influence in the world. The results of his comparison did not please von Bernhardi, as he perceived that "we find throughout the countries of the world German merchants, engineers, and men of every profession, employed actively in the service of foreign masters, because German colonies, when they might be profitably engaged, do not exist."[423] His conclusion was supportive of his initial contention that "in the future… the importance of Germany will depend on two points; firstly, how many millions of men in the world speak German? Secondly, how many of them are politically members of the German Empire?"[424] Treitschke made a similar point in his lectures regarding the importance of increasing the number of German-speaking people in the world.[425] Their recommendation for the future success of the German Empire was dissemination of German people, language, politics, culture, and commerce to newly acquired colonies as a means of not only 'civilizing the world' but also becoming a rival to England in world-domination.

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[421] Friedrich von Bernhardi and Allen H. Powles, *Germany and the next War* (New York, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1914), 13, http://archive.org/details/cu31924031165206.

[422] von Bernhardi and Powles, 79.

[423] von Bernhardi and Powles, 83.

[424] von Bernhardi and Powles, 83.

[425] Gowans, *Selections from Treitschke's Lectures on Politics*, 42.

Apparently, British Idealists were aware of the details of Treitschke and von Bernhardi's work. In *Fundamental Problems of Life* Mackenzie wrote, "I suppose it is true to say that, in the world as a whole, English is now more universally understood than any other language. The diffusion of this somewhat monosyllabic speech, in preference to some of the more finely inflected languages, has been regarded with a certain horror by Treitschke and others."[426] In another piece he wrote, Mackenzie referred to Germany's discontent with the vastness of the British Empire: "A growing nation that feels the need of 'a place in the sun' is naturally jealous of a long-established empire in which 'the sun never sets.'"[427] Their 'empathetic' remarks on the German 'jealousy' of the British Empire's worldwide influence was reflective of their belief, in the understandability of Germany's imperialistic ambitions. Haldane's remark on Germany's desire to expand its territories showed that he also did not receive such an ambition with contempt. On the contrary, Haldane argued "we urged Germany also to enter upon this path with us. We offered to help her in her progress towards the attainment of a 'place in the sun.'"[428] Mackenzie in "Might and Right" made a similar comment: "How far they [Germans] are really in need of colonies is a moot point… If we are not to have recurrent wars on a gigantic scale, the leading nations must learn to practice a policy of give and take in this respect more fully than they have done in the past."[429] Clearly, Germany's desire to expand its territories was received, even after the outbreak of the war, as a legitimate claim from a European state to take a part in the civilization of the world. What was not received well was the military means Germany was ready to employ for this sake based on an unsubstantiated claim of racial superiority. Their main opposition was to this 'false theory' adopted by German intellectuals and its materialization in the German state's militarism. In 1918 Muirhead wrote "What is wrong in Germany is not that it has a theory, but that it has a false theory, and we shall have failed to gather the whole moral of the war unless we have made clear to ourselves what precisely is wrong

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[426] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 247.

[427] J. S. Mackenzie, "Might and Right," in *The International Crisis: The Theory of the State* (London: Oxford University Press, 1916), 88.

[428] Haldane, *Before the War*, 145.

[429] Mackenzie, "Might and Right," 88.

about it and how it is to be corrected."[430] Regarding the internal dynamics between the German state and its citizens, what British Idealists found problematic was the severance of the link between the common good of the nation and the contribution it made to each individual's self-realization. As it was discussed above, they perceived a distortion of the concept of the good in its application to the state, which attributed undue importance to the material gains of the whole at the expanse of the well being of its parts. Yet, such distortion did not only result in an oppressive state that demanded unconditioned obedience from its citizens without being restrained by the moral obligations of a legitimate particular order, but it also had serious implications in such a state's actions in the international arena.

## 3.5 British Idealism and the Real Politik of the Great War

According to British Idealists, German militarism materialised in its hostility towards other European powers amounted to a sanctification of war as it was used for the betterment of German nation. The Germans justified war, an absolute violation of the moral order according to British Idealists, so far as it was serving the interests of the highest civilization. Both Henry Jones and Mackenzie thought that the driving force behind German militarism was their belief in the superiority of their race and *kultur*. According to Mackenzie the Germans were following the lead of the ancient Greeks and Romans in their proclamation of racial superiority and their right to world-dominance.[431] Mackenzie acknowledged German's superiority in certain respects; for instance "in almost everything that is expressed by the term Organization; and… in music and in constructive philosophy," but stated that "their superiority in other respects is not so apparent."[432] Jones also drove attention to the link between the German militarism and their conviction of embodying the highest form of civilization. He wrote "the Germans wished to impose their will on other peoples, and compel them to adopt their way of life, which they call their *Kultur* because they believed their way of life to be the best. And their ideal led them far in their career of conquest,

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[430] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 23.

[431] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 333.

[432] Mackenzie, "Might and Right," 83.

though without any very obvious benefit to the world…"[433] According to Henry Jones their belief in the superiority of their culture required them to achieve a complete world dominance and their militaristic ambitions were not to end until they ensured their control over all the peoples of the world. It was a reminiscence of "the conception of a permanent world peace… which presented itself in the past."[434] If they envisioned a peaceful future for the world, it was dependent on the complete dominance of the German culture:

> Once Germany was 'uber alles,' and all the nations had put on the livery of its
> *Kultur* and learned to rejoice in the service of this Teutonic breed of supermen,
> there would be no more war –unless it had every now and than to be kindled in
> order to fan the fighting spirit of heroes into flame, and avert the degenerating
> effects of a perpetual peace![435]

Thus, the struggle against German aggression was described by the British Idealists as a struggle for freedom and democracy. Germany's ambition for world domination was a threat to all nations alike and its cessation required cooperation of states. While France and Russia, being Great Powers themselves, were under direct threat from Germany due to their shared borders, Britain's security as an island was dependent on the strength of its navy in comparison with Germany's. In his reflections on the causes of the Great War, Haldane gave an account of the German military as he had the chance to observe it in 1906 as the War Minister of Britain. He wrote that the German army was greater than the military power France possessed and it was organised to ensure 'rapid mobilisation.'[436] Furthermore, Britain and France alike knew the process of piling up armaments in Germany, and it was a source of great concern.[437] Haldane accounted his dialogue with the German Emperor regarding the topic of 'disarmament' in his book:

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[433] Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 25.

[434] Jones, "The Obligations and Privileges of Citizenship - a Plea for the Study of Social Science," 138.

[435] Jones, 138.

[436] Haldane, *Before the War*, 23–25.

[437] Haldane, 101.

The Emperor then passed to the topic of The Hague Conference, trusting that disarmament would not be proposed. If so, he could not go in. I observed that the word 'disarmament was perhaps unfortunately chosen. 'The best testimony,' said the Emperor, 'to my earnest desire for peace is that I have had no war, though I should have had war if I had not earnestly striven to avoid it.' Throughout the conversation, which was as animated as it was long, the Emperor was cordial and agreeable.[438]

Britain's main concern was not the amount of weapons Germany possessed or the vastness of its army that acceded French army in numbers. Britain, as it had no land frontiers, had a small, voluntary army.[439] Haldane explained the rationale behind not creating a large army in Britain in the fashion of the continental forces that serve in Germany and France as follows: "It is customary to speak of the British Army as a very small one, But for purposes of comparison like must be compared with like. Our Home-Defence Army ought… to be small relatively to that of continental nations. This is a further result of our geographical conditions. The Home frontiers of this country are not land but sea frontiers."[440] It was due to the geographical uniqueness of Britain that it was free from the imperative of sustaining a large army. Yet, as an island state with dependencies all over the world, it was required to have a large Navy with the ability to engage in long-range operations. It was a strategic decision on the part of Britain to transfer all the resources it saved from not maintaining a large army, to building and sustaining a large Navy. In 1910 Haldane was confident of the ability of the British Navy in serving its purpose of protecting the 'over-sea outposts.' He wrote, "it is in point of fact enormously larger than the similar forces of Germany and France put together."[441]

According to Haldane, the main source of hostility between Britain and Germany was Germany's determination to build a navy that could become a rival to the British Naval force. Despite German Chancellor's desire to maintain friendly relations with

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[438] Ibid., 41.

[439] R. B. Haldane, "Introduction," in *Compulsory Service: A Study of the Question in the Light of Experience* (London: Hazell, Watson and Viney, LD., 1910), 15.

[440] Haldane, 12.

[441] Haldane, 12.

Britain, Haldane thought, he was compelled by others to expand German Navy considerably. A draft of the 'new Fleet Law' that was given to Haldane by the Emperor showed that "very large increases contemplated, of which we had no notion earlier, not only in the battleships, about which we did know before, but in small craft and submarines and personnel."[442] Germany's intention to considerably strengthen its navy was taken as a direct threat by Britain and Haldane argued that it was a legitimate concern when the specific necessities of the British Empire was taken into account. Regarding the legitimacy of British concerns about the increasing power of the German Naval force, Haldane wrote:

> The objection of this country was directed against… things that were being done by Germany in order to attain her purpose. The essence of these was the attempt to get her way by creating armaments which should in effect place her neighbours at her mercy. We who live on islands, and are dependent for our food and our raw materials on our being able to protect their transport and with it ourselves from invasion, could not permit the sea-protection which had been recognised from generation to generation as a necessity for our preservation to be threatened by the creation of naval forces intended to make it precarious.[443]

According to Haldane, after a careful examination of the contents of the German Navy Bill, the British Cabinet decided to 'counter these increases' with enforcing a similar policy of strengthening the Navy. And an additional precaution was taken by Britain to ensure its security from the increasing Naval force of Germany by forming alliances with other European powers. An 'entente' was formed among Britain, France, and Russia with the purpose of combining their forces on the occasion of an attack from Germany. The justification of the 'entente' was that neither of these powers had the means to resist the growing military force of Germany on their own, and that it was formed with the sole purpose of defence without any aspirations of launching an offensive against Germany. The already existing friendship between Russia and France was further strengthened with Britain's inclusion in the entente. Britain's decision to enter such an alliance was based on several considerations that

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[442] Haldane, *Before the War*, 70.

[443] Haldane, 87.

were summarised by Haldane in eight points. The overall purpose of the entente was put forward in the last one:

> The last thing wished for was war, and if we had to enter upon it we should do so only in defence of our own vital interests, as well as those of the other Entente Powers. Our entry, if it was to come, must be immediate and unhesitating. For if we delayed Germany might succeed in occupying the northern coast of France, and in impairing our security by sea.[444]

While the entente was perceived to ensure a 'balance of power' in Europe from the British perspective, Germany saw it as an attempt to encircle Germany by hostile powers. According to Haldane, the suspicion that Franco-Russian Dual Alliance with the support of Britain was preparing to attack Germany was simply a baseless paranoia. He noted, "the notion of an encirclement of Germany, excepting in defence against aggression by Germany herself, existed only in the minds of nervous Germans."[445] Yet, Haldane maintained the belief that although the German fears were baseless, the great powers that formed the entente had a responsibility to prove their good intentions. As it was the only way to prevent occurrence of a great war in Europe, Britain was determined to build a relationship based on trust between Entente powers and Germany. Still, in case of a failure in this endeavour, Britain had a secondary policy of preparing the country for a probable war.[446]

Even if Haldane's account of genuine British efforts to build trust among European states is taken to reflect the reality, it was immensely difficult to convince German intellectuals that their country was not under threat from Britain or the entente. Von Treitschke expressed his distrust of Britain quite clearly in his lectures by saying "England, while posing as the defender of Liberalism, egged on the European States against one another, kept Europe in a condition of latent unrest, and conquered half the world in the mean time."[447] Considering his lack of trust in England, it was quite understandable that the British efforts to ensure good will among European states did

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[444] Ibid., 151.

[445] Ibid., 36.

[446] Ibid., 5–6.

[447] Gowans, *Selections from Treitschke's Lectures on Politics*, 122.

not have any sincerity from Treitschke's perspective. Von Bernhardi, on the other hand, was convinced that the union of France and Britain was "cemented by the common hostility to Germany."[448] He believed that the entente was not only defensive but also an offensive military alliance. Thus, he attributed great importance to the *Triple Alliance* that was composed of Germany, Austria, and Italy, as a safeguard against a possible offensive from the entente countries and thought it was in the interests of the Germany to assist Italy in its quest for new colonies in the Mediterranean to ensure its loyalty to the Triple Alliance.[449] In addition to its core members, von Bernhardi had also a vision of including Turkey in the alliance against Britain, France, and Russia. He wrote, "we ought to spare no sacrifices to secure this country as an ally for the eventuality of a war with England or Russia. Turkey's interests are ours."[450] He believed that existence of a strong Turkish state in control of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles was in the interests of the triple alliance so far as it entrapped the Russian naval force in the Black Sea and prevented it from uniting with the French and British forces. Furthermore, von Bernhardi openly stated that the alliance of countries in the leadership of Germany was not to aim at only negative results, such as deterring a possible attack from the entente, but also to 'actively pursue' the vital interests of their partners with a collaborative effort. For instance, he advised a Turco-Italian partnership in the Mediterranean, which would satisfy the Italian desires for land in this region "at the cost of France, after the next war."[451]

Both Bernhardi and Treitschke's writings transmitted their belief in the necessity of a war among the European powers. Their belief was based on their suspicions regarding the British incentive to hinder German advancement in commerce and territories in the international arena and their strong sense of entitlement to a great German Empire that would have a strong position in the new world order. Thus, they thought it was imperative for the survival of Germany to both increase its military power and to lead a 'Central European Alliance' against the entente. Such an alliance did not only aim to deter a potential attack from the entente powers but also to collaborate for the

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[448] Bernhardi and Powles, *Germany and the next War*, 94.

[449] Ibid., 88.

[450] Ibid., 101.

[451] Ibid.

furtherance of the German, Austrian, and Italian interests in acquiring new territory and having a strong position in world commerce. Yet, Lord Haldane, a British Idealist and the Lord Chancellor of Britain justified the entente itself, in the years prior to the Great War, as a precaution against the signs of German aggression towards France, Russia, and Britain. What emerged in the first decade of 20th century in Europe was an uneasy standoff between two camps of states that had conflicting desires for territorial expansion and commerce. From the German perspective, if Treitschke and von Bernhardi is to be taken as its representatives, the 'balance of power' was a ploy used by Britain "to stir up enmity between the respective continental States, and to keep them at approximately the same standard of power, in order herself undisturbed to conquer at once the sovereignty of the seas and the sovereignty of the world."[452] Such an equilibrium's continuance was not desirable as it served Britain's interests and a new world order seemed to be possible only after a war among European states, as Britain and its allies would not let Germany's further advancement. From such a perspective Bernhardi wrote "we must remain conscious in all such eventualities that we cannot, under any circumstances, avoid fighting for our position in the world, and that the all-important point is, not to postpone that war as long as possible, but to bring it on under the most favourable conditions possible."[453] On the opposite side of this volatile balance of power was located Britain, and according to Haldane, the principle of balance of power was a dangerous yet unavoidable interim remedy in the current state of affairs. He wrote in his reflections on the Great War

> a general friendship between all Great Powers, or, better still, a League of the Nations, is by far preferable. But that consideration does not touch the actual point, which is that we did not seek to set up the principle of balancing that has given rise to so many questions. It was forced on us and was a sheer necessity of the situation.[454]

The situation, in short, was simply a vicious circle in which each states' attempt to gain more territory, build a stronger army, or increase its commerce via protectionism was perceived by other states as a threat to its own position and triggered the launch

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[452] Haldane, *Before the War*, 110.

[453] von Bernhardi and Powles, *Germany and the next War*, 112.

[454] Haldane, *Before the War*, 10.

of a similar policy. In this hostile environment those who had compatible interests or shared suspicions towards another country or countries formed alliances. Although those alliances were professedly formed for defensive purposes, their existence gave rise to further agitation in the opposite camp of states, which resulted in a continent that was divided into two hostile camps continually piling up armaments. By 1914, Green's apprehension that imperialism was bound to give rise to materialism and militarism in Europe was proven right and it took his students totally by surprise. It was the Great War that convinced even Lord Haldane, the most enthusiastic supporter of the Empire among the young generation of British Idealists who perceived the entente agreements among European states as a guarantee of international peace, that a League of Nations was by far preferable.

## 3.6 Time for Reflection

Evidently, a Europe divided into two hostile camps ready to engage in a Great War was a far cry from what British Idealists imagined it would be, 'a single unity' and a centre of 'international sympathy' in an era of civilisation and cooperation.[455] With the start of the war they began to reflect on two questions: How did civilized states of Europe ended in a position that the only 'honourable' option left in the international arena was to engage in a war with another European nation. It was a true tragedy according to Henry Jones because it left "to an honourable and unselfish people as its highest duty, a duty for which all the felicitous ways of peace have to be abandoned, to put its citizens to the slaughter, and, if it can gain its ends at no lower cost, to 'bleed a great country white!"[456] It was the duty of a honourable country as the German state was a threat to humanity in general and it was to be stopped before they gained world dominance in pursuance of a false belief in their racial superiority. Yet, taking German claim to racial superiority as the singular cause of Europe's inevitable destruction by a great war was not adequate. The underlying cause, according to the majority of British Idealists was the dominance of a materialistic worldview that was

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[455] Mackenzie, *Lectures on Humanism*, 89.
Muirhead, *The Elements of Ethics*, 221.

[456] Jones, "Why We Are Fighting," 53.

embodied in the colonial ambitions of European countries and resulted in the rise of militarism.

In a letter to a friend, Bosanquet wrote "I expect great catastrophes from time to time as civilisation becomes so intricate and the temptation to materialism so strong" and he added that the Great War served to "reveal what was there" in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century.[457] It was an inevitable result of the dominant materialism that urged the civilised countries to gain more territories, to have wider areas in which they had exclusive control of commerce. A state organized around the materialistic world-view necessarily engaged in evils such as "exploitation within or without, class privilege, arbitrary authority, discontent directing ambitions to foreign conquest and to jealousy of other states."[458] As each country desired simply material gain and not a common good, conflict of interest was inevitable; after all, the doctrine they followed suggested, "one state's gain is ipso facto another's loss."[459] Muirhead also observed the destructive effect of materialism in Europe, which "developed its most fatal consequences in Germany."[460] But, it was a common contention among the British Idealists that the dominance of materialism was not peculiar to Germany. In a book co-authored by Muirhead and Hetherington, the overall influence of materialism in Europe was explained as follows

> Hence among enterprising commercial nations there is a severe competition for "spheres of influence" –i.e. for tracts of rich and undeveloped country where one nation can establish itself predominantly and secure for itself the major share of the return to this kind of undertaking. Obviously, in this kind of scramble there are endless possibilities of friction, for the good reason that each group is seeking simply its own interest, and seeking it by means which necessarily react against the interests of others.[461]

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[457] Muirhead, *Bernard Bosanquet and His Friends*, 210.

[458] Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," 275.

[459] Bosanquet, 275.

[460] Muirhead, *German Philosophy in Relation to the War*, 93.

[461] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 277.

As the major source of material gain was expansion to undeveloped territories, imperialism was closely related to materialism. Though imperialism in itself did not require a pure materialistic interest in undeveloped territories of the world, its execution at the beginning of the 20th century was mostly devoid of any other concerns. And, Muirhead and Hetherington perceived that as long as the materialistic outlook dominated the imperial policies of the civilized countries, it was "hard to see what alternative there is to the cold-blooded partitioning of the less developed parts of the world among the more fortunate nations…"[462] In its materialistic execution, imperialism did not only mean a total neglect of the needs of the native peoples in the colonies but also a source of perpetual conflict among the European powers.

With an unusual exaltation of the Eastern outlook to life, Mackenzie also designated materialism as the underlying cause of the Great War in 1923. He argued that, both the uneasy standoff that preceded the Great War and the war itself was a direct result of "the materialisation of our Western outlook in recent times."[463] He argued that the source of the problem in Europe was purely economical and its most obvious sign was "the worship that was given to riches" with a total ignorance of the moral and spiritual ends they were to serve.[464] He complained that the European civilisation was marked with an undue importance attributed to material goods. With reference to one of Emerson's poems that read, "things are in the saddle and ride mankind," Mackenzie argued, in this respect the Western civilization was weaker than many "older and more primitive" civilizations.[465] Such devotion to materialism was to be considered as a weakness, because its pursuance usually meant disregard for higher goods that were common. Common good was always to be pursued with more devotion than the material goods as there was no limit to the number of parties that can benefit from them and they encouraged not jealousy and strife but cooperation. Purely materialistic ends, on the other hand, usually resulted in "a simple struggle for existence" and threatened, "to degrade human life to the level of the brutes."[466]

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[462] Hetherington and Muirhead, 279.

[463] J. S. Mackenzie, "Spiritual Values," *International Journal of Ethics* 33, no. 3 (1923): 258.

[464] Mackenzie, 258.

[465] Mackenzie, 260.

[466] J. S. Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1918), 119.

Mackenzie argued, in this respect there was something the Westerners could learn from the Eastern nations that attributed great significance to spiritual values sometimes with a disregard to their material well-being.

Among the British Idealists who witnessed the Great War, Henry Jones was the most ardent critique of materialism and its culmination in imperialism. As early as 1909, he argued that the materialistic nature of economic sphere posed a danger of prioritizing goods that were in limited supply at the expense of common goods. As material goods were not infinite and "it is the nature of material as distinguished from spiritual goods that they cannot be distributed without lessening every one's share," a singular focus on them reinforced not cooperation but hostile competition.[467] Yet, until the outbreak of the Great War, Jones did not perceived imperialism as inherently materialistic. It was possible to adopt a materialistic approach to colonies and dependencies with adopting policies that restrict free trade and perceive territories oversees as merely sources of raw materials and markets. Yet there was a higher form of imperialism that prioritized cooperation among the civilised states and service to undeveloped peoples for their own progress. Although he perceived some materialistic tendencies in the way British Empire was governed, he thought that it was possible to moralize every aspect of public life including the economical sphere and its practice within and among nations.[468]

With the start of the Great War, Jones adapted a much more critical approach to imperialism be it materialistic or not. In his article "Why We Are Fighting" he described imperialism as "the reasoned belief in territorial brigandage and in the methods of barbarism" and identified Germany's imperialistic passions as the main cause of the war.[469] It was no longer the native peoples of the conquered territories that were deemed barbaric but the European civilisation that "subjugates and even dedicates the higher, the things of the spirit, to the service of the lower and material."[470] Furthermore, it was the civilized nations of Europe that constituted the

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[467] Jones, *Idealism as a Practical Creed*, 210.

[468] Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays*, 147–49.

[469] Jones, "Why We Are Fighting," 61.

[470] Jones, 61.

direst impediment to humanity's progress in their singular pursuance of wealth. The Great War was a direct result of the dominance of material goods over moral ends in European civilisation and its embodiment in the world order was imperialism. The imperialistic order was ripe with occasions for armed conflict as it was turned into a sphere of "clash of material ambitions."[471] Later, in 1918, Jones wrote that the Great War was, or at least was supposed to be, a wake up call for the European nations:

> Such a discovery of a false faith has been made, in the light of the war, by the civilized nations of the world. They have had convincing evidence that the basis on which their civilization has hitherto rested is insecure. Some fatal error has crept into their methods of dealing with one another… for the first time in the world's history, it has come to seem possible that by their very inventions the civilized peoples of the earth may bring upon themselves universal ruin: *possible* in the eyes of everyone, *probable* in the eyes of the many men versed in man's history, *certain* in the eyes of those who reflect on the motives that make history, *unless, the spirit of envy, greed, and ruthless self-assertion perishes and the nations learn the meaning of mutual reverence and regard.*[472]

The error that became visible according to Jones was each nation's single-minded pursuance of its exclusive well-being, often at the expense of the good of other nations and the common good of humanity.[473] Such a hostile attitude towards other states naturally resulted in an increased need for protection from a possible offensive to their homeland or to their overseas territories. Thus, materialism in its imperialistic exercise gave rise to militarism in the European continent. According to British Idealists, the Great War showed that the materialistic mind-set has prevailed over the idealistic one in Europe and militarism was an inevitable consequence of the hostile world order it created. In Germany, the materialist ambition and its translation into a militaristic rage was acute and quite easy to perceive. According to Jones, "had Germany valued research in the domain of morals as it has valued it in that of industry and militarism… it would have found the powers of the world, not against it, but at its back."[474] Yet, British Idealists, and especially Jones argued that Germany

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[471] Jones, 55.

[472] Jones, "The Obligations and Privileges of Citizenship - a Plea for the Study of Social Science," 134.

[473] Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 36.

[474] Jones, 135.

was not an isolated case in its pursuance of material gain at the expense of higher moral values; it was singular mostly due to its late involvement in the empire-building practice of the European nations and its haste in becoming a Great Power through a accelerated process of militarization. But other European nations, including Britain, were also to blame for making a Great War inevitable.

## 3.7 A Small Dose of Self-Criticism

In his article *Why We Are Fighting,* Jones offered the harshest criticism of the British Empire that was made by a British Idealist. Both T. H. Green and Bernard Bosanquet were known sceptics of imperialism yet they both refrained from commenting exclusively about the British Empire. Yet, Jones, who was formerly defending the idea that a true empire was capable of serving moral ends of humanity, lost faith in both imperialism and the British Empire. His condemnation of the British Empire along with Germany's imperialistic ambitions is worth quoting at length:

> If, therefore, in attempting to find the cause of the present war we are driven to turn the light of inquiry mainly upon another people, it is not because our own hands are spotless. It was not by converting the heathen that we acquired their lands, nor for the sake of 'the ends of civilisation' that we drove the savages out of their hunting-grounds. We may say, with much truth, that our conquests have followed our trade, and that what we now possess has come 'in the way of business.' But at what time in our history were our business ways with crude peoples were honourable; or how often has the right of the savage to his wigwam been respected? We have been as ruthless, and we have been as ready to plead 'the rights of a higher civilisation over a lower,' as the German people are today.[475]

According to Jones, accusing Germany of sacrificing the moral values for the sake of material wealth, yet sustaining an empire based on the exploitation of conquered territories was hypocrisy. There was no fundamental difference between the ruling ideology of Britain and Germany, which was materialism for both countries. He argued that what Germany did was reducing "our own ways to a theory, in disregard

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[475] Jones, "Why We Are Fighting," 56.

of ordinary views of morals, and to seek to apply it in their thorough way to ourselves."[476] In other words, the only difference between British and German imperialism was temporal. While Britain achieved to attain its overseas territories before Great Powers parcelled out the whole world, Germany was a latecomer to the imperialistic game due to its latency in becoming a nation-state. In an uncommonly earnest manner, Jones argued that all the European powers including Britain, that claimed to be the agents of the highest civilisation on earth for over a century, brought down this great catastrophe upon the world:

> I do not think we can claim that, while other nations were entangling one another's ways through conflict of low aims and the clash of their material ambitions, doing and suffering great wrong, our own nation stood aloof in the 'splendid isolation' of innocence. On the contrary, it has taken all the nations of Europe in the past to make the war inevitable, and it will take them all in the future to make it impossible.[477]

Without denying the moral responsibility of Britain along with other European powers, Jones argued that the side that fought against Germany held the higher moral ground in the Great War. According to Jones, Britain was not only complicit in creating the circumstances that led to the Great War, but it also had a 'duty' to fight in it. The categorical duty to fight against Germany was based on its potential power to prevent recurrence of such a catastrophe. Although Britain itself was complicit in the moral wrongs committed that resulted in the Great War, it was justified to fight against it because it was growing out of the immoral practices of imperialism. Jones wrote "our right [to condemn the German nation], such as it is, springs from the fact that we are emerging."[478] The evidence of Britain's emergence from imperialism was evident in its willingness to "respect the rights of small nations and seeking, little by little, to nurse into liberty all the peoples over whom we rule."[479] Jones seemed to be convinced that, the desirable world order was no longer inhibited by a better or ethical version of empires, but by a moral order of independent and cooperative nation-states.

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[476] Jones, 56.

[477] Jones, 55.

[478] Jones, 56.

[479] Jones, 56.

The way forward required Great Powers to recognize that every nation had a legitimate and overriding interest in maintaining its own state and moving away from the materialistic passions that led to and in turn was strengthened by imperialism.[480]

Mackenzie and Muirhead, Jones' contemporaries in the Idealistic school of thought were more reluctant to move away from the idea of a 'true empire' as a means of serving humanity along with Britain. Yet, they also perceived the materialistic passions of Great Powers that were strengthened by each other's imperialistic power as a threat to world peace. In his book *Outlines of Social Philosophy,* published in 1918, Mackenzie offered a critique of the imperialistic mind set that had been morally justified with a reference to 'white man's burden.'[481] He wrote "now, it is certainly arguable that, if the ends thus aimed at could have been successfully achieved by violence… almost any amount of violence might have been justified by the achievement of some of them."[482] According to Mackenzie maintaining a belief in the existence of "a country with so high and unique a civilization that it would be to the obvious advantage of the world to have it universally imposed…" meant ignoring "the actual conditions of human life."[483] The actual conditions of human life, he argued, enabled peoples from all nations to interact and communicate with each other that lead to the dissemination of ideas and values without using violence. Although he did not offer a direct criticism of imperialism, evidently he was arguing against the moral legitimacy of maintaining colonies regardless of the end it was argued to serve. In the next book he published, Mackenzie pointed to the Great War as a turning point that revealed the central importance of "a vigorous development of national life" through the contribution of free citizens who live in a democratic order.[484] His preference was no longer with a world of colonies and dependencies schooled by the European nations but with a world inhabited by free and cooperating nation-states. He expressed his conviction on the importance of national self-determination as follows:

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[480] Jones, 64.

[481] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 192.

[482] Mackenzie, 192.

[483] Mackenzie, 193–94.

[484] J. S. Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1920), 209.

Now, it might be thought that the best way to secure that human beings shall march side by side would be to tie them together. But this obviously is not true of bodily marching. They can keep step better when each has complete control of his own movements. The same would seem to be true of spiritual advancement in individuals and of social development in nations. When they interfere with one another, they provoke antagonism; when they leave each other alone, they tend gradually to arrive at the same results. It is of the essence of every important human achievement that it must be gained by voluntary effort. This is the real ground for national self-determination.[485]

Apparently, what Mackenzie identified as the desirable world order was in contradiction with the existing organization of the British Empire. The colonies were ruled by British officials, who were foreign to the lands and peoples they were given authority over. Yet, Mackenzie was not wiling to openly condemn Britain over its disregard of its colonies' right to self-determination. Instead, he preferred to make no direct references to the specific case of the British Empire and to condemn foreign rule without tying it to the issue of imperialism. He was advocating the vital importance of national freedom and right to self-determination without condemning imperialism or its existing examples in the world. This attitude was most visible in his work published from 1916 to 1920.

## 3.8 After the Empire

In 1923, Mackenzie published "Spiritual Values" that marked a change in his strategy to defend nations' right to independence without condemning the British Empire. In a strain similar to Haldane's, he started to focus on what they called 'the daughter nations' of Britain and their union known as the 'Commonwealth.' While he recognized that Britain was formed into an empire long ago, he argued that it was going through a transitional period in the aftermath of the Great War. In his article, Mackenzie maintained that in the modern world the importance of spiritual values finally received the attention it deserved and it was translated into all spheres of life including the political and the international. In its specific application to politics,

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[485] Mackenzie, 194.

those spiritual values led people "to see that commonwealths exist for the sake of the good life, and not merely for the protection of bodily life and property."[486] What was first organised as British Empire was on its way to be transformed into a Commonwealth thanks to the recognition of independence and democracy as essential values that serve humanity's spiritual development. Again, in a sentence that reminds Haldane's position, Mackenzie expressed his belief that the newly forming British Commonwealth was capable of setting an example for the world. According to Mackenzie it was

> important now to lay stress on the federation of the world, not in the sense of creating a sort of super-state, but rather as the recognition of what is already perceived in what used to be known as the British Empire, that the countries of the world, though having distinct methods of organisation and different national characteristics, are essentially parts of a single Commonwealth, with great human interests that far outweigh their separate rivalries and apparent antagonisms.[487]

In his last book *Fundamental Problems of Life*, Mackenzie offered a detailed account of what a Commonwealth meant and how it was expected to function in the international arena. Clearly, a Commonwealth was "different in kind from any mode of unity that has so far existed" and it was not yet fully recognized by any of the existing political unities.[488] Britain was still "partly an Empire and only partly a Commonwealth" due to existing rivalries in the economic sphere and the incompatibility of cultural and religious values among its members. Still, as the Great War served as an awakening call to the nations of Europe, there was a common tendency to 'think internationally' and there was "a renewed interest in such schemes as those of Rousseau and Kant for the establishment of lasting peace and a reawakening of the desire to understand the modes of life and feeling in the leading nations of the earth."[489] What Mackenzie called a Commonwealth was "a community of a more comprehensive kind than most nations and including some diversity of

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[486] Mackenzie, "Spiritual Values," 257.

[487] Mackenzie, 261.

[488] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 320.

[489] Mackenzie, 330.

races."[490] Its significance was due to its ability to provide a sense of communal unity without requiring a "uniform system of law and organization."[491] According to him, such heterogeneous nations were to be brought together with reference to the attainment of a common good within a commonwealth. It was a model that was possible to be extended to the whole humanity because it enabled nations to preserve their own autonomy without creating an international order ruled by jealousy and rivalry. He argued that "the term Commonwealth suggests at once that what is aimed at in any complete form of social unity is a good that is common to the whole body that is concerned; and indeed it suggests that the good must be of such a kind as to be capable, in the end, of being shared by the whole human race."[492] He noted that the Roman Republic displayed some of the characteristics of a Commonwealth although it had a more or less uniform legal code.[493] In the first quarter of the 20th century Britain was the most developed commonwealth, although it still maintained some of the characteristics of an Empire. It was understandable so far as the Commonwealth had "grown out of the conception of Empire" but it was increasingly basing itself "less and less upon a uniform system of law and organization, and more and more upon ties of a less palpable kind –partly upon the recognition of community in race, language, and traditions, and partly, perhaps very slowly, upon a growing consciousness of the unity of mankind as involving a Common Good."[494] As the consciousness regarding the desirability of pursuing the common good of mankind gained ground, expansion of a Commonwealth of Nations, which do not necessarily, approximate to each other in race, language, or tradition was to become possible. In the concluding remarks of his book, Mackenzie wrote "I thus recognize this particular conception [of commonwealth] as a specially British contribution to the solution of the problem of World Citizenship. In taking this view, I trust that I have not been unduly influenced by a patriotic bias."[495] Even if Mackenzie's decision to advocate British Commonwealth as a role model for a cooperative union of nations had not

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[490] Mackenzie, 188.

[491] Mackenzie, 190.

[492] Mackenzie , 195.

[493] Mackenzie, 188.

[494] Mackenzie, 190.

[495] Mackenzie, 350–51.

been due to a patriotic bias, it still constituted a subtle move in condemning imperialism without attacking the British legacy in international relations.

The author of "What Imperialism Means" and the most ardent advocate of 'true imperialism,' J. H. Muirhead also moved away from the idea of reforming the British Empire into a moral unity by 1918. Like Mackenzie, he also adopted the language of the 'commonwealth' and paid increased attention to the values it indicated; democracy, nation-state, and world citizenship. In the introduction of the book he co-authored with Hetherington, Muirhead wrote "In the idea of a 'commonwealth' we are seeking to realize a wider citizenship… Looked from within the nation, it is demanded by all modern conditions that government shall be strong and efficient… But it is also demanded that it shall be democratic."[496] In the chapter Muirhead and Hetherington discussed the moral bases of international relations, they touched upon imperialisms' failure in prioritising the moral values in comparison with the economic ones. With an indirect reference to the Great War, they wrote "there [the international arena] the economic organization has so outstripped in complexity and power the more slowly built fabric of common spiritual life, that it threatens either to choke the latter, or to constrain it under mechanical and economic bonds, rather than be constrained by it."[497] Although they did not name the source of the problem, the critique they offered regarding the pre-Great War international order, indicated that they held the materialistic passions realized through imperialism responsible for the Great War. They wrote

> and perhaps it is worth pointing out, by way of warning and by way of hope, that the problems which are fraught with danger to the peace of the world are precisely those in which the economic motive is most crudely operative. These are the problems connected with the opening-up of the less highly developed parts of the world. If it were possible to restrict the economic relations of civilized countries to the exchange of commodities among themselves, probably no very serious threat to mutual friendship would arise.[498]

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[496] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 24.

[497] Hetherington and Muirhead, 275.

[498] Hetherington and Muirhead, 276.

Repeating the already well-known materialistic implications of such an international order, they argued it would inevitably end in disaster due to each states' egoistic pursuance of its material interest at the expense of its counterparts. Furthermore they pointed to the inherent immorality of imperialism with reference to its treatment of the 'weaker peoples': "apart from the exceeding instability of any such arrangement, the fundamental immorality of the whole position –the attitude to the weaker peoples, and the tacit recognition of them as suitable fields for exploitation by the stronger."[499] As, the idea of a 'true empire' no longer seemed to be a viable option to ensure world peace; both Muirhead and Hetherington advised a gradual process of granting independence to existing colonies.[500] In his article in which he answered the 'recent criticisms of the Idealist theory,' Muirhead argued, 'British Commonwealth' constituted a moral community that was "at least a partial embodiment of the will to a common human good greater and more compelling than that embodied in their own national State."[501] As he used the example of Canada and Britain in his evaluation of the British Commonwealth, it seems reasonable that his account of the commonwealth referred to the union of Britain with its territories that are largely inhabited by British immigrants.  Seemingly both Mackenzie and Muirhead replaced the idea of forming a 'true empire' in the post-Great War period with what Haldane called a 'Sittlichkeit' of the Anglo-Saxon group back in 1913. They referred to it as commonwealth and maintained the belief that it constituted an example for the unity of mankind within a commonwealth of nation-states. Henry Jones remained to be an exception in that specific issue, as he moved away decisively from the idea that the British Empire would serve the common good of humanity either in its pre-Great War form or in its transformation into a commonwealth.

## 3.9 Conclusion

During the years that preceded the Great War, the younger generation of British Idealists were concerned with the moral legitimacy of their rule over foreign peoples

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[499] Hetherington and Muirhead, 278.

[500] Hetherington and Muirhead, 282.

[501] J. H. Muirhead, "Recent Criticism of the Idealist Theory of the General Will," *Mind* 33, no. 132 (1924): 365.

and reflected on the matter in relation with the ideal of democracy. Still, they defended its necessity, if not desirability, with reference to the British peoples' responsibility to civilize humanity. Among them, only Viscount Haldane was singularly interested in the future of the British Empire as a unity of Anglo-Saxon settler colonies. Clearly, the British Empire with its settler and dependent colonies continued to be perceived as a progressive force whose contributions to humanity was far more greater than the occasional evils it caused. In regards to the cautionary voices that raised concern over the militarisation of Europe, the younger generation of British Idealists had a dismissive attitude. They perceived the technological advancements in communication and travel as guarantees of the continuing dialogue and cooperation within the Empire as well as among the civilized nations of Europe.

The outbreak of the Great War was a total shock for these names and they continually referred to it as a breaking point in the way they understood international politics. Although the philosophical basis of their political thought remained unchanged, a shift in the vocabulary they used occurred in this period. As they tried to distinguish themselves from the German intellectuals that defended German militarism by claiming national superiority, they abandoned their imperialistic arguments and put emphasis on nations' equal worth. Furthermore, the political continuum that ended in the Great War showed that European Great Powers were prone to unite in ententes against opposing interest groups in pursuance of expending their territories. By the end of the Great War, they were quite aware of the interconnectedness of imperialism and militarism. This shift in their position brought with it two interrelated arguments. Firstly, they engaged in a small dose of self-criticism as it became obvious that condemning German militarism without recognizing the British responsibility in the rise of imperial world-order was impossible. Secondly, recognizing that defending the continuance of the British Empire in its pre-Great War form was untenable, they advocated its transformation into a commonwealth of free and equal nations. To be able to do so they shifted their focus from the dependent colonies and the goal of civilizing them to the settler colonies whose cooperation was supposed to be based on shared characteristics of Anglo-Saxon peoples. Apart from their occasional remarks regarding the necessity of having good will amongst the Great Powers during the

future trade of colonies[502], they started to perceive Britain more as a Commonwealth than as an Empire, and attributed considerable importance to nations' right to self-government. This did not mean that they no longer believed in the superiority of the European civilization. On the contrary the "'Neo-Darwinian' belief in a hierarchy of peoples" persisted long after the Great War among the British Idealists.[503] The main change was that colonisation was no longer perceived as a legitimate or sustainable way of civilizing the world. This shift in their position can be placed in a wider movement from imperialist sentiment to liberal political values in British intellectual sphere.

In *The Oxford History of the British Empire* Brown argued that at the end of the Great War, "in establishing liberal goals for the Commonwealth, imperialists lessened their dependence upon dubious claims of racial superiority and forced their critics into the uncomfortable position of arguing that Britain lacked the capacity to promote good government."[504] According to Brown, this move from the vocabulary of the empire to that of commonwealth was a tactical one as it "offered an attractive vision of Empire as a kind of training academy in liberal democracy" and that "the gap between 'imperium and 'libertas' that had provided the point of leverage for pre-war anti-imperialists was now welded tightly shut."[505] From a rivalling position, Porter argued that the re-branding of the empire into a commonwealth was indicative of intellectuals' devotion to 'liberal values' rather than the project of an eternal British Empire. When the contradiction between liberalism and imperialism became manifest, the British Liberals shed their imperialistic title and upheld liberal values at the expense of the empire.[506] According to Porter, this shift showed that British people had always been more liberal than imperialist and empire was tolerated so long as it appeared to be in conformity with liberal values. It is impossible to estimate whether the younger generation of British Idealists truly abandoned the imperial

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[502] MacKenzie, "Might and Right," 88.

[503] Tinker, *Race, Conflict and the International Order*, 130.

[504] Judith M. Brown and Wm Roger Louis, eds., *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV: The Twentieth Century* (Oxford u.a.: Oxford University Press, 2001), 193.

[505] Brown and Louis, 193.

[506] Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, 312.

project or they rebranded the empire as a commonwealth to legitimise its continuance in a different form. What can be said is that they were not an exception among British intellectuals. While the shift in their vocabulary might point to their reluctance to face the British responsibility in the outbreak of the Great War, they were no longer committed to imperialism as a world order. They paid increased attention to the project of uniting self-governing nation-states within the Commonwealth or, sometimes more preferably, within a League of Nations as a means of ensuring world-peace and humanity's rights. In the coming chapter, their reflections on the establishment of a League of Nations and its implications regarding the formation of an ethical world order will be examined.

# CHAPTER 4

## A NEW HOPE: THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

*For most citizens, membership of a national State is the normal
way of fulfilling the obligation to the wider whole of Humanity.
In well-worn words, but words which bear much repetition and
reflection, T. H. Green wrote: "There is no other genuine
enthusiasm for humanity than one which has travelled the
common highway of reason –the life of the good neighbour and
the honest citizen- and can never forget that it is only a further
stage of the same journey."[507]*

### 4.1 British Intellectual Arena and the Idea of the League of Nations: 1914-1919

British intellectuals as well as their American counterparts did not wait for the end of
the war to start their advocacy for the immediate establishment of a league of nations.
Especially the last couple of years of the Great War and the following years till the
establishment of the League in January 1920 witnessed an almost all encompassing
call for the establishment of such a league. Fabians, and New Liberals, members of
Milner's Round Table and those who rallied behind Viscount Bryce seemed to

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[507] H. J. W. Hetherington and J. H. Muirhead, *Social Purpose: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Civic
Society* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD., 1918), 265.

constitute a united front in their endeavour for the realisation of a league of peace. Furthermore, both the Liberal and the Labour parties were supportive of their agenda and members of both parties cooperated with these intellectual groups on several occasions. The scope and effectiveness of newly founded Societies such as *The League of Nations Society, The League of Nations Union,* and *The League of Free Nations Association* were testaments to the public acceptance of the internationalist sentiment preached by these organizations. Their pamphlets, reports, and speeches were commonly addressed to the "sceptics," who believed that the idea of such a League was utopian, and the most prominent figures in the 1920s were either supporting or actively working towards designing and actualising a League of Nations. Alfred Zimmern, in *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law* expressed the extent of devotion to the idea of a League of Nations in Britain by stating that "it became almost a religious duty to 'believe in' it and to 'support' it" for a section of the British population.[508] The idea of establishing a League in which states would cooperate with each other in social, economic, scientific and technological matters and find peaceful solutions to their disagreements was readily accepted to be necessary by the majority of British intelligentsia. Their hard work in publicizing the inevitability of establishing such an international organization for the survival of Western civilisation was also effective in the broader public or, at least, they believed it to be so.

Starting from 1915, several individuals and groups published books, reports, and booklets in which they offered a detailed account of why they supported the idea of a League of Nations, and what such a League would entail. One of the first such documents was J. A. Hobson's *Towards International Government.* As an early example of its kind, it mostly dealt with the catastrophe-prone nature of the pre-Great War world order that relied on "Secret diplomacy of Powers" and why it had to be replaced for any reasonable hope of a lasting peace.[509] For Hobson, the current mood of Europe in 1915 was one of scepticism as all the links that believed to be holding the European States together through commerce and communication broke down

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[508] Alfred Zimmern, *The League of Nations and The Rule of Law, 1918-1935* (London: Millan and Co., Limited, 1936), 327.

[509] J. A. Hobson, *Towards International Government* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915), 7.

under the weight of militarism.[510] Hobson was convinced that the only force that could ensure a lasting peace among nations was the establishment of a reign of law at the international level. A year later, the Fabian Society published *International Government* in which Bernard Shaw supplied a justificatory account of their dedication to the League of Nations project and L. S. Woolf contributed with a lengthy narration of the European history of international treaties, concerts and conferences and why they all failed to protect the peace among the Great Powers of Europe. Their assertion was that "complete independence" was "a merely legal fiction" and all the vital interests of human beings were "international."[511] The following year, the Fabian Society had Woolf write a tentative framework for a League of Nations, which was published under the title of *The Framework of a Lasting Peace.* The book was aimed to give a comprehensive outlook on the existing plans for a future League of Nations with an emphasis on "the sameness rather than the differences in these schemes, to show, if possible, that the different ploughs, guided unconsciously, often by man "noble in reason," have followed two or three broad, general furrows while contemplating the possibility of an international organization and the seed of peace must be sown in one of them.[512] In it, the 'schemes' from six British and non-British peace societies were included: League to Enforce Peace, Minimum Programme of the Central Organization for a Durable Peace, the League of Nations Society, Proposals of Lord Bryce's Group, The Fabian Society Draft Treaty, The Community of Nations, and Preliminary Draft of a General Treaty for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes.

*Proposals for Prevention of Future Wars,* which was drafted by Viscount Bryce's group a couple years earlier, was also published in 1917. Although it was a product of the meetings conducted by a group of intellectuals in 1914 and 1915, and the British government knew about the report's existence as early as April 1915, its public appearance was postponed on Bryce's request "to avoid embarrassing the

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[510] Hobson, 177.

[511] L. S. Woolf, *International Government* (New York: Brentano's, 1916), 345. Woolf, 354.

[512] L. S. Woolf, *The Framework of a Lasting Peace* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1917), 11.

government."[513] The reports supplied by the Fabian Society and the Bryce Group is argued to be highly influential both in the public perception of a League of Nations and its initial reception by the British Government.[514]

Other well-known figures published individual books and booklets through which they expressed their support for a league of nations and put forward detailed accounts of how it should be organized. Among them were H. G. Wells, Gilbert Murray, Viscount Grey, Henry Noel Brailsford, and J. C. Smuts.[515] Although these names were located at various and sometimes opposing sides of the political spectrum, they all advocated for the establishment of a league. These works did not only dwell on the moral and political necessity of the League's establishment but also dealt with the technical details that emerged from such a broad project. Reflecting on a satisfactory peace treaty, designating the limits of League's responsibilities, and its member states, designing the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches of the league, and ensuring its long-lasting functionality were among the favourite subject matters of British intellectuals.

The literature on the League was dominated by highly technical discussions on the possible sanctions that would ensure reduction of armaments among the Great Powers and oblige these Powers to go to courts of arbitration in the case of future conflicts. On the matter of reduction of armaments, options ranging from a gradual and voluntary process of disarmament to a forced hand over of armaments to an

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[513] Martin David Dubin, "Toward the Concept of Collective Security: The Bryce Group's 'Proposals for the Avoidance of War.' 1914-1917," *International Organization* 24, no. 2 (Spring 1970): 290.

[514] Henry R. Winkler, "The Development of the League of Nations Idea in Great Britain, 1914-1919," *The Journal of Modern History* 20, no. 2 (June 1948): 99.

Joseph Charles Heim, "Liberalism and the Establishment of Collective Security in British Foreign Policy: The Alexander Prize Essay," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5 (1995): 91, https://doi.org/10.2307/3679329.

[515] H. G. Wells, *The Idea of a League of Nations* (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1919).

Gilbert Murray, *The League of Nations and the Democratic Idea* (London: Oxford University Press, 1918).

Viscount Grey, *The League of Nations* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1918).

J. C. Smuts, *The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1918).

Henry Noel Brailsford, *A League of Nations* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1917).

international authority were suggested.[516] The matter of arbitration was mostly considered with reference to the Second Hague Conference, and the League was expected to oblige all "the signatory Powers to agree to refer to the Court of Arbitral Justice."[517] A narrower approach to the League of Nations limited its functions to the matters of disarmament and arbitration and perceived it as a mechanism to prevent war. Viscount Bryce's *Proposals* can be taken as an example of this limited approach to the League of Nations, whereas, Fabian Society's *International Government* –as it is implied in its name- ascribed a much broader scope to the League's jurisdiction. Fabians' design of the League placed communications, public health, industry and commerce, and morals and crime within the jurisdiction of international administration. Furthermore, they advised for 'cosmopolitan law-making' on the matters of international maritime legislation and international labour legislation.[518] Dubin notes that especially after 1917-18, the limited approach was overridden by the more ambitious roles ascribed to the League: "In 1917-18, [many British] came to view an association of states as a device for transforming the international system rather than simply avoiding war."[519] In addition to legislative duties regarding matters that are predominantly international such as maritime law-making, and disarmament; strictly national matters such as education and health were proposed to be included within the agenda of the League of Nations so as to establish a universal standard of human well-being.[520] Wells, in support of a League endowed with every nations' loyalty noted in 1919 "The League of Nations cannot be a little thing: it is either to be a great thing in the world, an overriding idea of a greater state, or nothing." Evidently, the majority did not perceive the League as a first step towards a world state, yet it was expected to be something more than a war-prevention mechanism. The general

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[516] Hobson, *Towards International Government*, 21.

G. Lowes Dickinson, *The War and the Way Out* (London, 1914), 40.

[517] Woolf, *The Framework of a Lasting Peace*, 18.

[518] Woolf, *International Government*, v–vi.

[519] Dubin, "Toward the Concept of Collective Security: The Bryce Group's 'Proposals for the Avoidance of War.' 1914-1917," 299.

[520] F. N. K. Keith, "League of Nations Society Conference," *Journal of the Society of Comparative Legislation and International Law* 2, no. 1 (1920): 117.

Africanus, "Africa and the League of Nations," *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 1920, 319.

sentiment was that the League would be instrumental in supplying a platform for states to come together and develop cooperative solutions to common problems.

Curiously, the future of British colonies and dependencies received limited attention in Bryce Group's and Fabian Society's evaluation of the future of the international order. Actually, the British Empire was pointed out as an archetype of a League of Nations and as a functioning example of such international unity.[521] The harsh criticism imperialism received from several British intellectuals with the outbreak of the Great War did not find a reflection in the prominent League of Nations schemes. In Hobson's *Towards International Government* imperialism was mentioned as a primary reason of the rise of militarism in Europe, yet his recommendations for a future international government did not propose a solution to the problem of imperialism. And H. N. Brailsford, a journalist and member of the Independent Labour party wrote in 1917 that, like all the other Great Powers, Germany was to be given the opportunity to acquire its own colonies and commercial influence zones following the end of the Great War.[522] Although the question of who would have the ownership of the former German colonies and the lands previously held by the Ottoman Empire constituted an important subject matter in the discussions regarding the conditions of a satisfactory peace treaty, the existence of colonialism itself was not considered to be an issue.

It was only after the declaration of President Wilson's Fourteen Points, that imperialism itself received consideration from British intellectuals, and the future of the British as well as the German colonies was assessed in relation with the doctrine of self-determination. The most extensive suggestion regarding the future of colonial territories came from a South African, J. C. Smuts, in 1918, after Wilson declared his Fourteen Points. In an article published in 1922 it is noted that "in his suggested plans General Smuts had started out in part from the Fifth of President Wilson's Fourteen Points" and Wilson in turn adopted Smuts' plans and written them into "Article XXII

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[521] Woolf, *International Government*, 367.

Wells, *The Idea of a League of Nations*, 35.

Winkler, "The Development of the League of Nations Idea in Great Britain, 1914-1919," 96.

[522] Brailsford, *A League of Nations*, 250.

of the Covenant of the League and the Treaty of Versailles."[523] Thus, Smuts'
suggestions that were detailed in his *A League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion*
constituted the basis of the Mandates System of the League of Nations.

An overriding desire to acquire new territories for the British Empire in the form of
reprisal from Germany was not evident in the British literature on the League of
Nations. It was partly due to the common acceptance that the author of the Fourteen
Points, Windrow Wilson emerged during the Great War as "the unquestioned leader
of mankind" and he was a critic of colonialism.[524] His scheme for a League of
Nations whose details were pointed out in his Fourteen Points was accepted as the
blueprint for the future peace and well-being of Europe and the World. In his *The
League of Nations,* Viscount Grey, the Ambassador to the United States at the time,
wrote "The establishment and maintenance of a League of Nations, such as President
Wilson has advocated, is more important and essential to a secure peace than any of
the actual terms of peace that may conclude the war: it will transcend them all."[525]
Thus, their commitment to the Wilsonian points was contributive to British
intellectuals' diminishing interest in the fate of colonial territories. The matter of
colonies was avoided as an unpleasant discussion topic as it became evident that
colonialism in its pre-Great War form was impossible to maintain. In the *Oxford
History of the British Empire,* it was pointed out that the intellectuals of the time
"were not anti-imperial in the sense of wanting to liquidate the Empire, at least not
immediately. They wanted to reform it and to make it more accountable."[526] Yet, their
confidence in the British Empire's fair treatment of its colonies enabled them to
perceive the Mandates system as a challenge not to themselves but to other imperial
powers. Pedersen argued that, Lord Robert Cecil, President Wilson's main British ally
in his endeavour towards the establishment of the League was confident that the

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[523] Pitman B. Potter, "Origin of the System of Mandates Under the League of Nations.," *American
Political Science Review* 16, no. 4 (November 1922): 566, https://doi.org/10.2307/1943638.
Potter, 583.

[524] Durant Drake, "Will the League of Nations Work?," *The International Journal of Ethics* 29, no. 3
(1919): 339.

[525] Viscount Grey, *The League of Nations*, 14–15.

[526] Judith M. Brown and Wm Roger Louis, eds., *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV:
The Twentieth Century* (Oxford u.a.: Oxford University Press, 2001), 20.

British Empire had already met the standards required by the Mandate System and welcomed the program as it "would force reform on 'the badly governed colonies of France and Portugal.'"[527] Their confidence in their ability and experience in ruling 'savage peoples' in colonial territories also supplied the British intellectuals with an understanding that a well-functioning Mandates system would naturally place these territories under British rule. Smuts himself wrote "the only successful administration of undeveloped or subject peoples has been carried on by States with long experience for the purpose and staffs whose training and singleness of mind fit them for so difficult and special a task."[528] Britain, being one of the few remaining imperial powers, was confident that new colonial territories in need of a mandate would be entrusted to their care.

Yet, the fate of the colonies was not the main point of consideration in the designing process of the League. British intellectuals were mainly interested in ensuring that a functioning and long-lasting League of Nations was founded on the bases of good will and mutual trust. There were two equally important targets to be met to that end. Firstly, as it is discussed above, the British intellectuals made considerable efforts to design a fail-proof design of the judicial, legislative, and executive capacities and institutions of the League. Secondly, creating and maintaining a general will towards the establishment and conservation of such a League was perceived to be essential. To that end several Societies were established which held public meetings, lobbied with MPs from both Liberal and the Labour Parties and published pamphlets.[529] It was a common assertion that ensuring a sense of loyalty in individuals to the League in addition to their respective nation states was a precondition for the success of the League. Such loyalty was to be encouraged at schools and churches; Societies and Newspapers were to contribute towards creating an international sentiment. To that end Wells noted "it is clear that if a world-league is to be living and enduring, the idea

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[527] Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and The Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 28.

[528] Smuts, *The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion*, 19.

[529] Winkler, "The Development of the League of Nations Idea in Great Britain, 1914-1919."
Casper Sylvest, "Interwar Internationalism, the British Labour Party, and the Historiography of International Relations," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (2004): 409–432.
Heim, "Liberalism and the Establishment of Collective Security in British Foreign Policy."

of it, and the need and righteousness of its service, must be taught by every educational system in the world."[530] Creating the will to remain within the League even when its dictates seemed to contradict national interests was perceived to be vital for the success of the project and it was perceived to be a harder task than managing the technical details of international law and administration. Grey argued that it was an essential condition for "the foundation and maintenance of a League of Nations" that "the Governments and Peoples of the States willing to found it understand clearly that it will impose some limitation upon the national action of each, and may entail some inconvenient obligation."[531] The only remedy to overcome such inconvenience was for the people to know that the real interests of each and every people was international in its nature and maintaining peace was the primary condition of ensuring the realization of that common interest.

## 4.2 Locating the British Idealists in the British Intellectual Arena

Although the tone of the intellectual discussion on international relations had shifted from a philosophical discussion of human morality to that of technicality of international law from 1916 onwards, the British Idealists demonstrated little to no interest in adjusting their tone. Although they were aware of the on going activities within the British intellectual arena through publications and meetings of societies, British Idealists remained content with applying their idealist philosophy to newly emerging problems at a highly abstract level. On rare occasions some of them actively participated in the League of Nations Society activities or took official duties in the workings of the League. In 1918 Henry Jones wrote a pamphlet for the Society titled "Form the League of Peace Now: An Appeal to my Fellow Citizens" whose main purpose was to increase public awareness regarding the matter. Hetherington served in the secretariat of the International Labour Organization's Washington conference in 1919.[532] Additionally, Viscount Haldane is credited in several sources as the person who made the schemes for the establishment of a League of Nations known to the

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[530] Wells, *The Idea of a League of Nations*, 44.

[531] Viscount Grey, *The League of Nations*, 7–8.

[532] H. J. W. Hetherington, *International Labour Legislation* (London: Methuen & Co. LTD., 1920).

government through a memorandum in 1915.[533] Apart from that the names of British Idealists are hard to find in the published works on the League of Nations, 1915 onwards. One reference is made in Hobson's *Towards International Government* to Bosanquet and to his *Philosophical Theory of the State* in a footnote, though that reference blamed Bosanquet of deifying the State and hampering the spirit that is necessary for the establishment of a League of Nations.[534] Even lack of extensive criticism implies that the British Idealists were no longer considered to be popular figures in the British intellectual arena. Following the outbreak of the Great War, they focused on their academic endeavours, with the exception of Henry Jones who made "various appeals which had to be made to the civilian population –for recruits on the one hand, and on behalf of War Savings and of an increased industrial output on the other."[535] Their publications were mostly in the form of books instead of journal articles, and their approach to international relations was 'distinct' in its tone and scope from the mostly practical and technical discussions on international law and organisation.

As it was before the outbreak of the Great War, the British Idealists were mostly concerned with the teleological basis of morality that was present in all human societies with varying manifestations in the prevailing ethical codes. Yet, they were not totally unaffected by the new atmosphere of hope for a new and better international order. They were quite aware of the on going discussions regarding the establishment of a League of Nations which encouraged them to have a second look at Green's writings regarding humanity and relations among states. Thus, this period was marked by a renewed interest in the moral basis of international cooperation and moral unity of mankind. In that regard, they were focused on the question that was first raised by the Sophists according to Mackenzie: was morality based on the nature of things or was it a mere arbitrary convention. Their re-consideration of the basis of morality when the matter of international relations was the predominant concern of the time led them to reflect on the commonalities between particular ethical codes. In

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[533] Winkler, "The Development of the League of Nations Idea in Great Britain, 1914-1919," 109.

[534] Hobson, *Towards International Government*, 178.

[535] H. J. W. Hetherington, *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Jones* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1924), 123.

this regard they tried to extent Green's theory of the common-good and individual self-perfection beyond the limits of nationality and apply it to an international, if not cosmopolitan community.

Their return to the matters of the common-good and individual self-perfection which constituted the basis of Green's idealistic political theory, when coupled with the rising liberal sentiment in Britain and the United States, led them to move away from the language of civilization and back to the language of rights. Furthermore, their discussion of individual rights, especially in Bosanquet's writings was closely linked with the maintenance of a peaceful order at the international level. Although the relation was pointed out in Green's work before, Bosanquet placed the matter at the heart of his reflections on the establishment of a League of Nations and the limitations of such a project.

Another theme that resonated through their post Great-War writings was the significance of liberty at the national and fraternity at the international level. The distance they placed between their philosophical position and the imperialist sentiment grew through years –except some occasional lapses- to the extent that they condemned foreign-intervention and advised freedom to all self-sufficient nations. Although they were not totally free from making distinctions between the "civilized and the barbarous" peoples –as no one was at the time- for the most part, they acknowledged nations' right to their own sovereign states so that every human being would be endowed with the rights and duties that are due to him/her. The end to be reached was clearly pointed out as the "moral welfare of citizens" all over the world, and progress of civilization was ascribed only an instrumental value. In their considerations of the British Empire they put great emphasis on its transformation from an Empire to a Commonwealth and perceived the voluntary cooperation among the members of the commonwealth as an encouraging sign for the development of further international collaboration. Thus it exhibited quite a variation from their writings 20 years earlier during the Boer War when the end was perceived to be advancement of civilization.

Although there was a common understanding regarding the basis and legitimacy of international morality among the British Idealists, its application to the matter of

League of Nations varied considerably. It was Bosanquet who deviated from the main British Idealist position that perceived the League of Nations Idea as a plausible project. From a different perspective it can be argued that Bosanquet represented the closest position to Green's original approach to international order while others moved away in accordance with the 'spirit of the time.' According to Bosanquet a premature attempt to establish such a League would create greater danger for international peace and cooperation. Although, contrary to Hobson's allegations, he did not perceive a unity beyond the nation-state impossible, he took the existence of a general will as a fundamental requirement for its realisation. The remaining Idealists, namely Jones, Mackenzie, Muirhead, Hetherington, and Haldane perceived the League to be both possible and beneficial.

## 4.3 League of Nations as an expansion of the British Commonwealth

It was common among British intellectuals to designate the British Commonwealth as an embryonic stage of a more inclusive international organization. The idea itself gained momentum in the Edwardian Era as a transformative approach to the role and constitution of the British Empire.[536] According to Duncan Bell, it was constituted as a rivalling system of civic rule as opposed to France's oppressive imperialism. Bell maintaines that "civic imperialism was opposed to selfish individualism, emphasizing instead public duty, self-denying altruism, and the promotion of a virtuous patriotism, all on a global scale…"[537] Yet, an important point to bear in mind is that for many British Liberals at the time, the "commonwealth" signified the 'settler colonies' which they perceived to be "more legitimate and more durable."[538] Thus, possession of imperial dependencies in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean were not accounted for in many Liberal thinkers' evaluations of the Commonwealth and what it signified in a rapidly changing world order.[539] When the conditions in the territories that are

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[536] Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of the World Order, 1889-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 118.

[537] Bell, 139.

[538] Duncan Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 33.

[539] Bell, 33.

inhibited by 'savage peoples' that are ruled by British elites without any representation was excluded from the rationale of the commonwealth, what remained was a hope for the further improvement of a cooperative order of liberal states. From such a point of view, the pioneering scholar of international politics, Alfred Zimmern defined the British Commonwealth as a "smaller and more intimate league."[540] Another name who wrote continually on the League, argued in 1924 that "at present it looks rather as of through association we were going to get a future organization of the world on the model of independent nations within the British Commonwealth…"[541] More surprisingly, Smuts himself, a South African of Boer descent, perceived the British Commonwealth to be the only "embryo league of nations" because it was "based on the true principles of national freedom and political decentralisation."[542] Evidently, their claims were in regards to a British commonwealth that was constituted of the self-ruling settler colonies of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the British Isles. When other parts of the empire was taken into consideration two different strategies were adopted to justify the rule of these territories by a foreign nation: the argument that these peoples remained loyal to the British which proved their satisfaction, and that they were not ready for self-government and it would be morally wrong to abandon them to their fate.[543]

These tendencies that resonated in British liberal thinkers were also present in the writings of British Idealists. Duncan Bell argues that

> The pervasiveness of civic imperial themes in the debate over Greater Britain
> also helps explain the later infusion of imperial thought by philosophical
> idealism, One of the reasons that idealism emphasizing as it did the common
> good, duty, public service, and the mutual constitution of self and community,
> resonated so widely was that it proved compatible with extant patterns of

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[540] Zimmern, *The League of Nations and The Rule of Law, 1918-1935*, 495.

[541] Roth Williams, "The Technique of the League of Nations," *The International Journal of Ethics* 34, no. 2 (1924): 143.

[542] Smuts, *The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion*, 9.

[543] E. S. P. Haynes, "A League of Nations," *The International Journal of Ethics* 29, no. 4 (1919): 458. Smuts, *The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion*, 29–30.

thought, providing a new language and a new philosophical justification for some of the commonplaces of political discourse.[544]

It is true that up until the Great War, Idealism was one of the intellectually significant positions that supplied the idea of a benevolent empire with philosophical bases. By putting an uneven emphasis on the concept of civilization, they overshadowed other basic premises of their philosophical position. The concept of moral and political rights, individual self-perfection and general will were disregarded so as to justify the existence of an assumed patriarchal rule over 'savage peoples' while they were convinced of the moral legitimacy of the British Empire especially during the Boer War. Yet their writings from 1918 onwards stroke a different tone. While they were still loyal to the British Commonwealth, their support came with a number of pre-conditions. They were now concerned more with the well-being of each and every individual, be them from the 'civilized' nations of Europe or 'savage' peoples of Africa than the goal of advancing civilization or adapting 'savages' to European ethics and values. Furthermore, they paid increased attention to each peoples' right to self-determination and self-rule. These considerations led them to consider parts of the British Commonwealth as particular embodiments of universal morality that had a legitimate claim to independence.

Appropriate to their decreasing faith in the legitimacy of the British Empire as a benevolent power of the world, the attention they paid to the question of the Empire dwindled in time and even the term Commonwealth was not commonly used in their writings by 1920. Mackenzie condemned the ambitions that ruled all the Empires before the Great War that was justified as the 'white man's burden' and stated, "we now possess more of the world's territory than we are able to manage."[545] In a book published in 1920, Jones also accused Britain of taking part in a 'false faith' that was shared by all the Great Powers of Europe before the Great War.[546] So long as the territorial unity of the British Commonwealth was not understood to be a must, preservation of its parts was no longer perceived to be a moral duty by Mackenzie,

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[544] Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of the World Order, 1889-1900*, 143.

[545] J. S. Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1918), 192.

[546] Sir Henry Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1920), 26.

Muirhead, or Bosanquet. Muirhead valued the Commonwealth as a means toward the realization of a 'wider citizenship' and the strength and efficiency of the Commonwealth in itself was no longer a sufficient moral justification if it was not also a democratic form of government in compliance with the overriding liberal values. According to Muirhead it was necessary to defend the ideal of democracy "against the advocates of efficiency."[547] In this regard, both Bosanquet and Muirhead were understanding if not supportive of the newly arising patriotic sentiment in the British settler colonies. In 1924, Muirhead wrote, "even within the bounds of a common patriotism rival patriotisms have sprung up, as in our own great Colonies…"[548] In the special case of Canada, he noted "Canada would thenceforth have to take account of an element in the general will or in the conscience of the nation, which could only be realised by some sort of reunion if it were only that which a League of Nations could supply."[549] In relation with the possibility of the dissolution of the commonwealth, Bosanquet wrote "absolute government becomes irrational in as far as self-government becomes possible."[550] To him the existence of the commonwealth itself was not an end to be pursued; rather it was a means that could be dispensed with once it was no longer effectual. He argued "if the point [of the commonwealth] is that they are to be trained to freedom and equality, then it seems to me to matter little whether in the end they go their own way in peace, or choose to form an effective unity with the other members, which shall be a true state."[551]

Increasingly, they valued the commonwealth as a path towards larger and more inclusive modes of international cooperation. Bosanquet –who was sceptical of both the idea of Commonwealth and the League of Nations- contended in the introductory

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[547] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 24.

[548] J. H. Muirhead, "Recent Criticism of the Idealist Theory of the General Will," *Mind* 33, no. 131 (1924): 241.

[549] J. H. Muirhead, "Recent Criticism of the Idealist Theory of the General Will," *Mind* 33, no. 132 (1924): 365.

[550] Bernard Bosanquet, "A Moral from Athenian History," *International Journal of Ethics* 9, no. 1 (1898): 13–28.

[551] Bernard Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 17 (1916): 293.

chapter of the third edition of his *The Philosophical Theory of the State* that "to belong to the British Commonwealth will mean belonging to the League of Humanity; the great values and qualities are to display themselves and to show their full bearing for mankind."[552] Similarly, Muirhead pointed to the British Commonwealth as a precursor to the future League of Nations so far as it was "at least a partial embodiment of the will to a common human good greater and more compelling than the embodied in their own national State."[553] On a different note, Mackenzie argued that the organically growing sense of unity among the English-speaking peoples constituted the most significant opportunity for the establishment of an "ultimate federation of the world."[554] Written in 1924, it resonated with what Haldane argued in 1914 in his speech "Higher Nationality.[555] The difference of tone among these names is indicative of the varying degrees of faith in the possibility of establishing a functional League of Nations. While Muirhead, Hetherington, and Jones believed that the time was ripe for the realization of such a League that would include and benefit all the –independent- nations of the world, Bosanquet remained sceptical of the project until 1920s as he was highly cautious of any unity beyond the nation state. Mackenzie's position on the matter fluctuated greatly and his belief in the effectiveness of the League seemed to dwindle in time. In 1924 he seemed to believe that strengthening the unity within the commonwealth seemed to "hold out a more genuine prospect of an ultimate federation of the world than any number of leagues could yield" because "the ultimate basis of community must be spiritual rather than legal."[556] Contradicting some of his earlier writings, he bluntly wrote "I have never been able to believe that any mere machinery, such as that of a League of Nations could serve as a substitute for the conception of human brotherhood…"[557] His hope for international unity was more and more tied to the existing relations

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[552] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, Fourth Edition (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1920), lxi.

[553] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 365.

[554] J. S. Mackenzie, *Ultimate Values in the Light of Contemporary Thought* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1924), 245.

[555] R. B. Haldane, *Higher Nationality: A Study in Law and Ethics* (Washington: United States of America Government Printing Office, 1914).

[556] Mackenzie, *Ultimate Values in the Light of Contemporary Thought*, 245.

[557] MacKenzie, 245.

among English-speaking peoples, and the future development of a 'purified religion.'[558]

## 4.4 British Idealists' Perception of the League

As it is hinted above, there was no consensus among the Idealists regarding the probability of a League's success, though they all agreed that furthering international cooperation was essential for the future well being of humanity. They perceived international unity as a further step in humanity's advancement from tribes to city-states and then to nation states. The disagreement was mainly on the matter of timing and the method adopted for its realisation.

For Henry jones, establishment of a League was an urgent necessity in 1918.[559] In a pamphlet published by the League of Nations Union, Jones defined the League as a monument of nations' will to peace that "must embody itself amongst other state institutions."[560] He maintained that its establishment was an indispensible condition of a 'lasting peace.'[561] In a series of lectures he delivered the same year, he repeated his belief in the value and the necessity of the League. Yet he expressed his disappointment with the prevailing plans of a League that endowed only restrictive duties of "the policeman, judge, and executioner" in restricting armaments and punishing aggressive behaviour to the organization.[562] According to Jones, a League that would genuinely serve humanity would also have 'multiform positive services which constitute the main activities and all the virtues of good citizenship *within* a state." In the existing plans the League did "only say Dont's and frown –the method

[558] MacKenzie, 245.

Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 222.

John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life: An Essay on Citizenship as Pursuit of Values*, Library of Philosophy (London: Allen & Unwin, 1928), 90.

[559] Henry Jones, *Form the League of Peace Now: An Appeal to My Fellow Citizens* (London: The League of Nations Union, 1918), 13.

[560] Jones, 1.

[561] Jones, 5.

[562] Henry Jones, "The Obligations and Privileges of Citizenship - a Plea for the Study of Social Science," *Rice Institute Pamphlet - Rice University Studies* 6, no. 3 (1919): 136.

of the mother to the child when it is too small to understand the doing of anything."[563] It was a common expectation among the British Idealists that a genuinely international sentiment would necessitate such an authority to set standards for the internal conditions of its member states. Still, Jones was hopeful for the service of the League even in a highly limited form, as it would signify a "a change of mind on the part of the nations."[564] After its establishment, Jones rarely commented on the effectiveness of the League.

Mackenzie's fluctuating approach to the League can be understood as a reflection of his day-to-day evaluations of its endeavours. In *Outlines of Social Philosophy* published in 1918, Mackenzie appeared to be quite supportive of the idea of League of Nations. He argued that establishing and maintaining a League was possible as it would not pose any challenge to states' sovereignty and that it would guarantee a "good that is essentially [sa]me for all –viz. the freedom to maintain its own [n]ation."[565] As "peace and freedom" were "[c]losely related goods that are common to all nations" all nations would reasonably be expected to unite in their defence.[566] In 1920, he argued that "the future well-being of the world depends upon the establishment of a genuine League or Society of Nations" and added that "without this, it seems clear that there cannot be such a sense of security as would empower us to put our hearts thoroughly into the work of reconstruction within any particular State."[567] Yet, in the following years, Mackenzie returned to the Commonwealth as a more reliable basis of international unity and cooperation. In *Spiritual Values* published in 1923, he pointed to the Commonwealth instead of the League in his argument for further cooperation among nations. More strikingly, in 1924, he claimed he always believed that in comparison with the unity among the English-speaking peoples, the League of Nations was baseless as it relied on legality instead of spirituality. [568] His position seemed to change again by 1928; in his book *Fundamental Problems of Life* he noted that "the institution of the League of Nations,

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[563] Jones, 139.

[564] Jones, 136.

[565] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 207.

[566] Mackenzie, 207.

[567] J. S. Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1920), 220.

[568] Mackenzie, *Ultimate Values in the Light of Contemporary Thought*, 245.

even in its present imperfect form has gone a considerable way" in strengthening the international sentiment.[569] In the following pages Mackenzie contradicted his assertion that international unity was about spiritual instead of legal union and argued, "the chief desideratum for a genuine international unity is a common system of international law… it is the problem with which the League of Nations is concerned."[570] Evidently, at that time Mackenzie saw a potential in the League of Nations that would make its seat as the World Capital of "enlightenment on all the aspects of human life." Mackenzie, who was quite consistent in his devotion to international cooperation, was not always sure that the League of Nations was the best route for its realisation.

Though Muirhead did not write much about the League of Nations, he had the opportunity to reflect on the British Idealist position after the dissolution of the League, as he was the only one who lived to witness the Second World War. In 1924, without giving a name, Muirhead criticized Bosanquet's lack of conformity with the overriding ambition for the League of Nations. He wrote "I find myself in entire agreement with much that has been said in criticism of the scepticism with which some Idealists continue to regard the idea and such attempts to realise it as are represented by the League of Nations."[571] He argued that the League would greatly help each state in its work only if "they could be delivered from the fear of external aggression and from the paralysing burden of armaments" through the services of the League.[572] Although, Muirhead for sure had a clear understanding of Bosanquet's position on the matter, his argument indicates that he was positioning Bosanquet with those who were opposing the League to protect the sovereignty of the State. Mackenzie directed a similar criticism to Bosanquet as well in 1917. According to Mackenzie, Bosanquet's scepticism towards the League was due to his unfaltering devotion to Hegelian emphasis on the State.[573] Yet, in retrospect, Muirhead questioned the fairness of this criticism. In his *Reflections by a Journeyman in*

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[569] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 330.

[570] John Stuart Mackenzie, 330.

John Stuart Mackenzie, 343.

[571] Muirhead, "Recent Criticism of the Idealist Theory of the General Will," 1924, 366.

[572] Muirhead, 366.

[573] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 150.

*Philosophy,* he wrote "most of us at the time were caught up by the enthusiasm for world peace" to see that Bosanquet's fear "was almost too literally doomed to be verified."[574]

Bosanquet was the singular name that continuingly criticized the attempt to establish a League of Nations, which he deemed to be premature. Bosanquet's lack of faith in the possibility of maintaining an international unity was based on his conviction that there was not a general will at the international level that can sustain a political organization at the time. His reflections on the matter can be discerned from several articles he wrote and collected in the *Social and International Ideals,* which was published in 1917. In "Wisdom of Naaman's Servants" he made this point clear: "you may find several communities desiring peace. And they may make a league to enforce it. But their 'general wills' taken together are not one will, that is, they have not in common…"[575] Thus when the conditions presented states with conflicting interests, the bond between them would not be strong enough to unite them around their common good. Its unity would be completely dependent on force, which is neither a moral nor dependable source of political legitimacy. Such a league maintained only by force by its very nature would be prone to fall pray to discord.[576] Furthermore, the probability of discord within such a league posed a risk that may not have been present in its absence. Bosanquet maintained that every league that was not based on the general will of its members "must sooner or later (being a mere convention of separate wills) arouse a counter league" and such an order would be a fertile ground for war.[577] Overall, Bosanquet argued, in 1910s the world was not ready for an international 'praetor;' and already existing "international laws, treaties, and usages" were "at bottom, only agreements of a number of particular wills, the wills of absolute

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[574] A. J. Grieve, "Introduction," in *Reflections on the French Revolution & Other Essays by Edmund Burke* (London: The Temple Press Letchworth, 1910), 142.
John H. Muirhead, *John Henry Muirhead;: Reflections by a Journeyman in Philosophy on the Movements of Thought and Practice in His Time,* (G. Allen & Unwin, 1942), 180.
[575] Bernard Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals: Being Studies in Patriotism* (London: Macmillan, 1917), 314.
[576] Bernard Bosanquet, 314.
[577] Bernard Bosanquet, "Patriotism in the Perfect State," in *The International Crisis in Its Ethical and Psychological Aspects* (London: Oxford University Press, 1915), 281.

independent bodies."[578] Apparently, by 1917 Bosanquet was still highly suspicious of what an attempt at the organization of a League of Nations would lead to. Yet, in *Bernard Bosanquet and His Friends* Muirhead wrote "sharing though he did at this time Hegel's suspicions of federations imperfectly prepared for in the internal life of the nations concerned, Bosanquet lived to become an ardent supporter of the League which was formed in 1919."[579] Though, it would be an exaggeration to say that he was an ardent supporter, by the time he published the third edition of the *Philosophical Theory of the State* in 1920, he was optimistic on the matter; he wrote "I believe in the League of Nations as the hope and refuge of mankind…"[580] In 1935, Muirhead gave more credit to Bosanquet's earlier contentions on the matter then he did back in the 1920s: "Whether his earlier doubts were not justified is perhaps, in view of recent events, more open to question today than it seemed to many of us in those early days of enthusiasm."[581]

Evidently, Bosanquet was not against the establishment of a League of Nations even when he was critical of those who advocated for its realisation. Rather, he was suspicious of the existence of a moral basis on which it can be built upon at the time. Instead of focusing on the legal and technical details of a League, he believed in the necessity of building the moral capacity of each and every nation on earth so that they can take part in a general will to international unity. This position was shared by all other British Idealists who reflected on the nature of international order yet it did not deter them from believing in the success of the League of Nations. They held the opinion that the League of Nations, though necessarily based on legal formalities in the beginning, had the potential to be organically evolved into a moral unity of humanity. Furthermore, they perceived it as a potential source of influence on the internal affairs of states. It can be argued that, yet again, the optimism of the younger generation of British Idealists was getting ahead of their reason by bestowing a newly formed League of Nations with the capacity and duty of ensuring the well being of

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[578] Bosanquet, 273.

[579] J. H. Muirhead, *Bernard Bosanquet and His Friends: Letters Illustrating the Sources and the Development of His Philosophical Opinions* (Routledge, 2014), 163.

[580] Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, l.

[581] Bosanquet, "Patriotism in the Perfect State," 163.

each and every person on earth. Although their optimism was not philosophically unsupported, it lacked a certain degree of caution that was present in the arguments of a more seasoned Idealist, Bernard Bosanquet.

## 4.5 Mackenzie, Muirhead, Jones, Haldane and the Will to International Unity and Cooperation

As it was argued in the previous chapter, the Great War marked the end of an era that was doomed by the lurking dangers of materialism and militarism to which even the British Idealists were oblivious. Thus, their writings, -especially 1916 onwards- centered around their reflections on how materialism gained such a strong foothold in 19th century and how it can be prevented from recurring in the future. The war, although it brought inexpressible sorrow and anguish to millions of people, served as an eye-opener for the Great Powers of Europe. Haldane wrote in 1918:

> This war has been like a fire that has burned up chaff and stubble. It has swept away many prejudices, toned down many passions. It has got rid of much slackness and indifference, and it has opened the eyes of men and women to great duties, not only to themselves, but to their fellow men and women… It has raised our ideals.[582]

It was a common contention among these younger Idealists, that the trauma of the war gave rise to new ideas that required mutual service among peoples beyond the borders of nation states.[583] The increased interest in the possibility of international cooperation within the intellectual circles was evident from the sheer number of publications that focused on the necessity of establishing an international organization. Through these publications, Mackenzie argued, "most people have become familiar with the general conception of a League of Nations, and many have been led to think seriously about problems that are at least international, if not even

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[582] R. B. Haldane, *The Future of Democracy: An Address by Lord Haldane* (London: Headley Bros. Publishers, LTD., 1918), 4.

[583] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 327.
Jones, "The Obligations and Privileges of Citizenship - a Plea for the Study of Social Science," 157.
Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 96.

cosmopolitan."[584] The dissemination of interest in international matters from the intellectual circles to the wider public was significant in terms of giving rise to a general sentiment towards international cooperation. While the technical reflections on the limits and structure of the League was focused on the intrigues of international law and jurisdiction, British Idealists were predominantly concerned with the moral basis of international unity and contributing to the furtherance of consciousness on this matter.

In the pamphlet Jones wrote for the League of Nations Union, he argued that the 'War Aims' of the Allied world were reflective of the principles that were to be esteemed in the new world order that would be established once the war was over. These were "freedom, independence, and the right of every nation, great or small, to live its own life and to develop its own best powers while respecting and respected by its neighbours."[585] These were the principles followed, according to Jones, when the Allied countries took up arms in defence of Belgium, to make sure that, it would continue to be "an equal among equals, possessing and enjoying the right to make use of the world's resources and to develop its powers in doing so."[586] Clearly, Belgium was not one of the Great Powers; not an exporter of civilisation through possession of imperial colonies. Still it was a European country whose occupation by a foreign nation seemed to be unacceptable to the British government and to British Idealists alike. Furthermore, the official justification of Britain's involvement in the war –as it was not directly attacked- was "defence of the rights of small states and the principles of international law."[587] Yet, such a justification posed a contradiction with Britain's occupation of colonial territories. When it was coupled with the liberal and anti-imperialist principles that were advocated by the United States, a move from defending the moral duty of spreading civilization to defending the moral right of every society to sustain and develop its own civilization became inescapable. This change in tone was adopted by the British Idealists with a return to the original Greenian position. The interdependency of the good of each individual and the

[584] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 327.

[585] Jones, *Form the League of Peace Now: An Appeal to My Fellow Citizens*, 4.

[586] Sir Henry Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 65.

[587] Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and The Crisis of Empire*, 24.

common good of the society constituted one of the corner stones of Green's moral theory.[588] In the works of younger idealists, the individual was replaced with nations, and the society was replaced with the universal unity of mankind, and the same reciprocal understanding of the common good was applied to the international sphere. What was truly good for a nation was necessarily good for the whole mankind and contributive to its advancement. This contention was also reflective of Green's attribution of importance to the civil life within society as "giving reality to these capacities of will and reason, and enabling them to be really exercised."[589] By reflecting on the relation between the particular and the universal, they designated each ethical system that is embodied in each particular society as an indispensable part of the whole that is called morality. Existence and development of ethical systems in line with each society's unique experiences and material conditions was vital for the revelation of the many-sided nature of human morality. Furthermore a ranking among the ethical systems of societies, that marked the moral thinking of the Idealists a couple decades ago was mostly abandoned. By that time, they perceived each ethical system as a unique and invaluable expression of the moral law that resonated through all human interaction. For the British Idealists, unity of humanity was a given that cannot be denied or destructed. Yet the awareness of this unity and human beings' will to act in accordance with it was something that developed through time. As Green put forward in his *Prolegomena to Ethics,* the natural limits of human community could only be drawn around "all who have dealings with each other and who can communicate as 'I' and 'Thou.'[590] Thanks to the progressive nature of mankind, realisation of greater unities was an underlying pattern in the '*history* of human life.'[591] The transitions from the family to tribe, and from city-states to nations-states were understood as extensions of 'the area of the common good.'[592]

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[588] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 1999), 54.

[589] Green, 32.

[590] Thomas Hill Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, ed. A. C. Bradley, Fifth Edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), 242.

[591] John S. Mackenzie, *An Introduction to Social Philosophy*, Second (Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, 1895), 177.

[592] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 237.

Among the British Idealists as well as within the larger circle of British intellectuals, it was thought that the time was ripe to go beyond the borders of nations states in considerations of the common good. Yet, it was the British Idealists who put unequalled emphasize on the importance of the consciousness of a common good inclusive of all mankind as a precondition of legal or political cooperation. Following Green's argument that "no development of morality can be conceived, nor can any history of it be traced… which does not presuppose some idea of a common good…" the younger Idealists argued that the 'good' achieved through international cooperation would be common to all humanity.[593] In regards to the extension of common good to the whole humanity, Mackenzie argued that nations from then on were to serve as 'cooperative groups' within the larger unity of the 'Commonwealth of Nations' as families do within Villages.[594] He argued that the 'common good' and not the 'general will' was to be taken to be the fundamental moral determinant in international relations so far as "the only kind of General Will that is of much value is that which is the expression of a cooperative purpose directed towards the Common Good."[595] According to Mackenzie the Common Good was to be conceived as a "harmonious unity in the creation of what is good."[596] Pursuance of such a good was possible by every member of humanity in cooperation with others as they were both endowed with reason and naturally associative.[597] The emerging international sentiment was quite clear in its purpose: for developing and maintaining a cooperative international order, all the nations were to realise that the moral good that was worth pursuing was common to all humanity and its pursuance was so much more enhanced through the unity of parts. An example of such good in pursuance of which all nations can be united was peace and freedom. Mackenzie wrote in *Outlines of Social Philosophy* that "peace and freedom are [c]losely related goods that are common to all nations… and all might very well combine to defend them."[598]

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[593] Green, 236.

[594] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 103.

[595] John Stuart Mackenzie, 101.

[596] John Stuart Mackenzie, 101.

[597] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 37.

[598] Mackenzie, 207.

In *Social Purpose,* Muirhead gave a similar account of the good that was common to all the peoples of the world. He argued that at the present time (1918) the common good was the 'peaceful development' of human potential all over the world and the greatest threat to its realization was "the overgrown power of particular States."[599] In other words, militarism, which is considered to be in the self-interest of certain states, constituted an obstruction to the development of cosmopolitan interests. Yet Muirhead was convinced that "if the will and conscience of a nation is pledged, not merely to an abstract ideal of perfection, but to a condition of the world which makes its realization possible, the creation of other guarantees can only be a matter of time."[600] Thus, he argued the outlook of men, especially after what the Great War had taught, was to go beyond the limits of the nation state. Each individual from his particular position within a nation was to take part in the 'corporate will to good.'[601] When such will found expression in the official dealings of states –as it was starting to do- some of the most demanding duties of the states were to be met collectively, leaving individual states free to focus their resources on higher purposes. The most concrete example of this process was observable in the work of the League of Nations:

> If the League of Nations succeeds in its central aim of guaranteeing security to its members, it is only relieving them by their own free consent of one of the more elementary functions of States, so as to leave them free for their real work of developing their own material and spiritual sources. The corporate will to good remains the same… What will have happened is merely that for one of the primary needs of society the forces of civilisation as a whole will have become available to replace those of the individual State.[602]

When the States were "delivered from the fear of external aggression and from the paralysing burden of armaments," a good common to all humanity were to be realised, revealing the existence of further interests that mark the opportunity for

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[599] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 94.

[600] Hetherington and Muirhead, 94.

[601] Muirhead, "Recent Criticism of the Idealist Theory of the General Will," 1924, 366.

[602] Muirhead, 366.

progress.[603] In short, Muirhead's argument amounted to the designation of peace itself as a moral good common to all humanity.

While above considered names perceived the unity of mankind as a progressive sphere of influence in which individuals perceived a common good and accepted certain rights and obligations in its pursuance, Henry Jones argued that the unity of humanity was "possibly more real than the unity of the parts of a physical thing."[604] Although this variation in approach was not significant in terms of its practical implications, it necessarily put more emphasis on the unifying attributes of societies in comparison with their distinct characteristics. While recognizing that all societies were "individual" in terms of their distinctive characteristics, they were not in any sense 'isolated.'[605] Thus, Jones argued, the good common to all peoples was always present; what needed to be realized was how to pursue it collectively. As he emphasized the unity and interdependence of the parts that constituted humanity, Jones did not limit the extent of the common good to peace and freedom. According to Jones in all endeavours where individuals or states paid regard to the 'principle of mutual help' and acted in accordance with the dictates of moral rights and duties, there existed a common good. It necessitated not only refrain from causing harm but a "positive care of one another."[606] When the principle of common good was approached from a moral perspective, the binary division of 'nationalism and internationalism' proved to be a false distinction as the good of an individual, a nation and of humanity were like "the convex and concave sides of a circle."[607] They were not merely intertwined; in fact they were appearances of the same thing when looked at from different perspectives. A truly moral approach to the matter of nations' relations with each other revealed the intrinsic unity of all the parts that constituted humanity.

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[603] Muirhead, 366.

[604] Henry Jones, "SOME UNEXAMINED ASSUMPTIONS THAT HINDER THE STUDY OF THE CONDITIONS OF SOCIAL WELL-BEING," *Rice Institute Pamphlet - Rice University Studies* 6, no. 3 (1919): 143.

[605] Jones, 143.

[606] Jones, "The Obligations and Privileges of Citizenship - a Plea for the Study of Social Science," 136.

[607] Jones, "SOME UNEXAMINED ASSUMPTIONS THAT HINDER THE STUDY OF THE CONDITIONS OF SOCIAL WELL-BEING," 165.

This unity, although natural in its moral capacity, faced considerable problems when it was tried to be translated into a political one. Maintaining the sovereignty of states while ensuring their cooperation was a major concern in the schemes for the establishment of the League of Nations.[608] The critics of the League were mainly concerned with the League's capacity to enforce international legislation that would intervene in the spheres that had been traditionally considered to be in the sovereign power of states. For instance, as the primary aim of the League was to prevent armed conflict among states in the future, it had to utilize certain preventive and punitive measures and "it was hard to be done without compromising national sovereignty."[609] Especially the matter of reduction of armaments was perceived by some as a threat to national security and sovereignty. Due to such considerations, a significant number of government officials preferred a "diplomatically based League" which solely focused on arbitration among states.[610] In several schemes for the League such concerns were noted and mostly found baseless.[611] In his reflections on the International Labour Organisation Conference, Hetherington identified such a tendency of the "resurgence of the spirit of nationalism, jealous of every restraint on national sovereignty" as a counter force to the rise international spirit.[612] Other British Idealist as well, gave consideration to these suspicions and supplied the League with a moral justification of its duties and powers without going into a detailed consideration of what its limits should be.

Jones, Muirhead, and Mackenzie all agreed that delegation of certain powers from the states to an international organization did not necessarily meant a breach on individual states' sovereignty. And even when they considered the possibility that

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[608] Sylvest, "Interwar Internationalism, the British Labour Party, and the Historiography of International Relations," 427.

[609] Peter J. Yearwood, *Guarantee of Peace: The League of Nations in British Policy 1914-1925* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 16.

[610] Yearwood, 87.

[611] Viscount Grey et al., *The League of Nations* (London: Oxford University Press, 1919), 16.
Woolf, *The Framework of a Lasting Peace*, 49.
Hobson, *Towards International Government*, 178.

[612] Hetherington, *International Labour Legislation*, 2.

some aspects of states' sovereign power were to be surrendered, they did not perceive it as a threat to the states. The main reason behind their dismissive attitude towards apprehensions about state sovereignty was that, they perceived the move from national to international cooperation as a natural step in human development. They were convinced that as families did not vanish within nations, nations were not expected to vanish within international organisations. Furthermore, they contended that especially under modern circumstances, absolute sovereignty was a sham; states were already dependent on each other for commerce, finance, science and politics although they were not, up until that time, acting in a way that would ensure peace in such an intertwined international order. In *Principles of Citizenship,* Jones argued that "the sovereignty of states, like the liberty of individuals, depends, not upon being free *from* the world, but upon finding the world to be bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh."[613] As the world was already an interdependent whole that consists of nation-states, 'exclusion' was "a miserable half truth."[614] Instead of denying the reality of the unity of mankind, states were to acknowledge its existence and act in accordance with the moral dictates it gave rise to. Insisting on a principle of sovereignty that condemned states to a baseless isolation and "a sovereignty of unreason" was indicative of the internal deficiency of states in perceiving the moral dictates of cooperation.[615] The moral character of such international cooperation did not threatened states individuality; it aimed for their escape from isolation. Jones argued "the Sovereignty of a State is its authority over its world through being *in* the world; and in the world, not as a stranger, but at home amongst friendly powers."[616]Thus, international cooperation was to be perceived not as a threat but as an enhancer of state sovereignty.

Muirhead too, were convinced that international organizations were not a threat to States' sovereignty. He argued that the escalating will towards international cooperation was an opportunity for societies and individuals to go beyond "mere natural affection" for their own family and countrymen and to form 'larger

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[613] Sir Henry Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 64.

[614] Sir Henry Jones, 65.

[615] Sir Henry Jones, 69.

[616] Sir Henry Jones, 65.

attachments' beyond the borders of states. He argued that suspicion towards such larger unities was a sure mark of militarism and a renewal of the world necessitated going beyond such baseless concerns. Muirhead was confident that states' inclusion within international organisations would not weaken but strengthen their position, as they would be able to fulfil their duties towards their own citizens and to humanity in their fullest capacity without being obstructed by fear of external threats and the burden of armaments. He argued "the abiding result of the Hohenzollern-Hapsburg war will be the rise of a greater State as the organ of the "Great Society" of mankind which will endow the national State with… freedom and renewal."[617] Such freedom and renewal was guaranteed as the State was and would continue to be "the particular embodiment or (if it be preferred) the particular organ of the general will" of a society. As such a capacity was vital for the political life of peoples it was irreplaceable until such time that a genuine society of humanity was realised. Thus, a League of Nations or "the *civitas* among societies" was based on the principle of "*prima inter pares*" and did not pose any threat to states' sovereignty.

From a similar perspective Mackenzie argued that under prevailing conditions establishment of an international organisation for ensuring peace was a necessity for States' sovereignty. As peace was a common good to all nations, an organization that worked towards its maintenance did not necessitate "in reality to sacrifice sovereignty, but… to secure the necessary conditions upon which… the essentials of sovereignty can be maintained."[618] What appeared to be a restriction on states' sovereignty was in reality contributive to a fuller understanding of independence. In *Outlines of Social Philosophy* Mackenzie described sovereignty as follows: "a sovereign state, finally, is one that has complete independence. This does not mean that it possess a government that is authorized to do whatever it pleases."[619] This was in line with the British Idealist understanding of freedom that denied the possibility or morality of freedom without rational or social constraints. Individuals within a society were to be free "for the attainment of rational ends" which did not warrant a freedom

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[617] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 95.

[618] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 207.

[619] Mackenzie, 129.

to whatever one pleases to do.[620] Similarly States were to be free in pursuance of their moral and rational ends, while being restricted in, for instance, being aggressive towards other states, or curtailing their citizens' rights. Thus, Mackenzie argued "no sovereignty can be absolute" and so far as states acted in accordance with the dictates of an international authority with their free will in pursuance of the common good, such dictates would not restrict but only expand states' freedom.[621] Evidently, Mackenzie, Muirhead and Jones anticipated that the future of mankind in terms of its social, material and moral development was dependent not on the establishment of a world-state but on the participation of states within an international organization of cooperation in pursuance of the common good. Thus, sovereignty of states was not in any real danger, at least for the foreseeable future.

Although states were to retain their sovereignty, their interaction was to follow certain ideals so that such a great catastrophe as the Great War would not occur again. In the post-Great War works of all British Idealists freedom and cooperation of nations was repeatedly designated as the ideals that were to rule international relations. Mackenzie called these ideals fraternity and liberty of States and argued that while the principles of fraternity and liberty were essential in a more formal sense for the maintenance of a peaceful international order of sovereign states, they were also vital for the moral development of humanity through its parts. Fraternity of states was important in terms of sharing knowledge and experience as well as engaging in cooperative social, industrial, and scientific endeavours. Liberty of each state was important for the development of each society's unique expression of human potential. Curtailing states' independence in pursuance of a tight-knit international community was perceived to be counter-productive as it would leave no space for societies' particularities due to a wrongful enforcement of a fake uniformity. This was again an expansion of the British Idealist political theory into the domain of international politics. It was one of the primary contentions of Green's idealism that individuals were parts of an organic and not a mechanical unity in which they contributed to the

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[620] John S. Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, Fourth (New York City: HINDS, HAYDEN & ELDREDGE, INC., 1901), 316.

[621] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 206.

Mackenzie, 129.

whole through free development of their own potentials.[622] Thus, the society was perceived as a moral unity in which individuals were to act freely and in a cooperative manner for their individual good and for the good of the whole. Although this argument strongly resonated in all the works of Muirhead and Jones on national and international politics, its most vocal advocate in its application to international society was Mackenzie.

Mackenzie, who condoned external interference to Africa, India, Australia, and Ireland with an expectation that the British Empire may serve humanity by educating the 'savage peoples' before the Great War, was convinced that self-determination was a cosmopolitan right of peoples by 1920.[623] In his oddly named book *Arrows of Desire*, Mackenzie argued that for nations' to arrive at the dictates of the moral order, they were to be free in its pursuance, without being distracted by the antagonistic feelings that were raised due to external interferences. As it was the nature of morality that it could not be enforced on a person or a people but could only be achieved voluntarily, national self-determination was to be taken as a 'human right.'[624] He added that national self-determination "when it is thus sought as a simple human right, it is not claimed for one people in the spirit of opposition to others, but rather in a spirit that is essentially cosmopolitan."[625] In regards to the arguments of spreading civilization through colonisation–to which he was quite sympathetic two decades ago-Mackenzie wrote "it would be absurd, in any age, to suppose that any one nation or any one man has so great a superiority over others as to justify so extreme a measure; and the more the world advances in its general civilization, the more absurd does such an attitude become."[626] As he put emphasis on the impossibility of moralizing an individual or a society through force, he condemned every external intervention except in very limited number of situations. He wrote in 1918:

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[622] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 70.

Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 210.

[623] J. S. Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," *International Journal of Ethics* 10, no. 4 (1900): 477.

Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire*, 194.

[624] Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire*, 194.

[625] Mackenzie, 194.

[626] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 194.

any nation that seeks to impose its civilization on others, without restraint or
scruple, cannot be regarded as benefactor, but rather as the enemy of the human
race, even if it be true (of which, at any rate, it can hardly be entitled to be the
sole judge) that its civilization is, on the whole, superior to that of others. Indeed,
a claim of this kind is in pretty manifest contradiction to the general principle
from which it sets out –viz. that *every* state has the right to maintain and defend
its own civilization.[627]

Secondly and perhaps more importantly, the freedom of the parts at the international
level was essential for the healthy functioning of the whole. With the use of a bodily
analogy, Mackenzie argued that as tying human beings together did not result in a
harmonious march, the forward movement of societies were not possible when they
were forced into uniformity. Instead, when the societies were left to their own
devices, they tended to arrive at what morality dictated through their own reasoning.
[628] Just like the development of the parts was dependent on their freedom, the
harmonious unity of the whole necessitated their voluntary cooperation. For the world
to "become a more completely united system" it was necessary to ensure that it had
"an intenser life and a more ample freedom throughout its parts."[629] In his
descriptions of the desired nature of international relations, Mackenzie often used the
word fraternity of peoples. He described fraternity as "the quality of brotherhood" and
argued that it was "not strained" and "it cannot be enforced, though it may be
promoted by suitable institutions."[630] Fraternity of the peoples was an ideal that was
inescapable for human beings as reason itself constantly directed mankind to larger
modes of unity and to the "conception of universality."[631] While human beings would
be content with their achievements within smaller modes of unities such as the family
and the nation at certain stages of their developments, the human ideal per se was
achievement of those goods that are common to all mankind such as truth, knowledge,

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[627] Mackenzie, 194.

[628] Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire*, 194.

[629] Mackenzie, 221.

[630] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 107.

[631] J. S. Mackenzie, *Elements of Constructive Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1917), 330.

and beauty. Thus, international cooperation was emerging, as a sentiment amongst peoples and its achievement required fraternity as well as liberty of the parts and a certain degree of equality. From Mackenzie's perspective humanity's progress was not a march of the human army consisting of individuals in identical uniforms but a harmonious gathering of the parts that were unique and valuable in their particularities. This ideal shared by and beneficial to all peoples was defined by Mackenzie in his last book *The Fundamental Problems of Life* as "to make the World more and more into a 'fellowship,' a fellowship where free men and women help each other to achieve what beauty and purpose they can in their lives."[632]

The application of Green's moral theory to the international arena revealed a problem with which Green himself was not concerned: the variations and contradictions among ethical orders that developed in different societies and the possibility of their consolidation within a moral whole. The younger generation of British Idealists were set with the task of proving that the particular ethical orders adopted by human societies were not "purely arbitrary or conventional" though they were variable.[633] It was, especially Jones and Mackenzie's common contention that while material conditions and historical experiences of a society lead to certain variations in their ethical systems, the common attributes of human beings, namely their reason and their will to self-perfection united them in the pursuance of the highest moral good. In that sense, while no single ethical system was perfect in its approximation to the moral 'law', they all had the potential to evolve into better and more comprehensive realizations of morality. This was the basis of states' right to maintain and develop their own forms of civilization.

In the introductory part of *Outlines of Social Philosophy,* Mackenzie described social philosophy as an effort to understand "the social unity of mankind, and seek to interpret the significance of the special aspects of human life with reference to that unity."[634] In other words it was his aim to reveal the underlying unifying aspects of mankind that are not always so apparent under the veil of evident cultural and

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[632] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 349–50.

[633] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 25.

[634] Mackenzie, 14.

political differences. With reference to Sophists he put forward the contention that ethics and its legal reflections in the laws of particular states could be perceived as the outcomes of "human agreements or contracts, or… arbitrary choice of particular rulers" without any universal or 'natural' basis.[635] Such a perception put emphasis on the sharp distinction between what was natural and what was arbitrary or man-made. Yet, Mackenzie argued, the great works of Plato and Aristotle were attempts to go beyond that binary distinction and reveal that the ethics that ruled any social unity were "growing out of a particular fact in the nature of man."[636] According to Mackenzie, these great names strived to reveal the basis of human society as men's social nature and the role of ethics as the source of the most favourable principles that give rise to "the form of human organization in which the need for cooperation would be most perfectly supplied."[637] In a similar pursuit Mackenzie tried to reveal the sources of variation among ethical systems and the underlying 'natural' unity in *Outlines of Social Philosophy* and his consecutive books.

According to Mackenzie, the reason for the emergence of various ethical systems was, most significantly the material conditions under whose influence societies evolved. With a reference to the example of Great Britain and India, Mackenzie argued that, the material conditions that were mostly due to the considerable differences between these two geographies' climates, led to the development of two distinct modes of valuations which was in turn translated into two distinct ethical systems. According to Mackenzie, the Indian civilization, which was quite foreign to the native of Great Britain, was shaped in accordance with the favourable climate of that region:

> The brilliant sunshine in many parts of India throughout a large part of the year, varying but little from day to day, causes the demands for material satisfaction in the way of food, clothing and housing to be comparatively

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[635] Mackenzie, 20.

[636] Mackenzie, 21.

[637] Mackenzie, 21–25.

slight, and encourages leisurely and contemplative habits and the belief in beneficent powers behind the workings of nature.[638]

Clearly, it was in contrast with the valuations of the Western civilization, which attributed great importance to material possessions and the endeavour for their acquirement in the way of discipline and hard work. As these differences could not be explained with reference to race –Mackenzie noted both British and Indian peoples were descendants of the same Aryan race-, a greater emphasis was to be put on 'geographical and social conditions' that shape the experiences and character of societies.[639]

Mackenzie contended that such differences in the outlook of societies were not sufficient grounds for strife among peoples. They were after all outcomes of material conditions that were quite arbitrary. Furthermore he argued that claiming superiority to other civilizations was baseless so far as the international mind set was gaining ground in all societies. Despite the differences of tongue, manners, laws, as well as thought and action, it was no longer possible to designate a single civilization as superior to others. The belief in the superiority of a single civilization was mostly the result of a failure to understand different cultures and the ethical codes they pursued. In accordance with the international sentiment that was becoming dominant among all societies, Mackenzie argued "it would not be easy to arrange an order of merit" among various peoples, and if such an order were to be made he "should be inclined to say that the best race or mixture of races is the one that is best able to appreciate others."[640] After all it was a common inclination in men to "value what is most familiar to us and we can best appreciate."[641] Evidently, Mackenzie also fell prey to that same inclination as he argued that "some modes of existence are pretty obviously higher than others in the scale of being," and that although "it could hardly be right to kill out the lower types of human life or of animal life," it was morally necessary to "promote and conserve the higher forms of life, but, as far as possible without injury

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[638] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 231.

[639] Mackenzie, 187.

[640] Mackenzie, 107.

[641] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 257.

to the lower."[642] This was a curious lapse into the mind-set of 'higher civilisations' on the part of Mackenzie, as it occurred in his last book, published in 1928, and it constituted an obvious contradiction with his general line of argument since 1918. Apart from this single remark, Mackenzie was content that "things that distinguish men from one another" were "insignificant in comparison with the things that unite them."[643] These differences were merely conventional and due to the material differences among geographies and their expression within the ethical systems of particular societies was not enough to overshadow the moral unity of mankind. In a later phase of his life when he developed an interest in the works of Indian philosopher Radhakrishnan, Mackenzie wrote

> Though the supreme values are the same for both, the subordinate values are in many respects different. All that can fairly be expected is that Eastern philosophers should pay attention to the best thought of the West and that Western philosophers should return the compliment in kind.[644]

The right way to surpass the illusion of contradiction among various ethical systems was through use of communication and free exchange of ideas.

If ethical orders of societies were overridden with particularities, what was the relation of moral law that is deemed to be universal to human conduct at national and international levels? In the *Principles of Citizenship,* after defending the universality of moral order and its separateness from human contingencies, Jones argued that its realisation was totally dependent on the will of humanity. According to Jones, the moral order due to its ideal nature –something that is present not in the material but in the contemplative form- was in a constant process of construction and reconstruction.[645] In other words the moral world existed only so long as human beings consciously obeyed its laws. Furthermore, as it was constantly reconstructed in the actual world, it was impossible for an individual or a society to know its dictates in full. Based in this contention, Jones argued, "it is a prolific error to hypostatize the

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[642] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 59.

[643] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 177.

[644] J. S. Mackenzie, "JOAD, C. E. M. -Counter Attack From the East," *Mind* 43, no. n/a (1934): 121.

[645] Sir Henry Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 71.

moral world, in the sense of giving it an existence *apart* from the imperfect forms of social order within which men live their ordinary lives."[646] Morality was realized through an on-going –and potentially endless- process in which men strived to live up to their capacity as human beings. Thus, the moral world was not "a world aloof from the real" but an idea that was realised through mankind's constant effort for its actualisation.[647] As morality was not something fixed, it was impossible to judge particular ethical orders in comparison to the moral order without reference to the human capacities that made it possible and essential as well as the conditions under which they were operating. For Jones as well as for Mackenzie these capacities were reason and will. While reason bestowed individuals and the communities they formed with the ability of evaluating facts and coming up with the best possible conduct in the pursuance of the common good, their will gave them the power to pursue it in their endeavours. And the variations among ethical systems were due to the material conditions that constantly changed the best course of realizing the ideal. With reference to the famous oak analogy, Jones argued that although morality itself was present in man as the "full-grown oak is the reality and the power at the core of the acorn," its actualisation required a process throughout which individuals and their societies were to will it. In short, the moral order was the ideal and the ethical systems were the actuals; and their interdependence was the reason each ethical order was perceived to be valuable. Jones argued that

> The ideal that is *only* ideal is empty; and the real that is not disturbed by an ideal
> which is its own and its inmost secret and substance, is inert, with the inertness
> and helplessness of death. Ideal and real cannot be held apart. They are related to
> one another as the life of the living is to its outward structure.[648]

In other words, the moral was existent due to man's nature as a social and rational being who had a will to achieve the good, and thus it was universal. The ethical on the other hand was a limited actualisation of the moral, and although it was imperfect, it

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[646] Jones, 71.

[647] Jones, 72.

[648] Jones, 76.

constituted the basis on which the moral can be developed. Mackenzie made a similar point in a more direct fashion:

> The words Ethics and Morals both suggest a connection with customs; and certainly much of what is commonly understood by morality consists of customs that are different in different times and countries. On the other hand, it would be difficult to point to any time or country in which certain qualities such as Kindness in another's trouble, Courage in your own' would not be recognised as morally good. Morality is commonly understood, includes some things that are everywhere and always acknowledged to be good, and some that are differently regarded by different peoples and in different conditions. The former may be said to lie in the nature of things, the latter are more or less conventional.[649]

The relation between morality and ethical orders from the perspective of Jones and Mackenzie is significant in terms of supplying the principle of each society's right to freedom and sovereignty with a moral theoretical basis. In the post Great-War period, partly due to the changing intellectual atmosphere and partly due to their own reflections, British Idealists advocated a reformation of the way people thought about nations and the moral way of interaction among their states. Such reformation was to aim for the establishment of an international organization that would unite free and sovereign states in pursuance of the common good of humanity. Furthermore, within this unity, each state was to contribute to the development of humanity through their particular attributes as they were to be valued as particular expressions of the human potential. Especially Jones and Mackenzie and to a lesser extent Muirhead reflected on this matter in their writings, which reflected a return to the 'original British Idealist position' as it was present in the foundational works of Green: *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* and *Prolegomena to Ethics.* Yet another name, who arguably never deviated from the original position, approached the matter from the opposite side, and although his arguments were not in conflict with those of the younger generation, he put more emphasis on the internal constitutions of states as a preliminary condition for a peaceful and cooperative international order. When Bosanquet's emphasis on the internal organization of states was coupled with younger Idealists' moral arguments for the achievement of the unity of mankind through

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[649] Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire*, 135.

preservation of particularities, the post Great-War British Idealist literature supplied the basis for a theory of international human rights

## 4.6 Bosanquet and "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind"

Bosanquet's outlook to international order is best gathered from a book of collected essays published in 1917 under the title of *Social and International Ideals.* Unlike many books published in those years by prominent names, it was not concerned with the legal and technical difficulties that faced a future League of Nations or its institutional design. Bosanquet, in the Preface of the book, made this quite clear by noting that this book was "about the enduring conditions of peace," but it did not concern itself with "the ending of the present war, or about diplomatic arrangements for providing directly against recurrence."[650] Like other British Idealists who witnessed the Great War and reflected on the conditions that led to it, Bosanquet was concerned about the moral basis of international cooperation. Yet, unlike them, he focused on the internal structures of individual states and the nature of 'patriotism' that was maintained by the general will of particular societies. He maintained that "the warlike atmosphere means disease within the State; the healthy State, however strong, is non-militant in temper."[651] The disease itself was a flawed form of patriotism and its most visible and destructive symptom was a desire for "the things which diminish by sharing."[652] Although Bosanquet himself did not name those things that pose as a false good, all kinds of material and military ambitions were to be considered as the sources of states' aggressiveness towards other states. True patriotism was marked by the pursuance of those goods that were universal such as "beauty, truth, kindness."[653] The pursuance of these goods was the guarantee of international peace and the betterment of mankind, although it seemed unpractical to many men who pursued the flawed yet very familiar form of patriotism. Bosanquet maintained that the pursuance of the supreme values could only be guaranteed by the

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[650] Bernard Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals*, v.

[651] Bosanquet, v.

[652] Bosanquet, v.

[653] Bosanquet, vi.

organizations of rights and duties within each political community.[654] In other words, without organising each state for the pursuance of universal values that are available to all, it was impossible to guarantee peace and prosperity at the international level by establishing a league or a world-state. Furthermore, it was impossible to force a people to adopt true patriotism in the pursuance of supreme values as it was to be maintained by the free and general will of a people. Thus, Bosanquet was sceptical of the chances of success of a League of Nations at the time, and instead, he advocated for the education and better organization of peoples within their social and political communities. He summarised this position in the introductory part of his book:

> My point is throughout, then, that the really important thing is also the thing
> open to all of us; the amelioration of the social spirit and social detail here where
> we live; and that this is the principal ground on which the victory of all humanity
> is to be won, because it alone can furnish a solid foundation on which extended
> unities of will can be built up… I repeat here that the essential thing in all
> international agreements is the quality and real aim of the will that sustains them;
> and that throughout great communities and systems of these, this will can only
> be in stable harmony in so far as it possesses that outlook on life which takes the
> supreme values as its criterion and embodies them in a well-ordered
> community.[655]

The *Social and International Ideals* was not significant in terms of putting forward new arguments, as all the articles in the book except one were published before.[656] The book was significant in quite a contrary way; it showed that Bosanquet's approach to international relations –which was very much influenced by Green's teaching- was still defendable in 1917. The fact that some of the articles collected in this volume were published long before the Great War and the fact that they were still

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[654] Bosanquet, v.

[655] Bosanquet, vii.

[656]Bosanquet, "A Moral from Athenian History," 1898.

Bernard Bosanquet, "The Teaching of Patriotism," *Charity Organisation Review* 36, no. 214 (1914): 265–79.

"Syllabus of Three Lectures on Social Ideals," *Charity Organisation Review* 39, no. 232 (1916): 199–201.

Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," 1916.

consistent with his more recent articles shows that Bosanquet's position on the nature of international relations was not altered during the Great War. In this sense he diverged from the younger generation of British Idealists who adopted an imperialist outlook from 1900 to 1914 and gradually shifted their position to a more liberal one afterwards. Arguably, it was because Bosanquet was never an enthusiastic supporter of imperialism although his works revealed the presence of the basic contentions of an imperialistic mind-set. He was not totally unaffected by the practice of ranking civilizations that was prominent before the Great War, although he was not sure of the effectiveness of maintaining colonies to 'civilize' foreign peoples. For him the best service to humanity was to create and maintain the best possible system of rights and duties at home. Even though his fellow Idealists criticized him for his unwillingness to support the League of Nations, his reluctance on the matter was quite consistent with his theoretical position. He believed in the gradual development of mankind, and advocated the view that without each state creating a moral order at home it was impossible to create a moral international order. This, for sure, was not an argument for abandoning the goal of striving towards the higher moral unity of mankind; it was a reminder that skipping steps would most probably hinder its realisation and might lead to greater disasters in the future.

In *Social and International Ideals,* Bosanquet's approach to international relations revolved around Green's contention that as each state "attains its proper object of giving free scope to the capacities of all persons living on a certain range of territory, the easier it is for others to do so.[657] By applying Green's position to the post Great-War world, Bosanquet recognized that the State was not the ultimate end of life but that it was an essential form of social and political unity, contributive to the realization of the unity of mankind. He argued that, as humanity was not –for the time being- a real unity, a singular devotion to it, at the expense of ones' own city and country would possibly end in hypocrisy. Instead, individuals as constitutive parts of their own political unions were to work towards the betterment of the system of rights and duties recognized and maintained by their own states. Every society living under the guardianship of its respective state was to contribute to humanity in its own

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[657] Bernard Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals*, 276.

Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 171.

particular way in accordance with its national strengths and inclinations. From this perspective each state was the "guardian of one type of humanity," and it was in the service of the whole by "maintaining the peculiar contribution of its community to the total of human life and human mind."[658] And regardless of national peculiarities, Bosanquet expected every satisfactory social and political system to be organized around the principles of justice and public welfare due to men's social and moral nature. When the parts acted in pursuance of the common good and the supreme values of humanity within their own just political systems that ensured public welfare, the ground for war was expected to disappear at the international level.

As early as 1891, Bosanquet was willing to acknowledge ones' duty to humanity to be higher and more general than the duty to their own country.[659] Clearly he was not rejecting the existence of a community that is called humanity and a shared characteristic of mankind all over the globe. What he rejected was an unqualified devotion to humanity that is marked by a false belief "that humanity is a real corporate being, an object of devotion and a guide to moral duty."[660] This was a position he associated with Comtism and found highly erroneous. By supposing humanity to be a concrete whole with shared characteristics, this approach was capable of uniting mankind only at the lowest possible level. Instead, Bosanquet argued, humanity was to be understood as an 'ideal unity;' a unity that existed only "in the medium of the thought… made up of certain sentiments, purposes, and ideas."[661] From Bosanquet's perspective, the 'sentiments, purposes, and ideas,' necessary for the unity of mankind were not consciously realised in every human society, let alone in the minds of every single individual. Actually these ideals were only to be found in the "national culture and kindness" of the "great civilised nations

[658] Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," 1916, 277.

[659] Bernard Bosanquet, "Some Socialistic Features of Ancient Societies," in *Essays and Addresses* (London: Swan SONNENSCHEIN & CO., Lim., 1891), 53.

[660] Bernard Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," in *Social and International Ideals* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1917), 292.

[661] Bernard Bosanquet, *Essays and Addresses* (London: Swan SONNENSCHEIN & CO., Lim., 1891), 97.

with all their faults, than in what is common to the life of all man."[662] If the apparent arrogance of being a member of the civilized nations is overlooked, Bosanquet's main point was to look for the unity of mankind not in the mere quantity of human beings, but in their quality; that is to say in the ends they pursued, the social and political perfection of their communities, and the advancements they achieved in arts, science and technology. Bosanquet repeatedly made the distinction between approaching the matter of unity of humanity with reference to "quantity or quality". He argued that, taking all existing human beings as an aggregate would only lead to the discovery of a crowd with "no common character in which the values to which we are devoted as the qualitative essence of humanity are adequately represented."[663] And from a sober and non-romanticized perspective, devotion to such a crowd meant equating the value of humanity with "all human beings, past, present, and future, with their wicked and wasted lives."[664] According to Bosanquet, the unity of humanity did not signify the unity of actual human beings, the majority of which pursued lives where they did not or could not realised any of the qualities that marked them as human beings. Yet it was not his contention that these individuals who lacked the opportunity to be a part of humanity qualitatively should be left to their own devices, or that they should be eliminated or taken advantage of. Rather they were to be supplied with the powers necessary to realize their potentials within their own social and political community.

Evidently, the state was a major actor in the pursuance of the ideal of the unity of mankind for Bosanquet. Yet, the state did not simply mean its tangible institutions; more importantly, the state was the vehicle through which the general will of the community pursued the supreme values through a better and wider organisation of its citizens' rights and duties within its borders. The state, being the embodiment of the general will of its community was essential for the peace and progress of mankind, so far as it held together a specific type of human experience and achievement. From this perspective, Bosanquet argued every self-ruling community was contributive to the

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[662] Bernard Bosanquet, "The Teaching of Patriotism," in *Social and International Ideals* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1917), 15.

[663] Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," 1917, 290.

[664] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Civilization of Christiendom and Other Essays*, ed. William Sweet, vol. 13, The Collected Works of Bernard Bosanquet (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1999), 66.

overall progress of mankind to the extent that it had developed a system of rights and duties that was organised around the principles of justice and public welfare. As the unity of mankind was not a concrete but an ideal whole, "the great gifts are still to be, as they have been, achievements of diversely intensified life-centres."[665] When Bosanquet argued that the progress of humanity was dependent on the independence and interdependence of its parts, he had in mind the great contributors to art, philosophy, and science. Against the contention that humanity as a whole should be valued regardless of the specifities that constituted it, Bosanquet argued

> The idea to be got rid of is the idea that specialised circumstances are a fetter upon individuality and genius. Homer and Shakespeare, for instance, are characteristic individual voices each of his country, race, and climate, Do we wish that it were not so? Do we think that they would be more themselves if they were not? What is the world there for if it is not, with all its rich individuality, to come to utterance in mind? [666]

Existence of communities with their particular experiences and characteristics, and their free pursuance of "absolute values in the self-moulded life of the community" was essential for the unity of mankind.[667] The differences between communities were not to be melted within a concrete unity of mankind; rather they were to be cherished as different experiences of the same human nature and valuable contributions to the whole of human achievement. In this point, Bosanquet was in line with Mackenzie, Jones and Muirhead in their differentiation between morality as a common human attribute and ethics as a specific materialization of it in distinct communities. While morality was universal and present in each and every human community –sometimes only as a potential- the ethical systems were its multiform reflections, and valuable to the extent that they approximated to the ideal. Bosanquet added to their argument, by arguing that only these organically evolved forms of national attitude supplied a fertile ground for the expression of humanity's genius.

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[665] Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," 1917, 297.

[666] Bernard Bosanquet, "A Moral from Athenian History," in *Social and International Ideals* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1917), 262.

[667] Bernard Bosanquet, "The Wisdom of Naaman's Servants," in *Social and International Ideals* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1917), 319.

Still, those national attitudes were not endorsed by Bosanquet without making sure that they complied with certain characteristics that are common to all well-ordered societies. One of these qualities was the existence of a sense of patriotism within the community. According to Bosanquet, keeping alive this sense of patriotism was vital so as not to fall into "coldness and pessimism" and keeping the will to strive for the betterment of the social whole. Yet, the kind of patriotism that was defined by Bosanquet as a "source of brainless and often fraudulent clamour, or at best a dangerous fanaticism" was not desirable. [668] What Bosanquet advocated as a safeguard against international strife was "the purest kind of patriotism" that took pride in the achievements of the nation so far as they were in the pursuance of the supreme values, and those goods that were not "diminished by sharing."[669] In that sense, the true patriot was not to take pride in the military power of his/her state, or the territories it occupied, or the material advancement of it at the expense of other peoples. Rather she/he was to cherish its state in the political order it established within which the principles of justice and communal welfare was realised as well as the contributions of his community and his fellow citizens to the overall human advancement. Such patriotism was to be observed in "the arduous and courageous work of an elementary school-teacher in remote and thinly populated districts of our colonies, offering them a well-merited meed of praise."[670] In his labour, Bosanquet recognized the will to work for the betterment of his country and through it to contribute to the general well being of mankind. Bosanquet argued "no patriotism and no politics are trustworthy unless they are kept sweet and clean by a real and fundamental love for the things that are not diminished by being shared –such as kindness, beauty, truth."[671] While the militant form of patriotism was "the spirit of romantic and occasional glorification of the group", true patriotism was most visible

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[668] Bosanquet, "The Teaching of Patriotism," 1917, 3.

[669] Bosanquet, 15.

 Bosanquet, "The Wisdom of Naaman's Servants," 315.

[670] Bosanquet, "The Teaching of Patriotism," 1917, 3.

[671] Bosanquet, 12.

in "the daily spirit of communal labour and duty."[672] Clearly, a true and intelligent patriot was not militant but noble in purpose and zealous in his work in pursuance of the supreme values within his own community and in accordance with his powers.

It was a logical outcome for Bosanquet that when peoples were devoted to the true form of patriotism, they would work for the establishment and maintenance of a satisfactory system of rights and duties within a justly ruled community. After all, these were the conditions that strengthened their devotion to their state and encouraged them for further service to their community. The internal organizations of a community in the above specified manner was also vital for the manner in which its state engaged with external matters. Bosanquet argued that the determining factor at the international arena was specifically the kind of patriotism that was upheld within specific communities. And from his perspective, "the way to peace and security" was simple enough; it was "to do right at home, and banish sinister interests and class privileges from the commonwealth."[673] While this was an end to be pursued privately by each community, it was also a universal end for whose realisation every community must comply with the shared values of humanity. In other words, while "non-interference" was to be established as a rule in international conduct, each and every state was to have an internal organization that maintains the principle of justice as well as a satisfactory order of rights and duties, for the maintenance of peace. Bosanquet was quite confident that when each community established a just social and political order, the grounds for international strife would disappear: "there is not the smallest reason why, under such a policy as is here outlined, every individual and society should not find communication and cooperation with every other on the earth's surface as easy and convenient as within his own country."[674]

Bosanquet was thoroughly convinced that the necessary conditions for peace could only be realised within nation-states and external institutions to enforce peace would

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[672] Bernard Bosanquet, review of *Review of The Group Mind: A Sketch of the Principles of Collective Psychology with Some Attempt to Apply them to the Interpretation of National Life and Character*, by William McDougall, *Mind* 30, no. 117 (1921): 66.

[673] Bosanquet, "The Wisdom of Naaman's Servants," 309.

[674] Bosanquet, 317.

be totally ineffective in the absence of a general will toward its realisation within national communities. From this perspective, instead of pinning his faith upon the foundation of the League of Nations, Bosanquet recommended that everyone should focus on the betterment of their own states' internal organization. He argued that "a system of nation-states or of commonwealths each internally well organised, would not perhaps give us all that a world-state might give us, but it would place the world in a wholly different ethical position from that which it occupies today."[675] Clearly, the process of betterment was to be realised by the members of each state without foreign intervention, yet it was not perceived to be a solitary endeavour. Bosanquet was sure that, even if a real unity of mankind was never established in the world "reciprocal good will, with understanding and appreciation, even intensified by the sense of foreignness and mystery" would tie the nations together and ensure their cooperation.[676] Although he did not deny the possibility of having a successful League of Nations, he was convinced that without a general will within the communities towards peace and pursuance of supreme values; any attempt was bound to fail. The existence of the general will in each community towards peace was a pre-condition for the healthy functioning of a League and not vice versa. A League as a mere 'machinery' was insufficient to protect peace without the existence of a general will towards it. But "if… there were to exist in one or more communities, a prevailing general will… in favour of peace, for example; then there would so far be a solid foundation for practical steps towards international or cosmopolitan unity."[677] Ensuring that each community upheld a general will toward peace and cooperation was the most basic step towards ensuring further unity of mankind; and without it all attempts to establish Leagues and federations were in vain.

Evidently, there were differences between how Bosanquet approached the future of international relations from a state-centered perspective and how the younger generation of British Idealists pinned their hopes upon the establishment of a League of Nations. But, the difference was not due to a contradiction in their reasoning; it was rather based upon the aspects of the theory they prioritized. While the younger

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[675] Bosanquet, "The Function of the State in Promoting the Unity of Mankind," 1917, 294.

[676] Bosanquet, 297.

[677] Bosanquet, "The Wisdom of Naaman's Servants," 314.

generation emphasized the importance of understanding and cooperation among states, Bosanquet perceived the internal organisation of individual states as a basic yet vital step for the maintenance of a peaceful international order. Neither Bosanquet, nor Muirhead, Mackenzie, and Jones denied the importance of international cooperation or a healthy internal organization of individual states. Furthermore, their arguments converged on the most basic and yet most important points, such as the interdependence between patriotism and cosmopolitanism, the universal necessity for independent, just and well-ordered social systems, and the importance of maintaining satisfactory systems of rights and duties within each community for global peace and the unity and progress of mankind.

## 4.7 Patriotism, Cosmopolitanism and Service to Humanity

The British Idealists' shared conviction that patriotism and cosmopolitanism -contrary to the commonly held supposition- were not contradictory but interdependent aspirations was most evident in their repeated references to a quotation from Green: "there is no other genuine enthusiasm for humanity than one which has travelled the common highway of reason –the life of the good neighbour and the honest citizen- and can never forget that it is only a further stage of the same journey."[678] Evidently, Bosanquet was the one who was most interested in the relation between the existence of a general will towards the pursuance of the supreme values, i.e. a true kind of patriotism at the national level and its consequences for international relations. He consistently maintained in his reflections on the conditions of peace that a people who were satisfied at home with the internal organization of their community were not in pursuance of adventures abroad and thus they were not warlike in character.[679] As their satisfaction was dependent on the existence of a moral order in which the supreme values were accepted as the true ends to be pursued, a true perception of patriotism was vital for international peace.[680] Thus, ones' duty to humanity was not

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[678] Thomas Hill Green, *Works of Thomas Hill Green* (London, New York : Longmans, Green, and co., 1885), 371, http://archive.org/details/worksofthomashil01greeiala.

[679] Bernard Bosanquet, *Selected Essays*, ed. William Sweet, vol. 1, Collected Works of Bernard Bosanquet (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1999), 279.

[680] Bernard Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals*, v.

something that is in contradiction with his duty to his country. On the contrary they were one and the same thing in character, and when they appeared to be in contradiction it was either one's patriotism or humanitarianism that was ill defined and in the wrong. Based on this perspective, Bosanquet wrote:

> in our best humanitarianism we do not really discover a duty to mankind that is beyond, much less in conflict with, our patriotism. Our nation, after all, remains our instrument for doing service to humanity and our main source of the ideal of humanity itself… Therefore it is our nation which is our clue and ideal, even in the service of man, and therefore again it is doubly important here that our patriotism should be of the purest kind.[681]

In that sense individual's duty to work towards the betterment of their own community was a way of indirectly fulfilling their duty towards the whole of mankind. This was an argument often repeated by the younger British Idealists as well.

Henry Jones, for instance, was of the same mind with Bosanquet on the matter of humanitarianism and patriotism. Like Bosanquet, Jones perceived individuals' duty to humanity to be of a higher moral order than their duty to their own community, as the ideal was in its nature universal and any boundaries to its scope were arbitrary and to be overcome in time.[682] Once the individual and the state acquired a moral character by designating the supreme purposes as their ends, they sought "a good which is Absolute, and therefore all comprehensive."[683] As the moral good itself was universal, the ideal of its actualisation could also not be within the borders of nation states. Thus, Jones argued, "both the State and the Individual are in truth, if they only knew it, in the service of humanity, and they are loyal to their own good in the degree in which they are faithful to its well-being."[684] Yet, the service to humanity was not an unmitigated effort, as humanity without reference to its constitutive components was a non-existent unity. After all, the universal that is called humanity was a mere fiction

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[681] Bosanquet, "The Teaching of Patriotism," 1917, 15.

[682] Henry Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1920), 56.

[683] Jones, 110.

[684] Jones, 110.

without the particulars that formed it, and the particulars lost their value without a reference to the universal. With reference to the underlying idealist metaphysics, Jones argued "universal and particular exist only as elements in a system, and disappear when separated."[685] An application of this argument to the matter at hand revealed "the true good of the State is at the same time the true good of humanity and of the individual."[686] The unity of the moral good that is realised at the individual, the national, and the universal levels was most of the time hard to realize, as their scope was different. Yet the true good, being moral in nature was the same in essence. And like Bosanquet, Jones' expectations from the individual in his contribution to the betterment of mankind were modest in nature. He argued that although "the station which the good man fills may be small and his duties may have a narrow range –his contribution to the world's good may be 'a widow's mite'" it was still a partaker in the pursuance of the supreme values.[687] It can be discerned by keeping Green's utterance in mind that being a good neighbour and honest citizen was a step in the service of humanity as a whole. In that sense, even before the Great War, Jones was convinced that it was the outcome of an individualistic mind-set to perceive the interests of the state and humanity as antagonistic to each other. He wrote in 1910, "to represent the good of a State as antagonistic to that of humanity, or to set patriotism and cosmopolitanism against each other, is as wrong in theory and as mischievous in practice as it is to oppose the good of the individual citizen to that of his State."[688]

Muirhead's approach to the matter of patriotism and cosmopolitanism is best discerned from the book he co-authored with Hetherington. Like Bosanquet and Jones, they also perceived that an international outlook was an essential quality both for individuals and states although it was often obstructed by the pursuance of false ideals or a fixation on materialistic self-interests.[689] Convinced that, the state was not the highest or final organization of humanity, they argued that an unconditional loyalty to the state was prone to turn into an erroneous form of patriotism and become

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[685] Henry Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1910), 70.

[686] Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 70.

[687] Jones, 70.

[688] Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays*, 146.

[689] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 94.

obstructive to the realisation of the true purpose of the state.[690] The main purpose of the state was defined by Muirhead and Hetherington as "the moral welfare of its individual citizens" and due to the universal nature of morality, its full realisation necessitated "an outlook beyond the nation."[691] In compliance with Green's contention that the moral unities created by men were bound to become wider and wider through time, they argued "looking beyond the nation, our citizenship must be a national one, but it must also have an outlook beyond the nation. It must be European, ultimately a citizenship of the world."[692] From this perspective they evaluated the 'truthfulness' of patriotism in relation to the international outlook it endorsed. To the extent that patriotism constituted a barrier to a "devotion to the remoter interests of humanity" it was deemed to be false; an equivalent of the kind of patriotism that was adopted by Germany and resulted in the Great War.[693] Such false patriotism was marked by a narrow and uncritical devotion to the State and a lack of "proper concern for the general welfare of mankind."[694] Real patriotism on the other hand meant a free interest in the service of ones' country and fellow men so far as such service was perceived to be not only a fulfilment of his duty to the state but also to the "whole community of mankind."[695] In that sense, the internal organization of each state based on a true form of patriotism and in pursuance of the true ideals was an essential condition for international cooperation. For Muirhead and Hetherington, the most significant result of such an outlook was present in the countries that attained a democratic form of rule. They argued that while democracy was possible only through a conscious effort that required "discipline, self-sacrifice, and devotion to the best it can find," its realisation constituted the basis of hope as "those conditions will achieve an organization of the common will and aspiration of the world."[696] That is why Muirhead was optimistic in regards to the possibility of a higher level of unity that is to be realised beyond the limits of particular states. He believed that the

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[690] Hetherington and Muirhead, 227.

[691] Hetherington and Muirhead, 253.
      Hetherington and Muirhead, 24.

[692] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 24.

[693] Hetherington and Muirhead, 26.

[694] Hetherington and Muirhead, 221.

[695] Hetherington and Muirhead, 266.

[696] Hetherington and Muirhead, 290.

consciousness towards the fulfilment of moral duties beyond the limits of national communities was taking a hold among the civilised peoples and such consciousness created the conditions for international unity and cooperation.

Mackenzie as well, perceived humanity as a wider form of human community whose realisation was not contradictory to narrower forms of union but necessarily dependent on their healthy functioning. In a phrase that almost amounts to a paraphrasing of Green's position, he wrote

> Just as the good father and son is naturally prior to the good neighbour, the good neighbour to the good citizen, and the good citizen to the patriotic worker; so perhaps even more emphatically, it is still essential that one should be a good patriot before he can be a 'good European' and a good European before he can hope to be, in any effective sense, a good citizen of the world.[697]

Yet, in distinction from his fellow Idealists, Mackenzie made a differentiation between a cosmopolitan and an international outlook, and preferred the usage of the latter. According to Mackenzie, 'a pure cosmopolitan' would lack the loyalty to the narrower forms of association such as the family and the nation, and thus end up being a "wretch concentrated all in self."[698] Yet an internationalist outlook would mean the coupling of the already existing loyalties with a will to become a contributor to the wellbeing of the whole mankind.

All the names referred to above shared a belief in the vital importance of an international outlook within particular communities for achieving a peaceful and cooperative international order. Such an outlook was closely associated with a 'true' form of patriotism that was not antagonistic to the wider interests of humanity. While the order in which national organisation and international cooperation was to be achieved was not a point all British Idealists agreed upon, the inter-relation between these two ideals was recognized by all of them. A peaceful and cooperative international order was not perceived to be possible in the absence of nation-states

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[697] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 332.

[698] Mackenzie, 333.

that did not have a healthy internal organization. What such a healthy organization amounted to was strictly related to the system of rights and duties maintained by nation-states.

## 4.8 A Just Social Order

As it can be remembered, the ethical discussions of the British Idealists regarding the nature of humanity continually pointed to an underlying unity of human morality that is often overshadowed by the differences among particular ethical systems that are adopted by various communities. While the differences were explained through the impact of material conditions such as geography and climate, the unity was taken to be the result of universal human nature as social and reasonable. The social and reasonable nature of man that was used by Green to explain the basis of human society was now used to explain the underlying similarities on which apparently distinct communities were founded. Based on this contention, Bosanquet wrote that the conditions of social function constituted the root of individual morality and that "these ideas furnish matter for social ideals, and extended social ideals may certainly appear applicable to the welfare of all conceivable members of humanity."[699] Furthermore, there was a unity of purpose among mankind, as its reasonable and social nature required it, although its expressions varied considerably. The 'supreme goods' of truth, beauty, and goodness supplied the ends towards which all human communities worked in their own particular ways. In this sense the basis and end of all human societies were 'universal' but not 'general.'[700] Mackenzie made the same point when he wrote "… what is natural is not necessarily invariable and that the special features of human nature give rise to special kinds of order which, though not uniform, are not without law and reason."[701] According to Bosanquet, such a perception of the unity of mankind was a re-statement of Kantian ethics that was developed by 'English theory' and it amounted to an improved version of Kant's

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[699] Bernard Bosanquet, *Some Suggestions on Ethics*, ed. William Sweet, vol. 16 (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1999), 30.

[700] Bosanquet, 16:30.

[701] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 25.

work on the 'law universal.' In a chapter published in *Contemporary British Philosophy*, Bosanquet wrote

> it appears to me absolutely plain that by developing the conception of "law universal" into that of a concrete system, embodied in the actual whole of existing institutions, and yet furnishing through its particulars a content in which the universal end lives and grows within the individual will, a meaning is given to the Kantian ethical idea which Kant very likely would have disowned, but which really satisfied the theoretical demand which his system recognized but failed to meet.[702]

To apply this British Idealist philosophical position to the matter of international relations, both an interpretative and critical approach was necessary. While they tried to make sense of the reasons that created so much difference among the ethical systems of societies, they also sought to reveal the basic conditions any morally organized community was expected to meet. The basic conditions and the extent to which particular communities met these conditions were to be judged with reference to the "good that is being aimed at in a human society."[703]

With reference to the most basic premise of British Idealist philosophy, the good that was to be aimed at within any human society was each individual's ability to reach his/her full potential that is often called self-development, self-realization, or self-perfection; and it was expected to culminate in the common good of particular societies, and then in the good of mankind in general. From this perspective, certain conditions had to be met for the pursuance of the moral good. First and foremost, each individual was to be a part of a community; he\she had to be a partaker within a moral system of co-existence. Secondly, each community was to meet certain conditions so as to supply the necessary grounds for each individual's physical and spiritual development in accordance with his\her own capacities. While many British Idealists perceived certain forms of justice and equality to be essential attributes of every moral

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[702] Bernard Bosanquet, "Life and Philosophy," in *Contemporary British Philosophy* (Great Britain: Brandford & Dickens, 1924), 58.

[703] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 105.

community, the most common indicator they used was the nature of the system of rights and duties they developed.

Being a part of a community was equated with being a citizen by the British Idealists, which indicated the centrality of the state in ensuring the functioning of the social system in accordance with the existing ethical rules and regulations. This was a point most apparent in Bosanquet's work, yet it was also not absent in the writings of younger British Idealists. Haldane, for instance, argued in *The Future of Democracy* that in an ethical community "every man, woman, and child ought to have the opportunity of developing what is in them."[704] Ensuring this condition of 'equal opportunity' was the duty of the State. For the accomplishment of this duty, the State was expected to educate the child to have a fair chance of success in the community and restrain "other people who are very clever from pushing their special advantages to such an extreme point that for their own ends they unduly drag down the level of others."[705] As the state was the only authority that could ensure the preservation of such an order, being a citizen was a precondition of pursuing the moral good. Similarly, Muirhead maintained that the State was and would continue to be a condition "of the integrity of human life" despite the possibility that new organs beyond the nation-state would be established for the maintenance of wider human interests.[706] As the good of a human being was perceived to be dependent on the conditions the states ensured for their citizens, Muirhead claimed that "to deny one's citizenship is to deny one's humanity."[707] And Henry Jones, while criticizing the contention that every human being had rights solely because he was a human being, wrote that "…a citizen of no state, member of no community, and enjoying none of the rights of a state or community, he could not find a place to sit or stand except in some island over which no flag has ever flown."[708] As this was neither a realistic nor desirable position for a human being, he designated membership within a political

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[704] Haldane, *The Future of Democracy: An Address by Lord Haldane*, 7–8.

[705] Haldane, 9.

[706] Muirhead, "Recent Criticism of the Idealist Theory of the General Will," 1924, 361.

[707] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 97.

[708] Henry Jones, "The Fundamental Principle of Good Citizenship Which Social Science Develops and Applies," *Rice Institute Pamphlet - Rice University Studies* 6, no. 3 (1919): 168.

community as an indispensible condition for man to have rights, i.e. to have the conditions necessary for the realization of his human potential.

Yet, a society whose existence was a precondition for the development of the individual as well as the progress of mankind was not an unspecified crowd. To be able to fulfil its moral purpose, a society, and the state as its political embodiment was bound to be organized around the principle of justice. The principle of justice, according to Mackenzie, qualified the state as a moral power at the national level. A state that solely relied on power to rule its citizens without ensuring the existence of a just social and political system would be inadequate in its moral capacity.[709] In defining justice, Mackenzie claimed to follow Plato and his conception of 'distributive justice' with some modifications.[710] Plato's definition of 'distributive justice' was placement of everyone "in the position for which he is best fitted, adequately prepared to fulfil his function in that place, and supplied with the materials and instruments that are necessary for its proper discharge."[711] Admitting that this principle was not applicable in the modern world as it would mean subordination of "the individual life too completely to the service of the State,"[712] Mackenzie suggested that the State would be ensuring justice by making sure that "no unnecessary obstacles are placed in the way of each one discovering for himself what is the position for which he is best fitted, and eventually gaining that position."[713] In a more practical note, Mackenzie argued that to maintain justice, the state was to ensure that every child had access to education and that no individual would be in such extreme poverty "as would prevent him from securing" the "necessary materials and instruments for the proper discharge of his functions."[714] In short, Mackenzie perceived a just society as one in which "each would have what is due to him"[715] and preservation of justice within its borders was the primary duty of the State and the

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[709] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 138–39.

[710] Mackenzie, 156.

[711] Mackenzie, 156.

[712] Mackenzie, 159.

[713] Mackenzie, 157.

[714] Mackenzie, 157.

[715] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 307.

condition on which its citizens were required to support their State and upheld the law.[716]

In *Social Purpose,* Muirhead and Hetherington also defined the moral duty of the state with reference to the principle of justice, though their description of justice was limited in its scope. While the primary tool used by the state to ensure justice was the courts, more 'positive attempts' for its promotion was possible through "control and regulation of many relationships of life, and the provision of safeguards to secure that the enterprise of individuals and groups should not bring injury to others."[717] Such restrictions were necessary to ensure that, as Mackenzie also argued, each individual within the society had the opportunity to strive towards the realization of his potential. As self-development was a universal attribute of each and every individual, every state had the duty to maintain a just social and political order in which human beings had the opportunity to fulfil their potentials.

It was Bosanquet who most articulately related the state's moral nature with reference to its organisation around the principle of justice, and related it to the organization of a system of rights and duties. According to Bosanquet, justice was an ideal that was both universal and social in nature. It was universal as it was "in a sense the lowest of social claims," the basic condition for the moral existence of individuals.[718] It was social because its realisation was only possible when human beings came together and developed a social unity in which they all recognized certain rules whose pursuance was essential for their individual good and the good of the community. In that sense in "any social system, which is to be satisfactory," its participants' claims for justice were to be recognised.[719] Such recognition was possible through two factors "one constant, the other variable."[720] The first factor required the state to uphold the law it

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[716] Jones, "The Fundamental Principle of Good Citizenship Which Social Science Develops and Applies," 305.

[717] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 229.

Hetherington and Muirhead, 231.

[718] Bernard Bosanquet, "Three Lectures on Social Ideals," in *Social and International Ideals* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1917), 198.

[719] Bosanquet, 210.

[720] Bosanquet, 196.

professed to keep under any circumstances without making exceptions for individuals or groups. The second factor, on the other hand, depended on the nature of the rule that is kept by the state, and whether or not these rules were compatible with the good of the individuals and the good of the community. [721] Maintenance of justice at these two levels was indispensable qualities of a satisfactory social system as it was a condition for "making possible an impartial development of human capacity" within each and every social unity.[722] Finally, the clearest indicator of the extent to which the principle of justice was followed in a particular community was the system of rights and duties that was upheld by the state. So far as a satisfactory level of justice prevailed, individuals were expected to have a satisfactory set of rights and duties to realise their best possible selves.

## 4.9 Conclusion

This chapter offered an in depth analysis of the British Idealists' reflections on international relations in the post-Great War period. The analysis revealed that in this period, British Idealists like the rest of the liberal British intelligentsia decisively distanced themselves from the rhetoric of civilisation they adopted prior to 1914. Instead they started to use an 'internationalist' vocabulary that attributed great importance to the rights of great and small nations alike. Their discussions revolved around the concepts of the right to self-determination for all nations, and the fraternity of nations with each other at the world stage. They no longer distinguished the 'civilized' nations of Europe from the supposedly savage peoples under imperial rule; instead, defending each nations' particular worth as a unique realisation of human potential, worthy of preservation. When combined with the optimistic sentiment that prevailed in Britain thanks to the establishment of the League of Nations, Jones, Muirhead, Mackenzie, and Hetherington paid increased attention to the conditions of international peace and stability. Their works deviated from the dominant tone of discussion in the 1920s as they had little to say about the technical aspect of the newly emerging international institutions and laws. Instead, they focused on the philosophical basis of a universal law applicable to all nations with their respective

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[721] Bosanquet, 196.

[722] Bosanquet, 229.

particularities of law, belief and custom. This necessitated them to revisit Green's 'cosmopolitanism' in regards to the universal basis of human nature, comprised of reason, sociability, and morality and adapt it to the rising internationalist sentiment of the 1920s.

In this period, the most adamant question they wrestled with was an old one that Mackenzie traced back to the ancient Greek philosophy:

> That problem is still, on the whole, the one that was raised at its first beginning viz. in what sense, and to what extent, can human society be properly described as natural? If it is purely arbitrary or conventional, its study can be little more than an attempt to trace the external, variable, and, in a sense, accidental circumstances by which its forms have been, from time to time, determined. If, on the other hand, it is in its essence natural, we have to try to explain in what sense it is natural, and what are the particular forms to which its fundamental nature gives rise.[723]

Being confident in the universal moral nature of humanity, British Idealists argued that under the apparent multiplicity of human experience there was an underlying consistency. Each and every functioning society and every civilization worthy of the name complied with the most basic tenets of human morality. In every ethical society dishonesty was frowned upon while a sense of justice was observed. While no society was a perfect embodiment of human morality, none was completely disconnected from the dictates of morality either. Each ethical system was a unique approximation to the moral ideal. The apparent contradictions among laws and customs of specific peoples were mostly due to the material and geographical differences under which these peoples evolved their social and political institutions. So far as every society tapped into the same universal morality, it was not impossible to find a set of moral values that can be utilized as a common denominator for all nations for their internal and external conduct.

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[723] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 25.

One significant difference between the younger generation of British Idealists and Bosanquet in their post-Great War writings was in regards to the appropriate way of ensuring compliance with the basic premises of universal morality. While the members of the younger generation; Mackenzie, Muirhead, Hetherington and Jones favored a more direct form of cooperation among nations through international institutions for the articulation and adaptation of universal moral standards of conduct, Bosanquet was highly skeptical of such an approach. Instead, he argued, each nation had to be responsible for its own moral development through a better and more just organisation of its laws and institutions before they could develop a general will to become a part of the larger unity of humanity. A premature attempt to form a universal league, according to Bosanquet, would fail inevitably, possibly giving rise to leagues and counter-leagues in conflict with each other. The junction between the younger generations' and Bosanquet's approach to the matter was not related to the basic premises of the relation between the particular and the universal but the specific matter of how to move towards the universal from the particular. While the younger generation believed that increased communication and cooperation between nations through international institutions would enable them to see past their differences and realize their common moral ideals, Bosanquet believed nations had to ensure a just system within their borders before they can be a part of the larger unity of humanity.

Still, this difference of opinion did not point to a fundamental inconsistency of the position of the younger generation and Bosanquet. On the contrary they agreed on the most basic premises that morality, in itself, necessitated larger and larger circles of community in pursuance of a common good that could only be complete when it comprised the whole humanity. The apparent obstacles to such unity were mostly variations of human experience that did not necessarily meant a fundamental contradiction of norms but a variation of experience. So far as each nation followed the most basic dictates of morality in pursuance of justice and individual self-realization, the variations in their particular norms and customs were to be celebrated as the embodiment of a unique realisation of the human potential. Furthermore, they all agreed the national and international sentiment was not contradictory in nature; on the contrary they were the expression of the same sentiment –pursuance of a common good- at different levels of social unity. Thus, development of an international sentiment, as well as international organizations and international law was not a threat

to the nation-state. It was a necessary step in the moral development of humanity. In the next chapter, it is argued that these basic premises of the post-Great War writings of the British Idealists provide ample material to support an internationalist system of human rights.

# CHAPTER 5

# AN INTERNATIONALIST APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS

> *The rights of a citizen are pleasant to contemplate; but when one thinks of the obligations that go along with them, one may well ask, Who is adequate to such things? But happily perfection cannot be expected in human life. Still, whenever anyone fails in the carrying out of his obligations, it must be recognized that his claim to the corresponding rights becomes somewhat shaky.[724]*

This dissertation, so far, traced the evolution of British Idealist understanding of a moral order of international relations. It is argued that pre-1914 writings of many British Idealists were marked by an overt imperialist sentiment based on the paternalistic vocabulary of 'civilization.' It was the Great War that served as a deterrent for these British Idealists from supplying the 'materialistic' ambitions of imperialistic Great Powers with quasi-moral justifications. Thus, their transition first to a model of Commonwealth for the British Empire and then to the League of Nations as a moral order at the international level was based on the internationalist

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[724] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life: An Essay on Citizenship as Pursuit of Values*, Library of Philosophy (London: Allen & Unwin, 1928), 317.

turn their theorizing took following the outbreak of the Great War. Their changing position, as usual, was very much in keeping with the simultaneously evolving liberal position on international relations in Britain. What differentiated them from the rest of the British intelligencia in this period was their insistence on the primacy of the 'moral' character of international relations in comparison to the 'technical' details regarding international law and international organizations that dominated much of the intellectual debate in the inter-war period. Following Casper Sylvest's differentiation between the 'moralistic' way of theorizing in the pre-Great War period and the 'institutionalist' approaches to the matter that became dominant from 1918 onwards, it is possible to say British Idealists remained as remnants of a way of theorizing that lost its appeal.[725] This chapter argues, although British Idealism lost its popularity in the post-Great War period in Britain, writings of the younger generation of British Idealists offered remarkable insights in regards to an internationalist system of human rights. The ingenuity of their arguments was based on the unique synthesis they came up with as they were remaining true to the idealistic philosophy of Green in a predominantly internationalist intellectual atmosphere. Rights served as a touchstone in their reflections on international relations as well as offering a universal criterion of moral relations among individuals as well as nations.

As it was argued in the first chapter of this dissertation, young generation of British Idealists embraced the dominant liberal imperialist position in their contemplations regarding non-Western peoples. This position implied a paternalistic responsibility for European Great Powers to 'educate' the supposedly 'savage peoples' into the civilized way of life pioneered by the Europeans. Its end point was designated to be a universal system of morality that can only be achieved when a uniform way of outlook was adopted towards life by European as well as non-European peoples across the globe. Thus, this envisioned system of universal morality required a more or less uniform way of life for all peoples. This position, however, was later identified with the Prussian ambition of establishing the German 'kultur' as the dominant civilization not only for the non-European imperial subjects but also for the 'civilized peoples' of Europe. As this ambition was singled out among all others as the root

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[725] Casper Sylvest, "Continuity and Change in British Liberal Internationalism, C. 1900–1930," *Review of International Studies* 31, no. 2 (2005): 269.

cause of the atrocities of the Great War, British Idealists along with the majority of the British intelligentsia distanced themselves from the project of establishing a uniform –European- civilization that would support universal morality.

It was argued in the previous chapter, following the outbreak of the Great War British Idealists put increased emphasis on the concepts of national sovereignty of peoples as well as fraternity and cooperation among them as a regulating principle at the international level. Along with the ideals of independence and cooperation, there emerged an increased sensitivity on the part of the British Idealists to the particular value of ethical systems developed by peoples all over the world. These particularities –mostly thanks to Bosanquet's later work- were endorsed as singular realizations of the universal human experience that were contributive to the realization of the humanity's potential. Yet, their recognition and affirmation of variations among multiple ethical orders did not amount to an unconditional relativism. While, specific conditions for the realisation of an ethical order were expected to change from time to time and country to country, they were to be in compliance with the universal moral nature of mankind. The basic conditions of a moral order and the extent to which particular communities met these conditions were to be judged with reference to the "good that is being aimed at in a human society."[726] The social and reasonable nature of man that was used by Green to substantiate his theory of rights was now used by the younger generation of idealists to explain the underlying unity of the apparently distinct values particular communities upheld. As it was discussed in the previous chapter, to be able to fulfil its moral purpose, a society, and the state as its political embodiment were bound to be organized around the principle of justice.[727] By justice, they meant not only judicial accountability and equality of individuals but also social commensurability of rules and conditions that would offer reasonable conditions for *self-realization* to every individual within a society. The clearest expression of a just

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[726] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 105.

[727] J. S. Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1918), 156. H. J. W. Hetherington and J. H. Muirhead, *Social Purpose: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Civic Society* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD., 1918), 229. Henry Jones, "The Fundamental Principle of Good Citizenship Which Social Science Develops and Applies," *Rice Institute Pamphlet - Rice University Studies* 6, no. 3 (1919): 305.

social order was the satisfactory and well-articulated system of rights and duties its state recognized and maintained to reach this universal moral goal.

This chapter aims to reveal the younger generation of British Idealists' attempt to adapt Greenian theory of rights into a theory of human rights in the predominantly internationalist intellectual atmosphere of post-Great War Britain. The first part revisits Green's approach to rights especially in terms of its scope both in terms of the rights it designated to be vital and its spatial limitations. The second part offers a close reading of Mackenzie's list of the "Right's of Man," included in his *Fundamental Problems of Life.*[728] This part also seeks the impact of internationalism on the way British Idealists enlarged the scope of rights to the international arena with a special emphasis on Hetherington's *Labour Legislation* based on his observations of the first Conference of the International Labour Organisation in 1919.[729] The final part of this chapter offers a discussion regarding the parallels between the internationalist human rights system derived from the writings of the younger generation of British Idealists and Nussbaum's capabilities approach to human rights.

## 5.1 Self-realization as a Universal Moral Criterion for Human Rights

In contemporary accounts of British Idealist theory of rights Green's "recognition thesis" attracted much more interest than the metaphysical basis of those rights. While the metaphysical roots of Green's ethical and political theory constituted a point of interest for several thinkers, its centrality for the British Idealist rights theory has not always been acknowledged. Furthermore, these two aspects were sometimes argued to be self-sufficient theoretical constructs that can be separated from each other without loosing their importance. The distrust towards metaphysics that is most adequately exemplified by Rawls's claim to develop a 'political' theory without succumbing into discussions regarding 'metaphysical' argumentations was echoed in attempts to transform Green's theory of rights into a theory of human rights.[730] In the *Limits of Ethics,* Boucher drew attention to this tendency in contemporary literature

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[728] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 314–19.

[729] H. J. W. Hetherington, *International Labour Legislation* (London: Methuen & Co. LTD., 1920).

[730] John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, n.d.), 10.

by arguing, "modern philosophers have retained the conventionalism, or communitarianism, sometimes called constitutive theory and jettisoned the metaphysics."[731] Cacoullos also argued in her book *Thomas Hill Green: Philosopher of Rights:*

> I shall not deal with Green's metaphysics in this book. His distinctive contribution as a philosopher does not lie here but, if anywhere, in his moral and political ideas. It may be argued that we cannot separate his moral and political ideas… In Green's mind, certainly they were inseparable. But his ethics of self-realization and his theory of rights and the common good do not stand or fall with the belief in a universe which is self-conscious, whose unity is sustained by a divine principle. That Green tried to ground his ethics in his metaphysics is true; that he did not have to do is also true.[732]

Apart from the apparent lack of consensus in the literature regarding what does or does not count as metaphysics, attempts to divide British Idealists theory into clear compartments poses the risk of glossing over one of the most interesting aspects of Green's theory of rights. When Green's perception of the universe as a consistent whole is left out of the equation, his claims regarding the compatibility of personal well-being and the common-good of the society looses its support point. Although it is very common in contemporary human rights literature that "the deeper philosophical questions about what human rights are and how we come to have them, that is, the questions of foundations, are avoided," it is not necessarily beneficial, especially in the case of British Idealism. Arguably, the non-proportional attention given to Green's rights recognition thesis in comparison with his metaphysics shaped around the concept of self-realization leads to human rights theories that emphasize the particularities of societies in contrast to the universal moral character of humanity. This in turn gives rise to the criticism that British Idealist theory of human rights is a

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[731] David Boucher, *The Limits of Ethics in International Relations: Natural Law, Natural Rights, and Human Rights in Transition*, Reprint edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 13.

[732] Ann R. Cacoullos, *Thomas Hill Green: Philosopher of Rights*, ed. Arthur W. Brown and Thomas S. Knight (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc.,U.S., 1975), 33.

relativist one, a criticism contemporary literature on British Idealism seems to be at pains to disprove.[733]

Admittedly, the lack of interest or trust in metaphysics is not a new tendency in political philosophy. It is quite telling that Hobhouse choose the title, *The Metaphysical Theory of the State* for his book that was devoted to discrediting Bosanquet's *The Philosophical Theory of the State.* Still, from the British Idealists' perspective metaphysics was an integral part of their work without which their moral and political theory lost their ground. In his *A Manual of Ethics* published in 1901, Mackenzie wrote

> The truth is that the theory of Ethics which seems most satisfactory has a metaphysical basis, and without the consideration of that basis there can be no thorough understanding of it. If we could have satisfied ourselves with a Hedonistic theory, a psychological basis might perhaps have sufficed. On the other hand, if one of the current evolution theories could be accepted we might look for our basis in the study of biology. But if we rest our view of Ethics on the ideal of self or of the rational universe, the significance of this cannot be made fully apparent without a metaphysical examination of the nature of the self; nor can its validity be established except by a discussion of the reality of the rational universe.[734]

More than 20 years later, in response to the criticisms that British Idealism was contaminated by Prussian metaphysics, Mackenzie reemphasized the importance of metaphysical inquiry, especially for idealist philosophy by claiming that idealism without metaphysics would only amount to "Pragmatism or Humanism, which might, I think, be characterized as a sort of practical idealism."[735] Such philosophizing was not perceived to be satisfactory by Mackenzie so far as it could not answer the most

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[733] Rex Martin, *A System of Rights*, First Thus edition (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1997), 74.

[734] John S. Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, Fourth (New York City: HINDS, HAYDEN & ELDREDGE, INC., 1901).

[735] J. S. Mackenzie, *Ultimate Values in the Light of Contemporary Thought* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1924), 87.

basic problem: in a world where religion no longer justified the indispensability of moral life, what will?[736] Green's ethical and political theory was and continues to be attractive for so many thinkers, so far as it filled this void by arguing for the reality of moral life through identifying man as a moral as well as a social being whose very nature requires him to be a part of a moral community. The concept of self-realization that constitutes one of the cornerstones of his metaphysics and ethics also shaped the way Green dealt with the matter of rights.

In the secondary literature on Green's conception of citizenship and ethical society, the Aristotelian roots of his thinking are well documented. It is commonly contended that Green's ethical theory is an unprecedented combination of Kantian deontology and Aristotelian eudemonic ethics.[737] Colin Tyler, for instance, noted that "Green corrected Aristotle with the idealist tradition and not least with Kant, putting particular weight on the latter's metaphysics and ethics (especially the 'good will,' 'categorical imperative' and 'kingdom of ends')."[738] While the Kantian/deontological aspect of his work dealt with the ethical norms that regulate individuals' other regarding actions, Aristotelian legacy of eudaemonist ethical theory substantiated Green's emphasize on the "good" by designating self-realization as a universal end whose pursuance is intrinsic to human nature.[739] Unquestionably, Green's perception of human nature was intrinsically linked to his metaphysics that presupposed the existence of 'an eternal consciousness', which cloaked the moral end of self-realization with a transcendent justification. He argued, although human beings were limited due to their 'animality,' human reason was the vessel through which eternal consciousness was coming to its own realisation. Thus, in his *Prolegomena to Ethics* he argued "it will be found, we believe… in the growth of our experience, in the

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[736] Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, 450.

[737] W. J. Mander, "Idealism and the True Self," in *British Idealism and the Concept of the Self*, ed. (W. J.) Mander and Stamatoula Panagakou (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 289.

[738] Colin Tyler, *The Metaphysics of Self-Realisation and Freedom*, Green Studies (UK, USA: Imprint Academic, 2010), 28.

[739] Colin Tyler, *The Metaphysics of Self-Realisation and Freedom*, Green Studies (UK, USA: Imprint Academic, 2010), 140.

David O. Brink, "Self-Realization and the Common Good: Themes in T. H. Green," in *T. H. Green: Ethics, Metaphysics and Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 22.

process of our learning to know the world, an animal organism, which has its history in time, gradually becomes the vehicle of an eternally complete consciousness."[740] Although he did not deny the existence of certain animal instincts and desires operative in every human individual, he attributed a truly human quality to only those aspects of humanity that endowed human beings with a moral and rational capacity that carried them beyond their animality. For Green the most apparent indication of man's capacity to realize the eternal consciousness in himself was also the quality that separated him from all the lower orders of animals; namely, his capacity to envision himself as something that which he is not, an ideal self, and his will to act with the intent of becoming that self. In *Prolegomena* he clearly made the distinction between the animal attributes of human beings that limited it in contrast to his reason and will that enabled him to become a participator in the realisation of the eternal consciousness:

> The reason and will of man have their common ground in that characteristic of being an object to himself which… belongs to him in so far as the eternal mind, through the medium of an animal organism and under limitations arising from the employment of such a medium, reproduces itself in him. It is in virtue of this self-objectifying principle that he is determined, nor simply by natural wants according to natural laws, but by the thought of himself as existing under certain conditions, and as having ends that may be attained and capabilities that may be realized under those conditions. It is thus that he not merely desires but seeks to satisfy himself in gaining the objects of his desire; presents to himself a certain possible state of himself' which the gratification of the desire he seeks to reach… *It is thus, again, that he has the impulse to make himself what he has the possibility of becoming but actually is not, and hence not merely, like the plant or animal, undergoes a process of development, but seeks to and does, develop himself.[741]*

In its relation to the eternal mind or consciousness, human individuals were characterized by Green with an innate ability to envision a better version of

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[740] Thomas Hill Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, ed. A. C. Bradley, Fifth Edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), 77.

[741] Green, 199.

themselves and the will to act in the pursuance of this self-constructed end. Green argued the moral act was revealed to be the act that was in accordance with the truly human characteristics of the individual, namely his reason and will that enabled him to pursue the higher satisfaction of self-realization.

While some related Green's emphasis on the moral end to the 'consequentialist' line of thinking in moral theory that is shaped by a dominantly utilitarian philosophical tradition, a more plausible tendency is to trace the impact of the Aristotelian thinking's revival during Green's lifetime. In 'Between Kantianism and Consequentialism in T. H. Green's Moral Philosophy', David Weinstein argued that Green's consequentialist moral theory was very much impacted by the "conceptual horizons" of his time and thus "it never escaped from some of the rudimentary motifs of the dominant utilitarian paradigm."[742] Weinstein contended, as "modern interpreters of Green have not adequately appreciated the extent to which Green's liberalism was also consequentialist," contemporary literature on Green "tends to put him on the deontological side of the lively rivalry between Kantians and utilitarians."[743] According to Weinstein, while Green was certainly not a utilitarian, it was also impossible to ignore his criticisms of Kant's deontological ethics. If Green was to be considered to be a Kantian it was only possible with a considerable amount of revisions in regards to the 'content' of the moral law. Green's emphasis on 'moral self-realization' was "the kind of consequence which Kant's moral law needs in order to escape its otherwise empty formalism."[744] Since 1993 when Weinstein published his article, Green's modification of Kantian deontology has been well acknowledged in the secondary literature. Yet it was not commonly explained with Green's appreciation of Mill and Sidgwick, but with the Ancient Greek roots of Idealist line of thought. Green's usage of the concept of self-realization is recognized to be more in line with Aristotle's eudemonic ethics then with Mill's 'self-development.'[745]

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[742] David Weinstein, "Between Kantianism and Consequentialism in TH Green's Moral Philosophy," *Political Studies* 41, no. 4 (1993): 618–19.

[743] Weinstein, 619.

[744] Weinstein, 631.

[745] Weinstein, 618.

Gerald F. Gaus, "Liberalism at the End of the Century," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 5, no. 2 (June 2000): 184.

Back in 1932, in his book *Rule and End in Morals,* Muirhead also dealt with the long-standing heteronomy between consequentialist and deontological ethics and tried to locate Idealist tradition in respect to these two prominent positions. In this work, Muirhead himself, acknowledged Green's deviation from Kantian deontological ethics and defined Green's most prominent contribution to ethical theory; *Prolegomena to Ethics* as the "reinterpretation of the classical scheme of the Nicomachean *Ethics.*"[746] The same contention has been repeated in the secondary literature especially when dealing with the implications of Green's ethical theory for the individual. Although the individual in Green's mind was not an entity separable from the social whole in and through which the individual was shaped, the common good in separation from the ideal of self-realization was not a sufficient end for the pursuance of a moral life. Thus, Green substantiated the moral life with two different yet closely interdependent ends at the individual and societal levels. While the end pursued by a moral life was identified as self-realization at the individual level, the end pursued by the aggregate of these individuals within a society was the common good. In other words, Green incorporated the teleological legacy of Aristotelian ethics that searched for the good in the self-realizing capacity of human beings into Kantian deontological ethics that mainly dealt with other-regarding and rule-following actions of individuals within a society. According to Green, these two ends were impossible to achieve in isolation from each other and only their pursuance gave rise to an ethical society.

In his *Prolegomena* Green identified men's moral capacity to be rooted in his possession of a "consciousness which is an object to itself."[747] What Green meant by being an object to itself related to men's ability to distinguish his current self from a possible future self that is qualitatively different and more advanced. Furthermore,

A. Simhony, "Idealist Organicism: Beyond Holism and Individualism," *History of Political Thought* 12, no. 3 (March 1, 1991): 533.

John Bowle, *Politics and Opinion in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1954), 290.

Peter Robbins, *British Hegelians 1875 1925* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1982), 9.

Cacoullos, *Thomas Hill Green*, 13.

[746] John H. Muirhead, *Rule and End in Morals* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 7.

[747] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 208.

Green argued, mankind could attain a higher order of satisfaction –in comparison with simple animal pleasures- only by continually realizing a better version of himself. Thus, the moral end of self-realization, according to Green served as a source of a higher order of satisfaction for the individual as well as a guiding principle in his endeavors to act ethically.[748] Green's approach to human nature or to the qualities that were distinctively human was shaped by his conviction that an eternal consciousness was on the process of realizing itself in the person of each and every individual through continual self-realization. Yet, although the eternal consciousness that Green referred to in substantiating the truly human capacity for self-realization was singular, its realization in individuals was recognized to be various. As Rex Martin explained, when Green used the concept of self-realization as a justificatory human quality for ethical life what it implied was not the "sameness of the ends themselves" but the "sameness of the means" that were necessary for its actualization.[749] Thus, for Green "the ideal of self-realization" was to "be an individualized one."[750] He acknowledged the multitude of the possibilities for self-realization for each individual when he dealt with the Aristotelian virtues and argued

> there was a 'virtue' to be exhibited in handicraft no less than in the functions of a magistrate or citizen-soldier or head of a family; but it was some interest in the achievement by men of what they had it in them to do, in their becoming the best they had it in them to become, that at once governed the estimation of virtue in all these cases and inspired or sustained the practice.[751]

Clearly, for Green the ideal of self-realization did not entail a readily identified conception of the best possible human being. On the contrary, Green acknowledged that each individual had a unique potential for an individualized form of self-realization. The unifying characteristic of individuals was not the type of person they ought to become but their potential to envision a better version of themselves and strive towards its actualisation. Like Aristotle, Green's evaluation of human nature

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[748] Tyler, *The Metaphysics of Self-Realisation and Freedom*, 157.

[749] Rex Martin, "T. H. Green's Idea of Persons and Citizens," in *Ethical Citizenship: British Idealism and the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Thom Broks (London: palgrave macmillan, 2014), 22.

[750] Martin, 22.

[751] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 294.

did not take truly human attributes as pre-determined or static entities. According to Green, human nature was marked by a potential and innate desire to achieve full excellence although the possibility of achieving it was restricted by the limitations of its 'animal organism.'[752] Human nature, distinguished from the lower order of animals by a 'moral quest for excellence' required the individual to act in a manner that pursued a never-ending pursuit of the betterment of his moral qualities as well as his intellectual and aesthetic abilities.[753] The centrality and the importance of the idea of self-realization in Green's ethical –and following from it social and political- theory was most clearly explained by Cookson and Mander as follows:

> Green goes on to argue that the motive determining an agent's will is always an idealized future state of his own self, a conception of himself as satisfied –whatever it may be that he seeks. For this reason, argues Green, moral action is 'the process of self-realisation, i.e. of making a possible self real. In historical terms, Green's arrival at the formula of self-realization represents an important shift in ethical thinking. Instead of asking with the utilitarian, intuitionist, and even the Kantian philosophers of the day, 'What ought I to do?,' Green and the many Idealists who followed him re-construed ethical inquiry in the mould of an older question, 'What kind of person ought I to be?'.[754]

Although Green's appropriation of Aristotle's eudaemonist ethics focused his ethical inquiry onto the subject of self-realization at the individual level, his perception of an ethical society was decisively different from Aristotle's. While acknowledging the discrepancy between Aristotle's and his own understanding of an ethical society, Green himself noted that, the difference was not a fundamental one in effect, it was only in regards to "the range of persons" who can claim to be participants of an ethical society.[755] While "the Greek of Aristotle's age," "could only conceive the self-

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[752] Green, 78.

[753] Colin Tyler, "Contesting the Common Good: T. H. Green and Contemporary Republicanism," in *T. H. Green*, ed. (Maria) Dimova Cookson and W. J. Mander (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 273.

[754] Maria Dimova-Cookson and W. J. Mander, "Introduction," in *T. H. Green: Ethics, Metaphysics and Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 9.

[755] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 273.

devotion in some form in which it had actually appeared in the citizen-soldier, who faced death calmly in battle for the State," Green argued Christian thought enabled men to recognize a higher moral standard in which all human beings were partakers. Green maintained, "the history of Christendom" led to the realisation of "the fact that a practical conviction of the brotherhood of all men, such as was impossible to the Greek."[756] While the ethical society envisioned by the Greeks was shaped around virtually identical ethical values, its application was limited to only a select group of citizens while large numbers of aliens and slaves were excluded from this ethical society.[757] The ancient Greek society of Aristotle's time embodied "the idea of a society of free and law-abiding persons, each his own master yet each his brother's keeper," but it lacked universality.[758] While such universality was unknown to the ancient Greeks, modern ethical thought revealed a tendency towards ever expending inclusiveness of the ethical society. In this respect, Aristotelian ethics when applied to social theory was to be modified with a conception of an all-inclusive conception of the common good. To emphasize the variety of sources that influenced Green's ethical theory, Tyler cites Ritchie's statement that "if one was trying to capture Green's intellectual debts, 'it would be least misleading to say that he corrected Kant by Aristotle and Aristotle by Kant.'"[759] Similarly, in their discussions of the roots of Green's ethical theory both Rex Martin and Leslie Armour notes certain points that Green deviated from Aristotle's conception of an ethical society in which "there were natural slaves who could not be citizens and that non-Greeks could never quite overcome their barbarity."[760]

In his *Prolegomena,* Green interpreted the lack of universality in Aristotle's description of an ethical society as a trait of his time. He also noted that, especially with the rise of Christian thought, humanity was moving beyond the arbitrary classifications of human communities and recognizing a true unity of humanity.

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[756] Green, 277.

[757] Green, 292.

[758] Green, 292.

[759] Tyler, *The Metaphysics of Self-Realisation and Freedom*, 139.

[760] Leslie Armour, "Idealism and Ethical Citizenship" (Palgrave MACMILLAN, 2014), 60. Rex Martin, "Three Dimensions of T. H. Green's Idea of the Self," in *British Idealism and the Concept of the Self*, ed. W. J. Mander and Stamatoula Panagakou (palgrave macmillan, 2016), 133.

According to Green, signs of this continuing movement towards a truly universal understanding of human community was present in different philosophical schools of thought. While in hedonistic line of thought, the universal principle was formulated in the phrase "every one should count for one and no one for more than one," Kantian ethics expressed the same sentiment through the categorical imperative "act so as to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of others, always as an end, never merely as a means."[761] Green argued, the hedonistic interpretation of the universal principle was not theoretically and practically capable of offering a sustainable guideline for ethical action. On the contrary, the hedonistic principle was open to exploitation by a superior race or class, so far as the equality prescribed by the hedonists was not an equality of persons but an equality of pleasures.[762] Again, the problem with the hedonistic maxim lay originally in the 'good' it designated to pursue; i.e. pleasure. Green argued, so far as there was a surplus of pleasure in 'hedonistic calculus,' it was no concern which individual or group of individuals were barred from participating in its enjoyment. Thus, Green designated Kantian imperative as a superior expression of the universal ideal. He concluded the 'Duty to Humanity' chapter in his *Prolegomena* with a restatement of the Kantian moral imperative:

> Every human person has an absolute value; the humanity in the person of every one is always to be treated as an end, never merely as a means; that in the estimate of that well-being which forms the true good every one is to count for one and no one for more than one; that every one has a 'suum' which every one else is bound to render him.[763]

For Green, ethical life for an individual in isolation from society was impossible to contemplate so far as the conditions for self-realisation were only possible when human beings were in company with each other. While at the individual level the ideal of self-realization offered a tentative guideline into the ways of maintaining an ethical life, individuals' inclusion within a society required a further consideration in

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[761] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 247.

[762] Green, 248.

[763] Green, 253.

regards to the nature of their interaction with each other. Thus, while incorporating Kantian deontology into his assessment of ethics, Green aimed to designate the conditions of maintaining a society that in effect enabled pursuance of an ethical life. These conditions were dependent on individuals' other regarding actions. In that sense, the eudemonic concept of self-realization that guided individuals in their pursuance of an ethical life was incorporated with the categorical approach to ethics that aimed to regulate individuals' interactions with each other within an ethical social whole. This additional criterion for ethical action required individuals to pursue their own self-realization while being mindful of the existence of a common good in which they were to participate both as a contributor and as a beneficiary. When the moral life of an individual were taken into consideration in line with his sociable nature, Green perceived a categorical duty for individuals not only to strive for their own self-realization, but also to strive for creating and maintaining the necessary conditions for the realization of a common good. Still the good that was common to all individuals within a designated society, be it a family, a clan, a nation, or humanity, was explained with reference to the ideal of self-realization. According to Green, the ideal of a common good, just like the ideal of self-realization, was a precondition for the possibility of a moral life, for human beings were social in nature and their self-realization was possible only in cooperation with their fellow human beings. Thus, he argued, without the idea of a common good

> however restricted in range the idea may be, there is given 'in promise and
> potency' the ideal of which the realisation would be perfect morality, the ideal of
> a society in which every one shall treat every one else as his neighbour, in which
> to every rational agent the well-being or perfection of every other such agent
> shall be included in that perfection of himself for which he lives.

According to Green individuals were social in nature so far as their moral nature required self-realization and the meaningful pursuance of this end required social cooperation. As man was a finite creature aware of his own mortality, his innate capacity to realize himself required him to search for ways that can carry him beyond his spatial and temporal limitation. Green argued that, in this attempt to go beyond his own death, human beings "associates his kindred with himself" and through this association he "neutralizes the effect which the anticipation of death must otherwise

have on the demand for permanent good."[764] Green believed that humans' sociability was one of the earliest and most intrinsic aspects of his nature so far as "in the earliest stages of human consciousness in which the idea of a true or permanent good could lead any one to call in question the good of an immediately attractive pleasure, it was already an idea of a social good—of a good not private to the man himself, but good for him as a member of a community."[765] According to Cookson this line of thinking which she calls "the salvation argument" comprises the bases of Green's belief in the social nature of man.[766] The idea that individual's enjoyment of the good, understood to be the realization of his innate capacities was dependent on his inclusion in a social whole creates the basis on which Green establishes an interdependency between the ideal of self realization and the ideal of a common good. Several other supportive arguments are also offered by Green to support his conviction in regards to human beings' innate social nature. For instance, Colin Tyler argues that Green offers a "Hegelian intersubjective recognition" argument through which he maintains that the very possibility of acquiring a sense of self depends on individuals' treatment by others. Through observing others' recognition of ourselves as rational agents endowed with higher capacities, "we become aware of both ourselves and them as 'persons in capacity –subjects capable each of conceiving himself and the bettering of life as an end to himself.'"[767] Furthermore, Brink argues that Green perceives interpersonal deliberations as a necessity for individuals to form more complete ideas of the good they are to pursue. According to Brink, this originally Socratic position that maintains discussion with those who are unlike me would help me go beyond my limitations was reproduced by Aristotle and through his work became influential on Green's account of human sociability.[768] Evidently, Green perceived sociability as one of the most basic tenets of being human along with his

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[764] Green, 271.

[765] Green, 271.

[766] Maria Dimova-Cookson, *T.H. Green's Moral and Political Philosophy: A Phenomenological Perspective*, 2001 edition (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 87.

[767] Tyler, "Contesting the Common Good: T. H. Green and Contemporary Republicanism," 273–74. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 210.

[768] David Owen Brink, *Perfectionism and the Common Good: Themes in the Philosophy of T.H. Green*, Lines of Thought (Oxford : New York: Clarendon ; Oxford University Press, 2003), 49.

rationality and will. So far as individuals had an innate awareness that their own satisfaction through self-realization was dependent on their ability to form cooperative relations with others, the idea of a common good became a precondition for the possibility of an ethical life.

While the basis of the idea of common good is easy to find in Green's writings, the exact content of the term proves to be more elusive. Green himself recognizes the impossibility to designate a 'constant' common good or inalterable laws that must be complied with in its pursuance. Instead, he defines the common good as an ideal, which does not exist yet, but is in the process of realization.[769] So far as it appears to be impossible to know what the ideal is until its full-realization, the duties in their pursuance also remain more or less undefined.[770] Still, with reference to the ideal of self-realization and in quite a circular manner, Green argued "the goodness of man lies in devotion to the ideal of humanity, and then that ideal of humanity consists in the goodness of man."[771] For Green, the good that was common to humanity was realisable only in the person of each and every individual. Thus, it was a duty for human beings to act in pursuance of this common good by ensuring the existence of the necessary conditions for the development of each individual's innate capacities including oneself. As this duty was expected to be in conflict with other desires and impulses "in relation to a nature such as ours," Green defined this duty to strive for self-realization in our own person as well as in the persons of others as a categorical imperative. Again the content of the imperative was impossible to define before it revealed itself to be necessary in the pursuance of the ideal at a certain point and time. Still, Green offered a guideline that required observance of all established traditional duties until such a time that these duties proved to be insufficient or contradictory in the pursuance of the ideal and "never in the interest of anyone's pleasure."[772] Green contended that although the categorical imperative appeared to "have no particular content" or that it appeared to have too much, the duties that was to be pursued by

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[769] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 226.

[770] Dr. Thom Brooks, ed., *Ethical Citizenship: British Idealism and the Politics of Recognition*, 2014 edition (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 151.

[771] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 225.

[772] Green, 227.

individuals in specific circumstances were expected to be clear enough. Most basically, these duties comprised following the established rules and regulations of the social whole and pursuing one's own self-development as well as ensuring more and more individuals became part of the area of the common good.

Green's conviction that there was a harmony between the good of the individual, defined as self-realization and the overall good of the society has long been a topic of discussion. Cacoullos for instance, argues that there was "genuine confusion" in Green's ethical theory so far as he ignored a very fundamental aspect of social life which gave rise to the necessity for rules and regulations in the first place: "conflict between individual demands."[773] Alternatively, Cookson argues Green stretched the limits of his theory when he claimed that "the innate moral nature of human beings" enables them to perceive and act in accordance with an idea of a common good. According to Cookson, a developmental approach to human morality that is based on not the existence of but the potential for moral behavior in human beings would better support Green's claims of harmony among individuals' interests.[774] Brink on the other hand maintains that, Green's moral theory successfully supported his claims of 'extreme harmony' among individuals' interests and adds that those interests are understood not only to be non-conflictual but also to be both strategically and metaphysically interdependent.[775] Clearly, Green very much counted on this interdependence between the goods of the individuals as the ideal of the common good would not be possible without such cohesion. Repeatedly, he defined the common good as a 'maximally comprehensive' form of good, which presupposed a "universal human fellowship."[776] According to Green, it was possible to identify a good as common so far as "in the effort after which there can be no competition between man and man; of which the pursuit of any individual is an equal service to others and to himself."[777] While material goods are finite in quantity and their

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[773] Cacoullos, *Thomas Hill Green*, 152.

[774] Dimova-Cookson, *T.H. Green's Moral and Political Philosophy*, 82.

[775] Brink, *Perfectionism and the Common Good*, 128.

[776] Brink, "Self-Realization and the Common Good: Themes in T. H. Green," 32.
Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 242.

[777] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 335.

pursuance naturally required a sort of competition no matter how abound they are, the common good Green had in mind was of a different kind. In the following pages, Green noted the non-material nature of the good in whose pursuance individuals formed ethical societies:

> The good has come to be conceived with increasing clearness, not as anything which one man or set of men can gain or enjoy to the exclusion of others, but as a spiritual activity in which all may partake, and in which all must partake, if it is to amount to a full realisation of the faculties of the human soul. And the progress of thought in individuals, by which the conception of the good has been thus freed from material limitations, has gone along with a progress in social unification which has made it possible for men practically to conceive a claim of all upon all for freedom and support in the pursuit of a common end.[778]

In a more precise manner, Green gave examples of the common good, which was built and enjoyed by the seemingly mundane actions of individuals within a society. He gave the examples of "the craftsman or writer, set upon making his work as good as he can without reference to his own glorification; by the father devoted to the education of his family, or the citizen devoted to the service of his state" as contributors and partakers of the common good.[779] According to Green, pursuits of such individuals were means to their personal end of self-realization as well as contributions to the overall good of the society. While these individuals pursued their own ends by their endeavors they were also conscious of their contributions to a common good from which other individuals benefited. Yet, their contributions to others' life was not understood to be an act of benevolence by Green. As a matter of fact, it has been argued that in Green's moral theory there was no substantial difference between acts of benevolence and acts of prudence.[780] By rejecting a simplistic dichotomy between actions born out of self-love and actions born out of the concern for others well being, Green recognized an interdependence between the goods of all human beings who acknowledge each other as partakers in the pursuance of a common good. At a very basic level individuals were aware that the possibility of

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[778] Green, 340.

[779] Green, 335–36.

[780] Brink, *Perfectionism and the Common Good*, 46.

their personal good was dependent on their ability to be partakers of a common good with others, which implied that their concern for others' good was to a certain extent 'derivative' of their concern for their own good.[781] Yet, the categorical imperative that "humanity in the person of every one is always to be treated as an end, never merely as a means" precluded the possibility of an instrumental approach to the ideal of the common good.[782] Instead, individuals were to recognize that the common good was the outcome of the collective endeavors of individuals within a society and each individual within it was both a contributor and a benefactor.

Green was aware that the idea of the common good was still an 'ideal' rather than a fact in many societies by the end of the 19th century. In his *Prolegomena* Green juxtaposed the ideal with the existing order of the society and noted that

> In fact we are very far, in our ordinary estimates of good… It makes itself felt in certain prohibitions, *e.g.* of slavery, but it has no such effect on the ordering of life as to secure for those whom we admit that it is wrong to use as chattels much real opportunity of self-development. They are left to sink or swim in the stream of unrelenting competition, in which we admit that the weaker has not a chance… Civil society may be, and is, founded on the idea of there being a common good, but that idea in relation to the less favored members of society is in effect unrealized…[783]

Yet, Green denied that the incompatibility between the ideal and the actual was not due to a deficiency of the ideal itself; the problem was rather a lack of compliance with the moral duties derived from the ideals of self-realization and the common good. While some still pursued their own 'good' through egoistic interests in material things "which admit of being competed for," others were ipso facto excluded from the possibility of being partakers in the common good. For Green, existing order of social life was not a proof that conflict was inherent within social wholes, but that individuals were still not fully aware of the true nature of the good that would bring them most satisfaction. Admittedly Green perceived two contradictory tendencies in

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[781] Brink, "Self-Realization and the Common Good: Themes in T. H. Green," 31.

[782] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 253.

[783] Green, 288.

the history of humanity one thanks to the innate moral capacity of man and the other due to his animal limitations. The first tendency was towards the creation and extension of the area of a common good and it was evident in the history of humanity. According to Green, there was a movement towards larger and larger areas of common good in which individuals who were conceived as less than human before were recognized as partakers in a common good. With his characteristic optimism, Green noted that "with growing means of intercourse and the progress of reflection the theory of a universal human fellowship" was the "natural outcome" of the continual expansion of the area of the common good.[784] On the other hand increased means of communication and more varied forms of material interests constantly opened new possibilities for conflict among the individuals. So far as there were individuals who pursed their egoistic interests rather than their categorical duty for self-realization in their own person as well as in the person of others "new vistas of hostile interests, with new prospects of failure for the weaker" were constantly generated.[785]

Green's seminal work on political theory, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* located the concept of rights at the heart of his approach to the basis of an ethical political community. Rights were described by Green as the guarantees that ensured the "individual to have certain powers secured to him by society, and the counter-claim of society to exercise certain powers over the individual…"[786] But these rights were not innate in the sense that individuals were born with them or contractual in the sense that each and every individual consciously entered into a contract with each other to respect these powers. On the contrary, these rights were recognized and observed, according to Green, due to the moral nature of man, because man needed these rights to realize his human potential. Thus Green argued the justification for the recognition of these powers lay in the "fact that these powers are necessary to the fulfillment of man's vocation as a moral being, to an effectual self-devotion to the work of developing the perfect character in himself and

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[784] Green, 242.

[785] Green, 289.

[786] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 1999), 41.

others."[787] According to Green the imperatives to be followed by each and every individual within ethical societies has been established and developed throughout history giving rise to the laws and norms that regulated individuals' relations with each other. In that sense actual recognized rights within every society was ethical as well as historical and traditional. From such a perspective Green noted that, the most basic rights recognized in every society in which individuals recognized each other as partakers in a common good were derived from the same moral source but "the form in which these claims are admitted and acted on by men in their dealings with each other varies with the form of society."[788] In his *Lectures,* Green examined the moral sources of those rights that he expects to be present in every well-ordered society despite the variances in their codification/observance. According to Green, those rights that 'naturally' arise in every society in which individuals recognise each other as equal participants in the pursuance of a common good were the right to free life, property, and family.

While Green perceived these rights to be indispensable for an individual to pursue his self-realization without undue constraint, this list was by no means exhaustive of the powers that may be necessary for individuals' self-realization under all conditions. Rather, Green offered these 'powers' to be bare minimums for individuals' pursuance of the moral end. The right to free life – a combination of right to life and right to liberty- was understood by Green as the foundation for the "capacity on the part of the subject for membership of a society, for determination of the will, and through it of the bodily organisation, by the conception of a well-being as common to self with others."[789] Green perceived two possible legitimate conditions for the violation of the right to free life possible in a well-organized community. The first condition applied during a war in which the community may demand individual to give up his right to life although the legitimacy of this demand could not remove the fact that one or more of the parties to the war were violating the moral law by causing harm to mankind in the person of the soldiers killed.[790] The second condition considered the case of

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[787] Green, 41.

[788] Green, 154.

[789] Green, 155–56.

[790] Green, 211.

punishment within a well-organized society. In this case, the individual punished was understood to be in violation of the moral end so far as he harmed his fellow man, and thus lost his right to free action "for the moral good of the community."[791] Green noted that morally legitimate punishment took for its end not vindictiveness but the "moral new birth" of the individual punished.[792] The second basic right Green expected to be present in well-organized societies, *i.e.* the right to property was also substantiated with reference to the moral end individuals pursued. Green recognized a right to property as legitimate so far as property acquired served as "realized will," an "extension of the man's organs, the constant apparatus through which he gives reality to his ideas and wishes."[793] In other words, Green recognized the appropriation of such things, which enabled men to pursue his own self-realization as a right. For instance, according to Green, a farmer may legitimately claim a right to the land he uses to grow food and a shoemaker had a legitimate claim to his workshop. The right to property was not an unconditional power according to Green. So far as the end to be pursued by the appropriation of property was the good of the individual as well as the collective good of the social whole, Green argued that the right to property did not condone a system in which "one set of men are secured in the power of getting and keeping the means of realizing their will, in such a way that others are practically denied the power."[794] In other words, for the legitimate use of the right of property society must be organized in such a way that every individual had a reasonable chance to acquire property. According to Green, in a society where property was disproportionally owned by an individual or a group of individuals, property was equal to theft.[795] Lastly, Green perceived the right to family as an indispensable power for men and women to pursue a moral life. If the underlying patriarchal tone of Green's agreement is disregarded in consideration of the prevailing social structure in which he formed his ideas, it can be seen that his main concern was with establishing the rights of men and women that guarantee their pursuit of their self-realization

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[791] Green, 203.

[792] Green, 205.

[793] Green, 214–17.

[794] Green, 220.

[795] Green, 220.

within the unity of the family as well as substantiating the rights owed to the children for enabling them to pursue a moral life.

According to Green these were the rights that preceded the establishment of a state and was expected to be recognized in every ethically organized society. Due to the shared nature of men as being social, reasonable and moral, all human societies, even the most primitive ones were organized around the moral end of self-realization and the ideal of a common good. Thus, Green argued "as the most elementary notion in a rational being of a personal good, common to himself with another who is as himself, is in possibility such an ideal, so the most primitive institutions for the regulation of a society with reference to a common good are already a school for the character which shall be responsive to the moral ideal."[796] Furthermore, so far as each nation had been acquainted with the "common language of right," within their own society, it was possible to extend the sphere of the common good beyond the nations to the whole of humanity.[797] Evidently, the Christian nations were further ahead in recognizing and maintaining a satisfactory system of rights within themselves as well as securing friendly relations with their counterparts.[798] With the spread of the sentiment of human fraternity, ethical relations based on an understanding of rights and duties that existed within nations or among the members of Christian nations were expected to apply to all relations among men. Green was hopeful that "the acceptance of humanitarian ideas" as well as their influence on the "laws, and institutions maintained by law of civilized nations; in the law of opinion, the social sentiments and expectations… and in the formulae by which philosophers have sought to methodize this law of opinion" had the potential to actualize the ideal of universal human fellowship.[799] Such movement was evident in the "conscience of those citizens of the modern world who are most responsive to the higher influences of their time" and it was expected to be improved through increased means of communication and cooperation among members of different states.[800] For Green, emanation of the ideal

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[796] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 237.

[797] Green, 252.

[798] Green, 243.

[799] Green, 242.

[800] Green, 239.

Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 178.

of human fraternity was the basis on which individuals from different nations would acquire the capacity to realize rights and duties they owed to each other based simply on their human nature regardless of their "race or religion or status."[801]

As it has been argued in the first chapter of this dissertation, Green did not have much to say on the possible international institutions that may be necessary to maintain a system of human rights. While he recognized that establishment of an international authority that was bestowed with the capacity to oversee the rightful relations among individuals as well as states was a distant dream, Green did not perceive this as an insurmountable obstacle to the observance of rights among individuals from different nationalities. On the contrary, he maintained that the very familiarity of the "claims of a common humanity" was proof that the idea was already affecting "laws and institutions."[802] Furthermore, like most of his contemporaries Green believed in the "power of innovative communications technologies" that superseded "the problem of distance."[803] He thought the main driving force behind the newly appreciated ideal of humanity was the increased opportunities of intercourse among individuals, especially through commercial partnerships.[804] Its furtherance was possible only through strengthening 'the habit' of observing rights and duties among individuals from different nationalities through continued exercise.[805] His focus on the actual relations among individuals carried strong undertones of cosmopolitanism, which was more moral than political in its argumentation. Although it is sometimes assumed that Green's approach to international relations left the possibility of a world state open, Green clearly believed that "the love of mankind, no doubt, needs to be particularized in order to have any power over life and action."[806] Additionally, Green perceived states as efficient institutions in organizing the rights and duties of its citizens and

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[801] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 239.

[802] Green, 249.

[803] Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of the World Order, 1889-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 63.

[804] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 178.

[805] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 241.

[806] Matt Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), 149, https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59597-3.

Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 175.

"localizing" "true public spirit" that is indispensable for a community of moral individuals. He made his position on the matter quite clear when he wrote that "the man whose desire to serve his kind is not centered primarily in some home, radiating from it to a commune, a municipality, and a nation, presumably has no effectual desire to serve his kind at all."[807] Green's moral cosmopolitanism did not require or foresee elimination of state borders or eradication of national identities for the realization of the ideal of human community. Instead he argued for a better organisation of states themselves so that their citizens would cooperate with each other as equals and states would have no reason for international conflict or war. His position on the matter was most adequately expressed as follows and the works of the younger generation of Idealists in the post-Great War era amounts to a more detailed restatement of it:

> Though a nation, with national feeling of its own, must everywhere underlie a
> state, properly so called, yet still, just so far as the perfect organisation of rights
> within each nation, which entitles it to be called a state, is attained, the occasions
> of conflict between nations disappear; and again, that by the same process, just
> so far as it is satisfactorily carried out, an organ of expression and action is
> established for each nation in dealing with other nations, which is not really
> liable to be influenced by the same egoistic passions in dealing with the
> government of another nation as embroil individuals with each other.[808]

## 5.2 The Younger Generation, Internationalism and Human Rights

The younger generation of British Idealists' position on the matter of rights and duties in the post 1914 era was quite uniform in its basic premises, and their reflections on the matter amounted to a restatement of Green's position as it was put forward in his *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation.* Firstly they perceived rights to be teleological instead of deontological in nature. Secondly, they perceived them to be applicable within a well-defined social order whose members form a general will. Lastly, they all avoided giving a definite list of rights that would be universally applicable, although the rights they perceived to be necessary within well-ordered

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[807] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 175.

[808] Green, 175.

communities were similar in scope and nature. As their understanding of rights varied quite considerably from what 'natural rights' theorists contended, their rights theories' application to humanity turned out to be a different form of 'human rights theory.' While their arguments on the matter supplied a theoretical basis in defence of the universal application of human rights, their emphasis was not strictly cosmopolitan. Instead, they combined the moral cosmopolitanism of Green with his emphasis on the social and historical aspects of communal rights and arrived at an 'internationalist' approach to human rights. While their form of argument was not in accordance with the 'institutionalist' turn the British intelligentsia took after the Great War broke out, the internationalist position they defended was in keeping with the overall sentiment that prevailed in Britain at the time.

As it has been discussed in detail above, an important attribute of Green's theory of rights in distinction from the theory of natural rights was the emphasis he put on the 'moral end' for whose pursuance rights were essential.[809] In other words, rights were perceived to be 'sacred' so far as they were understood as necessary powers for the pursuance of the moral end. Green made this point in his *Lectures*:

> The claim or right of the individual to have certain powers secured to him by
> society, and the counter-claim of society to exercise certain powers over the
> individual, alike rest on the fact that these powers are necessary to the fulfillment
> of man's vocation as a moral being, to an effectual self-devotion to the work of
> developing the perfect character in himself and others.[810]

Several British Idealists' restated this Greenian position in the post-Great War period while considering the value and importance of rights in maintaining a peaceful and cooperative international order. In his *Rule and End in Morals,* published in 1932, Muirhead called Green's theory of rights teleological rather than deontological, and argued that it was the essential link established between individual rights and the moral end that set apart Green's approach to rights from 'natural rights' theories. He argued that the appeal to 'natural rights' was marked by a vagueness in regards to the

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[809] Green, 40.

[810] Green, 41.

moral basis of the importance of rights and thus the discussion was conducted on more formal matters such as the correlativity of rights and duties.[811] According to Muirhead, the matter of rights was to be discussed instead, with reference to the ends they served; i.e. "self-development of individuals." In his discussion of the nature of rights, Mackenzie as well, put emphasis on the relation between rights and the moral and progressive nature of human beings. As the moral end was the self-development of individuals, the rights an individual had were to be instrumentalized for this purpose, although it was impossible for the community or the state to assess in which direction an individual were to develop himself or in which way he/she would use his rights.[812] Mackenzie maintained, "the granting of rights rests on some presupposition that they will be employed for the furtherance of some desirable end."[813] From a similar perspective Jones argued that "neither state, nor individual, nor 'humanity' (whose good is taken to be higher as well as wider, and whose rights are held to be supreme) has any authority or right '*in itself*' so long as its 'self' is regarded as something merely separate from other selves and is individuality as exclusive."[814] The rights of individuals as well as that of states could only be perceived as sacred or inalienable in so far as they were thought in relation with the common moral end they served. Bosanquet's definition of rights in his *Philosophical Theory of the State* also emphasized the importance of rights as necessary powers in pursuance of the moral good as they were to be "thought of as something instrumental to my purposes."[815] From this perspective Bosanquet argued that rights were not "anything primary."[816] They were rather powers "by reason of their relation to the end of the whole as manifested in me, are imperative like for me and for others."[817]

Rights in and of themselves were not to be considered 'primary' or 'sacred' as nothing in its exclusion had a claim to such attributes according to British Idealists.

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[811] John H. Muirhead, *Rule and End in Morals*, 103.

[812] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 168.

[813] Mackenzie, 168.

[814] Henry Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1920), 69.

[815] Bernard Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, Fourth Edition (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1920), 196.

[816] Bosanquet, 196.

[817] Bosanquet, 196.

Yet it did not mean that rights were not vital for the well being of the individual, of the community, and of humanity. On the contrary, rights, when they were organized "in accordance with universal reason" and when they were "with 'the nature of things'" derived their authority from a higher power; i.e. morality and they were binding for both states and individuals.[818] Such an understanding of rights constituted an alternative to the justification of rights from a natural rights perspective. While the 'natural rights' were deemed to be sacred and inalienable with reference to what man was, British Idealists attributed importance to individuals' rights in regards to what they had in them to become, or what they ought to be. From this perspective rights could be perceived to be 'natural' only because man was moral and progressive in his/her nature. As, the moral and progressive nature of man was universal; a satisfactory system of rights and duties was an indispensable attribute of every human community.

A second and equally important attribute of rights on which all British Idealists agreed was its communal nature. Rights of man in his/her singularity were a fiction as moral action was possible only when two or more people came together. On the impossibility of man having rights in a non-social setting, Green wrote:

> 'Natural rights,' as right in a state of nature which is not a state of society is a contradiction. There can be no right without a consciousness of common interest on the part of members of a society. Without this there might be certain powers on the part of individuals, but no recognition of these powers by others as powers of which they allow the exercise, nor any claim to such recognition; and without this recognition or claim to recognition there can be no right.[819]

The communal nature of rights was evident from the way British Idealists defined its role in the life of man. Muirhead and Hetherington, for instance, argued, "within every institution there is a system of rights and duties; that is each institution defines a certain set of relations between its members, and imposing on them the obligations consonant with these relations, it also confers on them the corresponding rights."[820]

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[818] Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 140.

[819] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 48.

[820] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 129.

From this perspective a system of rights and duties were understood to be the regulative principles of a community in which each and every individual had the necessary powers to pursue the moral end. Furthermore, the communal character of rights was based on the distinction British Idealists made between right claims and right recognition. While individuals addressing the community put right claims forward, only a general recognition of these claims turned them into proper rights. Regarding this point, Jones wrote "my rights *are* mine because they are accorded to me by the society of which I am a member. Yours are yours not in virtue of your assertion of them, but because the social system to which you belong grants and sustains them."[821] Thus, a system of rights and duties was communal in a double sense. Firstly, the system was an organic growth of the community itself, reflecting the general will of its members to cooperate with each other in pursuance of their self development and the common good of the society. Secondly, the system, although it was in constant development in relation with the changing needs of its members, constituted the basis on which each and every 'free society' maintained its life. A system of rights and duties was understood to be both the product and the basis of a moral and well-functioning society.

Due to their perception of the organic relationship between a community and the system of rights and duties it developed, the younger generation of British Idealists seldom wrote about a set of unalterable list of universal human rights. Instead, their reflections on human rights in the post-Great War period focused on revealing the necessary political organization and fundamental rights that should be recognized and maintained by states so that each individual had the necessary powers to reach his/her full potential and contribute to his/her community. Instead of adopting a top-down approach to rights by requiring every state to comply with the dictates of human rights, they argued for the adaptation of a 'republican' form of government by every state in which individuals have a say in the form and scope of their rights and duties. As rights and duties were claimed and recognized with reference to a universal moral end, certain basic rights were expected to be recognized by each and every state with a republican form of government. States were expected to recognize the right claims

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[821] Henry Jones, "Some Unexamined Assumptions That Hinder the Study of the Conditions of Social Well-being," *Rice Institute Pamphlet - Rice University Studies* 6, no. 3 (1919): 171.

of their citizens when those claims were in compliance with the conditions that necessitated existence of additional powers for self-development. As it has been discussed in the previous chapter, after their disillusionment with imperialism, the younger generation of British Idealists adapted the perspective that each community was expected to develop a genuine system of rights and duties in accordance with their own material and historical conditions. They thought, such a system of rights and duties designated the powers necessary for each individual for his/her self-development in their specific contexts the best. As the rights and obligations recognized in a community was closely related with the ends that are pursued by its members, such a system was argued to be reflective of the character of a community. Muirhead and Hetherington argued, for instance "a right differs from a mere demand, or a threat, just that it belongs to a different world. It rests, not on force, but on a view of the nature and ends of a given society."[822] As no external power would know better the necessities of individuals within particular communities than its members, the recognition, reform, and enforcement of a system of rights and duties were considered to be the responsibility of the government ruling each community. Their insistence on the communities' responsibility to shape their own system of rights and duties was related to their preference of the principle of non-intervention in the international arena in the post-Great War era. Muirhead and Hetherington were contended that when a general sense of injustice ensued within a particular community, it was "always better that wrong-doing by any community should be overcome by the outraged sense of justice of that community itself."[823] Similarly, Mackenzie maintained that each government 'acting on behalf of its people' was to be left free in its pursuance of the moral good through its own means as the moral good could only be achieved by 'voluntary effort.'[824] Thus, he argued that foreign interference was only acceptable when the government of a people was "so flagrantly unjust that it could not properly be regarded as a state at all."[825] He also added the purpose of such

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[822] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 130.

[823] Hetherington and Muirhead, 282.

[824] J. S. Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1920), 194.

[825] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 194.

intervention was not the occupation of the given country but the restoration of order.[826]

Evidently, the younger generation of British Idealists expected that where a community was ruled by a government that recognized and acted in accordance with the dictates of the general will of its people, the rights and duties it enforced formed a 'tolerable' system. Such contention was based on British Idealists' understanding of the system of rights and duties as an organic growth of a community's general will which is always in motion, preferably towards better organisation of the community. In this scheme, what was expected from the state was to be responsive to the changing demands of its community in its legislative and executive powers. Mackenzie and Muirhead defined such a state as a 'republic in the Kantian sense.' While Mackenzie, with reference to Kant, noted that in each community a republic "must be constituted as to enable a genuine national will to become effective," Muirhead argued that each community was to be ruled by "a state in which the idea of the common good permeated all public action."[827] Yet, when a state was not a 'republic,' or a 'true state' in the sense that it was ruling against the dictates of the general will of its people, British Idealists perceived that resistance became a duty for its citizens. This was again based on the Greenian argument that "when the authority from which the objectionable command proceeds is so easily separable from that on which the maintenance of social order and the fabric of settled rights depends," that such sovereign can be resisted without disturbing the ethical order of the society.[828] Following Green, in his discussion of the moral basis of resistance to state, Jones argued that when the rule of the State was not based on the general will of a people but on mere force, it was considered to be failing in its duty of ensuring the conditions under which its citizens can strive towards their good and the good of the community; resistance to such a state was legitimate.[829] Similarly, Mackenzie argued that when the legal rights that are recognized by the state did not "coincide with the moral

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[826] Mackenzie, 194.

[827] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 288.

J. H. Muirhead, *German Philosophy in Relation to the War* (London: John Murray, 1915), 16.

[828] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 111.

[829] Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 141.

rights" as they are recognized by the general will of the society, "it is incumbent on people to use any legitimate means that may be at their disposal to bring about reform."[830] The legitimacy of 'active resistance' was to be decided through a comparison of the evils suffered under the existent system of rights and duties and the probable "evils of anarchy, civil war, or general insecurity."[831] Although it was a very high bar met very rarely, the use of resistance against a *de facto* state was not overruled as a means of ensuring the recognition of moral rights by the state. Arguably, it was only when a state formed such a tyranny under which it becomes impossible for its citizens to resist its dictates that foreign intervention was seen to be legitimate by the younger generation of British Idealists.[832]

## 5.3 Mackenzie's Preliminary List of Human Rights

Although, the younger generation of British Idealists rejected the idea that a universal list of human rights can be forcefully imposed upon each and every society due to the perception of rights as communal and teleological standards in human conduct, they did not perceive rights to be dispensable. On the contrary, rights were given a central position in their political theory as powers that enabled individuals to realize their moral ends within a political community. Although the form and content of those rights were expected to vary from community to community, their reference was to a universal ideal, and they were to exist in every community as a means of regulating individuals' behavior in pursuance of the moral end. In that sense "the rights involved in the constitution of a well-organized community" would properly be considered to be 'natural' for that community. As "the medium of their rights and duties" states had a right to the loyalty and obedience of its citizens. Thus, there was no unalterable set of human rights to be accepted by each and every state. Still, the younger generation of British Idealists did not condone moral relativism. So far as rights operated with reference to a universal truth, beneath their apparent divergences, they were expected to comply with a universal standard. This universal standard was again defined with a reference to the moral end that was to be pursued by humanity. A certain minimum of

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[830] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 167.

[831] Mackenzie, 167.

[832] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 308.

rights that enabled individuals to live healthily and ethically in pursuance of their self-realization without being tempted by immoral ways of advancement was to be recognized in every well-ordered society. Those rights were vital not only for the well being of individuals but also for the healthy functioning of societies and maintenance of peaceful and cooperative relations among states.

From the writings of the younger generation of British Idealists, it can be discerned that, they have broadened the scope of the basic rights that Green perceived to be existent in every ethical society. In addition to the political rights that were perceived to constitute the foundation of any functioning political system, the younger generation also put emphasis on the importance of social and economic rights for the moral end of self-realization. Among them only Mackenzie made an attempt to list all the rights that can be understood as 'human rights' or 'rights of man' due to their essential role in enabling individuals to pursue their self-realization. Other names occasionally referred to the necessity of universalizing certain social and economic rights to enable all individuals to develop themselves. While Muirhead argued for the necessity of a 'right to work,' Jones put emphasis on the importance of a 'right to property as well as the 'rights of children.' Haldane also reflected on the importance of a right to decent life conditions. As Mackenzie's list is comprehensive of all these points and includes moral and social justifications for each right along with their corresponding duties, taking it as a template helps to understand the content and scope of the younger generations' perception of universalizable human rights in the post-Great War era.

Mackenzie's *A Manual of Ethic,* first published in 1897 included a list of rights. In this earlier work Mackenzie included the rights to life, freedom, property, contract, and education among those ethical rights that are "necessary for the development of our lives in the direction that is best for the highest good of the community of which we are members."[833] In accordance with Green's teachings, he justified these rights with reference to the moral end of self-realization and argued that the teleological underpinnings of an idealistic theory of ethics bestowed upon rights an undeniable

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[833] Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, 319.

importance as a means for "the unfolding of the capabilities of mankind."[834] The rights he included in his list and called 'human rights' were all justified with reference to the moral end of self-realization within a social community.[835] The first human right in this earlier list of human rights was the right to life. The right to life was the most basic one simply because "the human good requires the continuance of life for its realization."[836] So far as the moral end was understood to be an individualized good in the case of every individual, acts of self-sacrifice, in the case of war for instance- were justified only in cases that were exceptional. Furthermore, in a broader view of this most basic right, Mackenzie argued that it also involved the right to the "means of obtaining a livelihood," i.e., the right to labour.[837] The second human right enlisted by Mackenzie was the right to freedom. He argued that the pursuance of the moral end of self-realization was possible only when an individual was "free to exercise his will."[838] While unconditional freedom was an idea that was counterintuitive for social beings, the right to freedom condoned a "right of having the free development of one's life as little interfered with as is possible, consistently with the maintenance of social order."[839] According to Mackenzie the third right in his list, the right to property was properly understood, as a part of the right to freedom so far as almost all the ends an individual may legitimately pursue required the use of certain materials. He argued, "nearly all the ends at which a man can aim require instruments; and if a man has not the right to use these instruments, his liberty of pursuing the ends is practically rendered void."[840] While he acknowledged the necessity of limiting the right to property due to the limited nature of material goods that needs to be shared among individuals, he argued that this was not a legitimate basis for foregoing the right to property for a system of communal ownership of goods. Instead he argued that in an ideal system the right to property would be supported by a practice of education of property owners in the ways to use their goods

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[834] Mackenzie, 282.

[835] Mackenzie, 314.

[836] Mackenzie, 314.

[837] Mackenzie, 315.

[838] Mackenzie, 315.

[839] Mackenzie, 316.

[840] Mackenzie, 316.

for the common good of the society.[841] The following human right in Mackenzie's list was the right to contract. In his short list of rights, the right to contract was the least developed one in terms of its importance and justification. Mackenzie argued that the right to contract was significant as it was an improvement from a social order based on status to a society based on contract among individuals. Not surprisingly, the right to contract was dropped out of his list of human rights in its improved version in 1928. The fifth and last human right in Mackenzie's list was the right to education. In keeping with the teleological roots of his ethical theory, Mackenzie argued that education was both a right and a duty for every individual since it was a precondition "for the realization of the rational self."[842] Although the right to education was indispensible for the exercise of other human rights, Mackenzie perceived that the right to education "has been but tardily recognized even in some highly-civilized countries."[843] Instead it has been perceived as due only to the privileged classes while "the highest kinds of education" remained "practically inaccessible to the mass of the people."[844]

Mackenzie's list of human rights was evidently more comprehensive than the rights Green dealt with in his *Lectures.* Especially, inclusion of the right to education into the list of human rights was significant due to its relevance to the moral end of self-realization. While the right to contract was also an addition to the list of rights Green put forward and had important connotations in regards to an egalitarian form of social order all British Idealists condoned, it was not substantiated enough by Mackenzie to become a significant item in his list of human rights. Furthermore, Mackenzie's earlier list of human rights was primarily a list of ethical rights that did not deal with the social and political conditions necessary for their realization or their significance within the national or international spheres. In a footnote at the end of his discussion of human rights, Mackenzie acknowledged the primarily ethical nature of his approach and wrote, "of course I refer here to rights and obligations in the ethical sense. To what extent, and by what means, these rights and obligations are to be

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[841] Mackenzie, 318.

[842] Mackenzie, 319.

[843] Mackenzie, 319.

[844] Mackenzie, 319.

acknowledged and enforced in actual states, are questions for the political philosopher."[845] While, like Green, Mackenzie believed that these ethical rights were in the process of being recognized and maintained in all societies, he did not comment on the importance of these 'human rights' for the maintenance of a peaceful and well-ordered international order. Although he argued "there are certain definite, though at the same time somewhat elastic and modifiable, rights that come to be gradually recognized in human societies," the possibility of regulating these rights through an international organization of states was beyond his horizon in 1897. Furthermore, he did not consider the subjects of the British Empire in its vast territories in relation with the applicability of these rights to their circumstances. Arguably, the matter of imperialism and the matter of human rights were conceptually separated from each other so far as imperial subjects were not considered to be agents who had the capacity to pursue self-realization. Their situation required European nations to 'civilize' them before bestowing on them equal human rights at the time.

By 1928, not only Mackenzie's list of human rights but also British intellectuals' understanding of the international order significantly changed. As it has been discussed in the previous chapter, the League of Nations as a project of international cooperation attracted significant attention and support from British Intellectuals following the outbreak of the Great War. In spite of the younger generation of British Idealists' inability/unwillingness to engage in highly technical discussions regarding the basis of international law and international organizations, they were highly influenced by the internationalist turn within the British intelligentsia. Their emphasis on the ethical primacy of rights as means for self-realization, which they inherited from Green, was incorporated into the internationalist enthusiasm that prevailed in the 1920s. One of the earliest examples of this move was prevalent in the work of a more seasoned Idealist, Bernard Bosanquet. In the chapter "The Wisdom of Naaman's Servants," it was Bosanquet's contention that there was no intrinsic separation between a state's policies at home and its policies abroad. He was convinced that the disposition of a state's foreign relations depended "first and foremost not on powerful and skillful combinations of states or communities, but on the spirit of equality, and the recognition of the best things in life, within the social and political system at

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[845] Mackenzie, 319.

home."[846] Thus, Bosanquet argued, for the realization of a peaceful and cooperative international order, the most urgent concern was to ensure that in each society "man has a tolerable set of rights and duties" which naturally created a community that was "fair and unbiased towards the outside world."[847] Due to his long-held and well-known distrust of organizations that went beyond the borders of nation-states, Bosanquet argued that, before states' organized themselves in an ethical way by granting their citizens a tolerable set of rights, establishing "huge federations and alliances" was to prove counter-productive.[848] He maintained that international cooperation –be it institutional or not- was to follow state's independent organisation of "rights at home."[849]

As it has been argued in the previous chapter the younger generation of British Idealists did not necessarily shared Bosanquet's distrust for international organizations. They were more optimistic in regards to the League of Nations' potential in terms of creating an arena, which would encourage states to maintain peaceful and cooperative relations with each other. Still, in line with Bosanquet they attributed rights vital importance, as they were sure indicators of a state's disposition towards its own citizens and other states. Thus, in his revised version of human rights included in the *Fundamental Problems of Life* Mackenzie argued that there was an intrinsic link between the way a state organized the system of rights and duties its citizens were entitled to and its disposition towards other nations.[850] Based on this conviction Mackenzie argued at the end of his discussion of human rights that to become genuine members of the newly established international community of the League of Nations, each state was to recognise a tolerable set of rights in a truly 'republican' manner.[851] This was a decisive improvement on Mackenzie's approach to human rights as he started to engage with the political implications of human rights. In this manner, he started his discussion of human rights by noting that "these

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[846] Bernard Bosanquet, "The Wisdom of Naaman's Servants," in *Social and International Ideals* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1917), 312.

[847] Bosanquet, 307.

[848] Bosanquet, 306.

[849] Bosanquet, 308.

[850] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 319.

[851] Mackenzie, 315.

(human) rights and obligations are, of course, very largely affected by the special organization of the State within which the citizen happens to live; but it would be a mistake to regard them as being created or entirely determined by that organization. There is a sense in which rights and obligations may properly be described as 'natural' and independent of any kind of political sanction."[852] What Mackenzie deemed to be 'natural' about these rights was their assumed recognition in every well-ordered, 'republican' political community. Thus Mackenzie's list of human rights did not refer to an ideal set of rights but to "some of the chief rights that have been commonly claimed for" individuals in societies. In that respect Mackenzie's list of human rights was not definitive. It was open to improvement and alteration in accordance with the changing needs and claims of individuals in accordance with the changing circumstances in which they tried to realize their full human potential. Thus, the significant changes in the two lists of human rights Mackenzie offered in his works need not be seen as a result of inconsistency. Arguably, by 1928, Mackenzie realized basic liberal rights to life, liberty, and property along with the right to education was no longer sufficient for individuals who lived in complex social and political structures to realize their full potential. Accordingly, his second list of human rights with an emphasis on the importance of social and economic rights was more comprehensive than the list he provided back in 1897. Mackenzie's improved list of human rights included the rights to protection, franchise, employment, maintenance, and leisure along with the rights to life, liberty, property and education.[853]

The first item in Mackenzie's list of human rights in the *Fundamental Problems of Life* was the right to freedom. This was an alteration of the list he provided in *A Manual of Ethics* where the right to life was the first human right.[854] Presumably, in 1928, Mackenzie assumed the right to life as an indispensable quality in all well-ordered communities and a precondition for all other rights. Such presumption was in line with Green's reasoning as he also combined the rights to life and liberty and

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[852] Mackenzie, 304–5.

[853] Mackenzie, 312–19.

[854] Mackenzie, 312.

Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, 314.

argued for a right to 'free life.'[855] As mere life deprived the individual from the ability to act in accordance with his own will, it was not a sufficient condition for individuals' pursuance of the moral end; the rights to life and liberty were considered to be one and the same right. This perception shared by Green and Mackenzie was based on the idea that a moral end can only be pursued freely; that external interference was ineffective and indeed obstructive to the pursuance of the moral end. In that respect the right to freedom was the first item on the list of human rights according to Mackenzie. Yet, in line with the general British Idealist point of view, the right to freedom was not a right to unlimited freedom. On the contrary it was dependent on individuals' capacity to use that freedom for the realisation of rational and moral ends, which are taken to be individuals' self-development and the common good of the community. In other words, the right to freedom did not imply a freedom from "the restraint of duty."[856] This was a right closely connected to individuals' capacity to follow the inner dictates of universal morality, and fulfil these moral duties with their own free will.  In that sense, although it was understood to be universal, it was not an 'inborn' right. It was conditional on the fulfillment of certain duties. The most obvious of these for an individual who was bestowed with the right to freedom was that his actions "must be consistent with the equal freedom of others."[857] Still another and more fundamental duty required him to develop a potential to use this right for the moral end.[858] From this perspective Mackenzie argued, "the right to freedom can hardly be one that is inborn. It is rather that is gradually acquired."[859] To be a subject of the right to freedom, one had to cultivate himself to be 'wise and good' and to be "accustomed to govern himself by a law within, if he is not to be controlled by the law without."[860] The existence of the right to freedom was completely dependent on men's willingness to "learn the ends for which freedom should be used."[861] Although this duty lay prominently on the

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[855] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 155.

[856] Henry Jones, "The Social Organism," in *Essays in Philosophical Criticism* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1883), 204.

[857] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 312.

[858] Mackenzie, 312.

[859] Mackenzie, 312.

[860] Mackenzie, 312.

[861] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 208.

individual; his family, the society and the state had an accompanying duty to provide the means through which he can develop the 'inner law' that is to govern his actions.

The second right in Mackenzie's list of human rights was the right to property. This right was perceived to be fundamental by Mackenzie so far as property was used "creatively" and not simply "enjoyed."[862] Like Green's approach to the matter of property rights, this right was understood to be fundamental so far as it was a precondition for men's self-realization in a world where he was surrounded by materials. Thus, the right to property was not based on the possession of a thing but on its use in pursuance of the moral end of self-realization. In accordance with the justificatory moral criteria for all rights, the right to property also included its corresponding "obligation to use what is possessed for the common good."[863] Based on this connection, Mackenzie argued that the conditions for the ownership of a property were to be determined in relation with the ends they were used for. He argued "the general principle appears to be that property should, as far as possible, be in the control of those who can and will use it to the best advantage."[864] Again, Mackenzie's approach to the matter was in line with the principle of a just order of ownership within a community that was advocated by both Green and Bosanquet in their earlier works. A common sentiment in Green and Bosanquet's approaches to the matter was the priority of the right to life and liberty in comparison with the right to property. In his *Lectures,* Green argued that when a man was tempted to steal due to his inability to acquire the basic necessities for his livelihood through honest means, it was the duty of the state to abolish the conditions that gave rise to such temptations and not to try to deter people with merely the use of excessive punishment.[865] Similarly Bosanquet argued that the state had the duty to maintain "not the right only, but the system of rights as such," and that the right to life had to be guaranteed before the right to property.[866] Bosanquet noted, when "starvation is common, some readjustment of rights, or at least some temporary protection of the right to live, is the

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[862] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 259.

[863] Mackenzie, 313.

[864] Mackenzie, 313.

[865] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 155.

[866] Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 232.

remedy indicated, and not, or not solely, increased severity in dealing with theft."[867] From Green and Bosanquet's perspectives as well as Mackenzie's the right to property was not as sacred a right as the rights to life and liberty, yet still it was a necessary condition for individuals' realisation of the moral end within a community.

The third right that was to be recognized in every well-ordered society according to Mackenzie was the right to protection of the individual and his possessions. While other British Idealists usually perceived the matter of protection as a part of the rights to life and property, Mackenzie acknowledged it as a right on its own. He argued protection was to be perceived as a right of the individual so far as "the citizen is entitled to expect from it [the state] that he should be adequately protected both in his person and in his property."[868] And similar to other rights he has listed, he argued that this right implied the existence of a duty not only for the state but also for the members of the society. He noted, "the right that each of them has to be protected implies the obligation that is imposed upon each to take his share, according to his ability, in securing that the necessary protection is provided."[869] This obligation did not only mean a negative duty to not harm others but the positive consideration for the maintenance of others' rights by complying with the laws of the state. A common example British Idealists used to describe this positive duty was the changing perception of dueling in civilized countries. Mackenzie, Jones, and Haldane all argued in their works that the practice of dueling was becoming extinct in civilized countries because the individual was no longer perceived to be the legitimate authority to punish or inflict pain on other individuals.[870] Individuals' positive duty to refer any conflict with their fellow men to the courts of the state was recognized to be indispensable for the protection of every citizen's right to life and property.

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[867] Bosanquet, 232.

[868] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 314.

[869] Mackenzie, 314.

[870] Henry Jones, review of *Review of The Elements of Ethics*, by J. H. Muirhead, *International Journal of Ethics* 3, no. 1 (1892): 209.

R. B. Haldane, *The Conduct of Life and Other Addresses* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1915), 118.

John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 339.

While the conflicts among the members of a state were to be resolved through the judiciary capacity of their state, international conflict in which citizens were required to sacrifice their lives proved to be a much more complicated matter when considered in relation with the right to protection. Like Green, Mackenzie argued that while it was impossible to talk about a morally justified war in which both parties were pursuing a universal good, citizens' right to protection of their lives and possessions might be suspended for the protection of the social and political order in which they had the conditions for a moral life. Thus, Mackenzie maintained that the maintenance of the right to protection without exception was only possible when the occasions for war became extinct and the international problems were settled 'amicably.'[871] The effect of the internationalist turn in his thinking was evident when he added, "in the future the league of Nations may at least greatly facilitate this method of settlement."[872] He maintained this hope by comparing the matter of war with the almost extinct practice of dueling for the settlement of conflict. According to Mackenzie, when an international unity, which involves a just and stable 'court of appeal', was founded, war "would be as much an anachronism as dueling is now" and the citizens' right to protection would be protected without making an exception for the times of war.[873] When he first made the comparison in 1901, he added that he was most probably "referring to a somewhat distant date."[874] Yet, in his last book published in 1928, he noted that a new international outlook was already regarding war as a moral wrong comparable to dueling and the prospects for the elimination of war was promising thanks to the accomplishments of the Hague Tribunal and the League of Nations.[875]

The next right in Mackenzie's list of human rights, namely the right to education was considered to be an essential condition for individuals' ability to use his other rights in pursuance of the supreme values. In the list of rights Mackenzie offered in *A Manual of Ethics* the right to education was defended as a necessary condition for

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[871] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 314.

[872] Mackenzie, 314.

[873] J. S. Mackenzie, "The Use of Moral Ideas in Politics," *International Journal of Ethics* 12, no. 1 (1901): 20.

[874] MacKenzie, 20.

[875] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 319.

"the realization of the rational self" for each individual.[876] The importance attributed to the right to education by Mackenzie and other British Idealists was indicative of their understanding of human rationality and morality as a potential that has to be developed through formal and informal education. As it was argued in the defence of the right to liberty, only those individuals who had the capacity to rule themselves by an inner moral law were appropriate subjects for the enjoyment of rights. And the capacity to follow the moral law by ones' own free will without the intervention of external dictates was dependent on the education of the individual in regards to the requirements of it. From this perspective, Haldane argued for example "mental freedom actually come only through freedom from ignorance and Jones noted that the true purpose of education was to develop the faculties of men so that they can "apprehend wider and wiser purposes, which is the way to freedom."[877] Every individual's right to education implied a corresponding duty to form an educational system that serves all the components of a society. According to British Idealists, this was a duty of the state as it required an extensive reach to various parts of the society as well as a certain level of uniformity of purpose and considerable resources. Thus Mackenzie argued, from a 'humanistic' point of view "the state makes education both its foundation and its crowning achievement" because only through such a viewpoint the state looked "at man as a being developing towards an end, and naturally looks to education as the means by which this development is to be effected."[878] Not surprisingly the cause of education was the area in which almost all British Idealists were most active in their public work. Especially Green and Jones were highly acclaimed for their efforts to bring education to the poor children as well as women and working adults in England.[879]

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[876] Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, 319.

[877] R. B. Haldane, *The Future of Democracy: An Address by Lord Haldane* (London: Headley Bros. Publishers, LTD., 1918), 10.

Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 133.

[878] J. S. Mackenzie, *Lectures on Humanism* (London: Swan SONNENSCHEIN & CO., Lim., 1907), 130.

[879] David Boucher, "Henry Jones: Idealism as a Practical Creed," in *The Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy of British Idealists* (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2009), 143.

David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, *A Radical Hegelian: Political and Social Philosophy of Henry Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993), 17.

From the idealistic point of view, a state's dedication to the duty of educating its citizens for their own personal developments was an important attribute that distinguished it from a state that perceived its citizens as a means for the acquirement of material wealth or larger territories. While the British Idealists, especially after they saw the Prussian example, recognized the possibility that a state could use its educational system to indoctrinate a whole nation in pursuance of false ideals and egoistic ends, they did not take this to be a reason for absolving the state from the duty of serving the development of its citizens. On this matter Jones drew attention to the difference between a state that develops "in its citizens the forces and faculties of man" and a state that 'fashion,' or 'mold,' or 'form' its citizens for the attainment of its own ends.[880] He argued that state's service to educate its citizens was to aim for "the fullest development in them of the forces and faculties of man" and by doing so it must not to subdue but to strengthen "the personality of its citizens, make for their rational independence."[881] Similarly, Muirhead and Hetherington argued that education directed for the singular interests of a nation or a class meant "the death both of enlightened citizenship and of education" and the danger of it was always and everywhere present.[882] Still, they argued every state had the duty "to provide a free and compulsory system of education which will bring the young citizen to the point at which he is capable of making an intelligent decision as to the way of life he will pursue."[883] Evidently, the states' provision of at least an elementary level of education to its citizens was perceived to be a requirement for the healthy functioning of a society, which is comprised of rationally and morally progressive individuals. Although individuals' progress could not be tied down to the few years they spent getting a primary education, it was a means of giving the right direction for their future pursuits in life.

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Cacoullos, *Thomas Hill Green*, 40.

David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, *British Idealism and Political Theory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 21.

[880] Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 131.

[881] Jones, 133.

[882] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 211.

[883] Hetherington and Muirhead, 211.

The right to education was also closely related to the matter of children's rights. From Jones' perspective children could not be properly considered to be subjects of rights as they lacked the rational and moral capacity to use these rights in the pursuance of universal values. They were rather considered to be "potentially moral beings" and their rights were in essence "prospective rights."[884] Their rights were prospective not in the sense that they were not to be protected. Jones explained the nature of children's rights as follows: "children have rights in the present but they are rights of a particular kind and degree determined from the point of view of what it is in them to become. They are rights that which contributes to their growth."[885] From this perspective, a child's right to freedom was limited and conditioned by its parents or by its caretakers until such a time that it acquired the rational and moral capacity to use them for his own development and the good of the society. In the meantime, it was the states' and its caretakers' duty to supply him with the education he needed to become a full subject of rights. And the scope and intensity of such education was changing in years according to Jones as humanity was slowly recognizing the importance of its duty to its future generations. Jones perceived that the development was slow but consistent:

> A hundred years ago it was commonly said that the mass of the people did not
> need any education at all. Forty years ago it was sufficient to teach the children
> of the workers to the age of ten. Twenty years ago we were told that it was
> enough if they stayed at school till twelve or thirteen.[886]

Additionally, from the perspective of the British Idealists, the right to education was not limited to the basic education of children. Although the state was not perceived to have an obligation to supply a formal education to all its members, adult education, especially for the working class was perceived to be an important condition for the rational and moral development of individuals. Hetherington and Muirhead perceived that important steps were taken in this regard through "University Extension and other classes, and far more strikingly by the spontaneous growth of educational movements

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[884] Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 143.

[885] Jones, 134.

[886] Jones, 134.

among adult-workers –cooperative educational societies, adult schools, working-men's clubs, the Workers' Educational association, and the like."[887] In short, an elementary level of education that aims to develop the rational and moral capacities of children were considered to be an indispensable condition for each and every individual to use his other rights for the realization of his full potential. Furthermore, the conditions for adult education, both vocational and non-vocational, were to be present for those adults who wanted to develop themselves through such means, although access to such education was not necessarily perceived to be a right.

The next right on Mackenzie's list was the right to franchise or, in other words, the right to self-government. Regarding this right Mackenzie argued "although the general will or cooperative purpose by which the life of the Community is carried on is not adequately expressed by the wishes of the majority, yet the election of representatives is recognized as the only practical method of enabling the underlying purpose to make itself effective."[888] As it has been detailed in the third chapter of this dissertation the pre-Great War writings of the younger generation of British Idealists was marked by distrust towards a democratic form of government in 'uncivilized' societies. Mackenzie himself for a long time defended the necessity of combining democracy with a certain level of aristocracy, as he believed that important matters were not to be trusted "to the care of the man in the street."[889] Thus, Mackenzie argued even after the end of the Great War, especially uncivilized societies were to be "guided from above by the best and fittest who can by any means be discovered and brought forward." He added "when the people becomes more of a real unity, when it has well-established traditions and widely diffused knowledge, it becomes more possible to give the democratic elements in its constitution a continually increasing prominence."[890] Other Idealists to a certain degree shared Mackenzie's distrust towards democracy. Jones argued for instance, a state that gave the right to vote to all its adult citizens could still be "a slave to the clamour of passion and ignorance, and a

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[887] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 217.

[888] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 315.

[889] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 139.

[890] Mackenzie, 184.

minister to the greed of its constituents."[891] Their fear was that an enlightened population, unaware of the supreme values that give meaning to human life was likely to corrupt a democratic government in pursuance of egoistic interests. Thus, a right to franchise was perceived as a right conditional on a people's level of enlightenment and morality. Yet, this position was in stark contrast with Green's approach to the matter of franchise. He was known as an ardent supporter of the 1867 Reform Act through which he defended the extension of franchise to all men living in boroughs irrespective of their ownership of property.[892] In a speech he delivered on the matter of parliamentary reform, he argued

> We, who were reformers from the beginning, always said that the enfranchisement of the people was an end in itself. We said, and we were much derided for saying so, that citizenship only makes the moral man; that citizenship only gave that self-respect, which is the true basis of respect of others, and without which there is no lasting social order or real morality. If we were asked what result we looked for from the enfranchisement of the people, we said, that is not the present question. Untie a man's legs, and then it will be time to speculate how he will walk.[893]

Arguably, it took Green's followers a considerably long time to acknowledge that the right to franchise just like the right to freedom and property were to be acknowledged as a necessary power for individuals' self-development before its possible consequences were speculated. In 1908, for instance, Muirhead argued that the democratic creed that was so forcefully defended by Green during the discussion on the Reform Act of 1867 lost its appeal as the reformer "become painfully conscious of the failings, some would say, the failure of democracy."[894] It was only after the Great War, British liberal intellectuals including the younger generation of British Idealists

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[891] Henry Jones, *Idealism as a Practical Creed* (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1909), 114.

[892] Colin Tyler, *Idealist Political Philosophy: Pluralism and Conflict in the Absolute Idealist Tradition* (A&C Black, 2008), 78.

[893] Thomas Hill Green, *Works: V. 5 Additional Writings*, ed. Peter P. Nicholson (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1997), 206.

[894] John Henry Muirhead, *The Service of the State: Four Lectures on the Political Teaching of TH Green* (J. Murray, 1908), 86.

started to perceive self-government as an end in itself. For Mackenzie, this realization occurred as late as 1920 when he, for the first time allocated unconditional support to the ideal of democracy:

> Although it is possible to take different views about political development, and although the future of political institutions is a question on which it would be rash to dogmatise, yet it seems pretty clear that a vigorous development of national life is not possible without free citizens, In this sense most people, especially after the Great war, would admit that democracy must be aimed at, however much they may disagree about the best form of democratic organisation.[895]

By the time Mackenzie offered his revised version of human rights in 1928, he left behind the distinction between civilized and uncivilized nations in regards to their eligibility for a democratic form of government. While recognizing the potential failings of a majoritarian system of democracy, he noted "the election of representatives is recognized as the only practical method of enabling the underlying purpose to make itself effective."[896] Thus he argued, "every mature man and woman should at least have the right to vote for a representative."[897] According to Mackenzie, the only duty on the part of the citizen accompanying the right to franchise was "to inform oneself about questions of national importance and to reflect as carefully as possible about them."[898]

The remaining rights in Mackenzie's list were the right to employment, maintenance, and leisure. These rights were economic in their nature and they were mostly applicable to industrialized societies. It is telling that Mackenzie made a distinction between the right to work and the right to maintenance of conditions for a healthy and happy life. From the Idealist perspective, work, be it manual or intellectual was not only a way to earn money but one of the main spheres in which individuals realized themselves and contributed to the world they lived in. Thus, a right to work was not

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[895] Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire*, 209.

[896] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 315.

[897] Mackenzie, 315.

[898] Mackenzie, 316.

0only essential for individuals to accommodate themselves but also and perhaps more importantly to realize their full potential in a meaningful and productive manner. The fruits of man's labour were understood to be valuable not only for its use but also as an expression of their will and their contribution to humanity. Jones argued for instance:

> I cannot doubt that labour is meant to dignify the labourer. He should arise from his daily work a better man. The energies which he sets free upon his handicraft are capable, as every honest workman knows, of coming back to him enriched, bringing with them more skill, the consciousness of a duty well done, and the satisfaction which the artist knows as his best reward.[899]

From this perspective, a right to work was essential not only as a means for material gain but also as a means of expressing one's own to his fellow men. Clearly, it was not any kind of work that was deemed to be a right from the British Idealist perspective but a work that enabled men and women to express their will in the world. Thus, Muirhead and Hetherington defended the necessity of laborers' inclusion within the decision-making processes within their work place as well as within their social districts.[900] When understood as a way of fulfilling human capacity, the right to work was perceived as a "moral demand that the individual should have not only the means of life, but the conditions of personal integrity."[901] Mackenzie suggested that any modern state was expected to be capable of fulfilling its duty to locate individuals in appropriate working positions, at home or oversees. When a state failed to do so, it was indicative that "there is no effective demand for the kind of work that they are qualified to do" and in that case the individual was to acquire new skills.[902] Acknowledging that the constantly changing demands of the work market made it hard for individuals to determine what kind of work was desirable, Mackenzie maintained that "the obligations connected with it rest not merely upon individuals, but on those bodies that are concerned with industrial organization."[903]

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[899] Jones, *Idealism as a Practical Creed*, 120.

[900] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 187.

[901] Hetherington and Muirhead, 184.

[902] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 312.

[903] Mackenzie, 317.

The right to maintenance was clearly related to the right to work so far as the livelihood of an individual and his family was to be maintained by the wage he earned through his labour. What British Idealists considered being the conditions of 'maintenance' mainly included a living wage, and a decent house. On this matter Haldane argued that it was the responsibility of the state to ensure that in exchange of decent labour nobody is given "less than that on which he can live decently."[904] Haldane also included a 'decent home' within the list of "minima that the State must see to."[905] Similarly Mackenzie perceived a duty on the part of the state to "do something to provide suitable house accommodation" to its citizens.[906] According to Mackenzie such accommodation was to include a "suitable supply of water and light."[907] These were the conditions that were deemed to be essential for the pursuance of a moral and fulfilling life for each and every individual. Individuals who were granted the right to maintenance had the corresponding duty of using these means responsibly and not to indulge in laziness and wastefulness.

Lastly, the right to leisure was deemed to be a human right by Mackenzie although other British Idealists rarely mentioned it. In defence of the right to leisure, Mackenzie wrote "a human being needs rest and recreation, just as an animal does, and he needs also, as the animal does not, opportunities for the cultivation of the intellectual and more purely spiritual side of his nature."[908] What Mackenzie thought to be leisurely time included the time one spent with his family and friends, developed himself in non-work related spheres such as literature and art, and travelled. Again, it was the duty of the state to maintain an infrastructure in which every individual had access to certain services such as libraries, art collections, and facilities for travel. In their discussions of the conditions of the working class, Hetherington and Muirhead also mentioned the necessity for "ampler sources for the enjoyment of extra-industrial pursuits."[909] Clearly, Mackenzie's understanding of leisure did not include a

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[904] Haldane, *The Future of Democracy: An Address by Lord Haldane*, 9.

[905] Haldane, 10.

[906] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 157.

[907] Mackenzie, 157.

[908] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 317.

[909] Hetherington and Muirhead, *Social Purpose*, 195.

purposeless laziness or getting drunk in the public house. It was rather perceived to be an opportunity for the individual to improve himself in a multitude of spheres that do not necessarily relate to his function as a worker.

Mackenzie's list of human rights as it was put forward in 1928 offered a minimum set of powers that should be recognized by every state for individuals' pursuance of their self-realization, for the maintenance of well-ordered societies, as well as for a cooperative and peaceful international order. The younger generation of British Idealists' renewed emphasis on the universal character of the moral end combined with their newly adopted belief in nations' right to self-government resulted in an internationalist approach to human rights. They strongly believed that the matter of human rights and a peaceful international order were intrinsically linked because only those nations who maintained a just system of rights and duties would be of a peaceful disposition towards other states. They maintained that it was the purpose of the League to ensure that each state met a certain standard in the treatment of its citizens and was willing to work in harmony with other states. A universally recognized set of human rights designated through the mechanism of a League of Nations was the central concern for British Idealists not only for creating the conditions for each individuals' self-realization but also for the maintenance of a peaceful international order in the post-Great War period. A striking example of a possible application of their outlook was present in Hetherington's report on the first International Labour Conference that was convened in 1919 in Washington.

The internationalist rather than the cosmopolitan spirit adopted by Hetherington in writing of this report was evident in the introductory note to his book. While he put much emphasis on the necessity of introducing universal standards to the conditions of workers in all countries throughout his work, Hetherington argued that its actual application was possible only through free participation of states "in the ways of promoting human good" and not through the arbitrary use of power by an international organization.[910] He argued that the International Labour Organization in particular and the League of Nations in general provided "merely the environment within which men's minds and wills may meet and work together, not only in the

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[910] Hetherington, *International Labour Legislation*, viii.

solution of particular difficulties, but to the creation of a more confident, more generous and more universal attitude of mind, that shall be free to create and to sustain a more just and flexible and yet more stable international and national social order."[911] In his report Hetherington offered insights for possible ways of universalizing workers' rights in the face of apparent variations among nations' interests and priorities, alluding to the economic rights Mackenzie deemed to be universal conditions for self realization almost 10 years later. He argued it was possible to agree on "universal regulation of hours of work," "observance of a weekly day of rest," and standards for the "employment of women and children."[912] Hetherington acknowledged the adoption of a convention that prohibited children's employment under the age of 12 by the Conference as a sign of its effectiveness. With much optimism he noted "it was a fortunate inauguration of the work of the International Labour Legislature that its first act should have been so wholehearted an effort to secure to the children of the world a prolongation of the days of their youth and of preparation for the duties and responsibilities of industry and of citizenship."[913] Although this specific convention was adopted not unanimously but "by ninety-one votes to three- the minority being the representatives of the Government and employers of India," Hetherington was convinced of its potential of elevating the standards for working children all over the world "if for no other reason than its educational implications."[914] Another and much more controversial topic of discussion at the International Labour Conference was the working hours of labourers. Hetherington noted that on this topic like other topics regarding unemployment and minimum wage, it was the tendency of the Conference "not to base its standards on the lowest actually existing, but rather to prescribe as high a standard as seemed to be possible, and to admit a system of delays, so that the less advanced could reach the desirable condition not by one leap but by a series of timed and graduated steps."[915]

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[911] Hetherington, viii.

[912] Hetherington, 17.

Hetherington, 72.

Hetherington, 81.

[913] Hetherington, *International Labour Legislation*, 96.

[914] Hetherington, 96.

[915] Hetherington, 19.

This approach was visible in the proposed convention on the working hours. While the ultimate purpose of the convention was to introduce a universal "limitation of hours of work to eight per day or forty-eight in the week," certain exemptions were guaranteed to states with newly emerging industries.[916] Hetherington was largely in favour of such an approach so far as it did not impose arbitrary standards that are to be applied to all countries irrespective of their specific social and economic conditions. He argued that an 'International Conference" was the right medium for the negotiations of working conditions that were to be applied universally so far as it created an arena in which "beneath the consideration of any particular problem there lay the desire to effect, on only an adjustment, but the largest advance which was seriously possible."[917] According to Hetherington the success of the Conference was dependent on the condition that it did not legislate "in an abstract, cosmopolitan fashion, but in the full sense of the term internationally."[918] This international sentiment Hetherington condoned necessitated that while universal standards were applied to states through international legislation "a full study of the conditions and aims of every State-member" was taken into consideration. To ensure nations' compliance with the international standards, regulations were to be put forward not for the egoistic gains of certain states but for the common good of humanity as a whole, which is realizable only in the person of each and every individual. Evidently, for the younger generation of British Idealists a universal order of human rights was not cosmopolitan but internationalist in nature, so far as these rights' recognition and maintenance was dependent on the cooperation of states. Such cooperation in the post-Great War world order was to be ensured by the League of Nations, which would not only regulate states' relations with each other but also set standards for their internal conditions. It was from such a perspective that they insisted 'that the future well-being of the world depends upon the establishment of a genuine League or Society of Nations."[919]

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[916] Hetherington, 61.

[917] Hetherington, 73.

[918] Hetherington, 14.

[919] Mackenzie, *Arrows of Desire*, 221.

An equally important attribute of the younger generation of British Idealists' approach to human rights was their consistent emphasis on the equivalence of rights and duties for individuals' pursuance of a moral life. This was again a restatement of Green's teleological moral theory and theory of rights. From the Idealist perspective rights were granted to human beings within a social whole not only due to their bare existence but due to their moral nature. Thanks to this moral nature each individual was perceived to have certain capacities which, throughout his life he had a right and an obligation to realize. In this respect rights and duties were not only reciprocal but also inseparable. A right that did not serve an individuals' capacity for self-realization was valueless. Obligations that were not accompanied by the recognition of certain rights for the pursuance of such self-realization were illegitimate. Thus, Jones argued that "rights and duties not only imply one another, so that there are no rights where there are no duties, nor any duties except where there are rights, but, as I have already said, they are the same facts looked at from opposite points of view."[920] Both rights and duties were necessary conditions for the realization of human beings moral and rational capacity. In that respect every individual whose rights were recognized within a society was understood to accept those rights' corresponding duties. According to Jones, it was possible to trace back the origin of all obligations to a singular moral obligation to "put *present* circumstances to the highest use" in the pursuance of the moral end of self-realization.[921] From this perspective reciprocity of rights and obligations had a double meaning. The first and most obvious meaning that was also recognized by almost all rights theorists referred to individuals' obligation to recognize his fellow beings had the same rights he himself enjoyed in his society. The second meaning, which was emphasized much more by the Idealists, was individuals' obligation to recognize that he was granted certain rights for the pursuance of a moral end, and their legitimacy was dependent on his responsible use of those rights to that end. To draw attention to the double meaning of reciprocity, Mackenzie argued, "it is pretty obvious that the conceptions of a right and an obligation are correlative; but it is perhaps not quite so obvious that there are two distinguishable ways in which the

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[920] Jones, *The Principles of Citizenship*, 138.

[921] Henry Jones, "The Obligations and Privileges of Citizenship - a Plea for the Study of Social Science," *Rice Institute Pamphlet - Rice University Studies* 6, no. 3 (1919): 151.

one conception may be regarded as necessarily implying the other."[922] While "the most readily apparent" meaning of correlativity was that "any right or privilege which one person enjoys involves the obligation to respect it on the part of others," the other equally important meaning was commonly ignored.[923] This second, more individualized meaning referred to individuals' obligation to use his rights for the pursuance of the universal moral end. According to Mackenzie this obligation was central to our understanding of rights so far as "the granting of rights rests on some presupposition that they will be employed for the furtherance of some desirable end" which was from the Idealistic point of view the "complete realization of human powers."[924] Thus, at the end of his list of human rights, Mackenzie wrote:

> The rights of a citizen are pleasant to contemplate; but when one thinks of the obligations that go along with them, one may well ask, who is adequate to such things? But happily perfection cannot be expected in human life. Still, whenever anyone fails in the carrying out of his obligations, it must be recognized that his claim to the corresponding rights becomes somewhat shaky.[925]

As Jones also argued, an individual's recognition of his obligations stemming from the rights he enjoyed were vital for the maintenance of an ethical society and "his obligations to society were as sacred as his obligations to himself."[926] While the vitality of these obligations was recognized by the younger generation, they did not condone a total control of individual's use of their rights by the state. Instead, they recognized an individual's failure in meeting his obligations towards himself as a moral failing that remained outside the state's area of responsibility. Based on this conviction Mackenzie argued, "it would be an intolerable tyranny for the State to determine the exact way in which individuals employ the rights that are conferred

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[922] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 306.

[923] John Stuart Mackenzie, 306.

[924] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 168.
Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, 477.

[925] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 318.

[926] Henry Jones, *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1910), 130.

upon them."[927] It was possible to restrict an individual's enjoyment of his rights only when he engaged in a similar violation of the rights of his fellow men. In other words, it was the duty of the state to guarantee that individuals enjoyed their rights without violation from their fellow citizens, yet individuals' obligation to pursue their self-realization was a moral matter outside of the scope of states' jurisdiction. Overall it was states' obligation to "use its power for the protection of its citizens against aggression from without and for the maintenance of order and justice within its own territories."[928] Beyond that the best a state could do was to "provide the fittest conditions for men and women of certain general types… and even with regard to general types, it can usually only provide opportunities."[929] According to Mackenzie, the rest was to be left to the individual himself. As a general rule it was individuals' responsibility "to discover the best way of using the opportunities that are provided."[930] In short, individuals' obligation to pursue their self-realization with the use of their rights was a moral and not a political obligation. It was the duty of the state to make sure that they were bestowed with necessary powers but their actual usage by the individuals remained outside of states' control.

## 5.4 The Moral End of Self-Realization as a Universalizing Basis for an International System of Human Rights

Martha Nussbaum, in her seminal work, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach,* made a comment on the similarities between her approach to human rights and T. H. Green's political theory in general. She noted, "T. H. Green and Ernest barker were not known to me when I developed this view, but the discovery of similarities of approach has been illuminating."[931] Curiously enough, and despite Nussbaum's recognition, striking similarities between the capabilities approach and the British Idealist theory of rights remains unexamined to this day. In

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[927] Mackenzie, *Outlines of Social Philosophy*, 168.

[928] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life*, 307.

[929] John Stuart Mackenzie, 307.

[930] John Stuart Mackenzie, 307.

[931] Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 124.

this short section, possible venues for incorporating the younger generations' internationalist approach and Nussbaum's capabilities approach are drawn to attention mainly as an area that waits further study. It is the contention of this study that instead of aligning Green's rights theory with contemporary communitarian or cosmopolitan approaches to human rights, paying more attention to the internationalist turn of the younger generation of British Idealists offers a consolatory position on the matter. Doing so also reveals important resemblances between their approach to human rights and one of the most influential contemporary theories of human rights, developed by Martha Nussbaum. Further study on the matter may succeed in combining the highly acknowledged capabilities approach to human rights with a more substantial political philosophy in regards to the source and justification of human rights.

It is not surprising that there are similarities between the British Idealists' theory of rights and Nussbaum's capabilities approach. After all, their shared philosophical roots in the works of Aristotle and Kant had considerable impact on their works. The most striking of these influences seems to be the teleological approach to human nature that attributes importance to human rights not only because human beings are but also because they have a potential to become better versions of themselves. Thus, the central position occupied by the moral end of self-realization shapes their understanding of rights as necessary powers or opportunities that are to be available to each individual for self-development. Furthermore by both the younger generation of British Idealists and Nussbaum, the existence or non-existence of human rights in a given society is taken to be a basic indicator of the level of justice a society has achieved in its internal organisation.[932] Nussbaum's list of 'Central Capabilities' offers a way to assess the decency of a political organisation by looking at whether or not it supplies the conditions in which each individual can "pursue a dignified and minimally flourishing life."[933] Furthermore, Nussbaum's capabilities approach takes notice of the social, historical, and material variations among societies, yet it does not fall into pure relativism. While recognizing the necessity of leaving some room for nations "to elaborate capabilities differently to some extent," she maintains that the

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[932] Martha C. Nussbaum, "Capabilities and Human Rights," *Fordham L. Rev.* 66 (1997): 293.

[933] Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, 33.

minimum threshold should be met in every just society.[934] Additionally, the capabilities approach devotes attention to the ends for which the rights are claimed and used, although in a more limited way than the British Idealists did. Without designating their use for a certain end as a condition for the allocation of rights, Nussbaum argues, "the notion of functioning gives the notion of capability its end-point."[935] Rights are perceived to be necessary powers so that individuals would have the capability to choose in which spheres and ways they want to function. The slight difference between Nussbaum and Idealists' understanding of the relation between rights and obligations stems from their varied emphasis on the moral aspect of rights. While both positions acknowledge that the political authority could not legitimately claim a say in the way rights were used by individuals, British Idealists strongly believed that those individuals who used their rights not for their self-realization but for their egoistic ends were immoral.

The most striking resemblance between the British Idealists' approach to rights and Nussbaum's capabilities theory reveals itself when Nussbaum's list of 'Central Capabilities' is compared with Mackenzie's list of human rights. In her list of 'Central Capabilities,' Nussbaum offers a minimum set of conditions necessary for the pursuance of "a dignified and minimally flourishing life."[936] A majority of the capabilities Nussbaum includes in her list as vital elements of a dignified human life match with the items in Mackenzie's list of human rights. While the first items in Nussbaum's list: life, bodily health, senses, imagination, and thought are recognized as human rights by Mackenzie through the maintenance of rights to a free life, security, and education; capabilities of affiliation, play, and control over one's environment (both political and material) were recommended to be taken under protection by Mackenzie through the rights to leisure, employment, maintenance, property, and franchise.[937] The only capabilities Mackenzie did not recommend to protect through universal rights were emotional capabilities and those capabilities that ensured humans coexistence with other species. Emotional capabilities were those

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[934] Nussbaum, 40.

[935] Nussbaum, 25.

[936] Nussbaum, 33.

[937] Nussbaum, 34.

that ensured individuals were "able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger."[938] Presumably, Mackenzie assumed that each individual being a social and moral being were already endowed with these capabilities and his ongoing cooperative relations with his fellow men ensured the natural protection and development of this capability. The capability to coexist with other species was defined by Nussbaum as the ability "to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature."[939] Admittedly, Mackenzie was not a champion of animal rights like Ritchie was. As a response to Ritchie's article "The Rights of Animals," he wrote for instance "if rights were treated as absolute, and all living beings were supposed to have rights, it would seem to be doubtful whether we are even entitled to eat cabbages or to prune roses."[940] In his defence, he argued that infliction of unnecessary pain was to be taken as a moral evil at all times, and during his lifetime environmental concerns along with concerns for the well-being of animals used in industrial facilities was not a priority.

While the above discussion points to a considerable overlap between Nussbaum's capabilities approach and the Younger Generation of British Idealists' internationalist attitude towards human rights, a significant discrepancy between these two positions is worth noting. As it has been discussed throughout this dissertation, according to the British Idealists the justification of the contention that each and every individual was to be bestowed with rights was that human beings were social and moral beings whose potential for self-realization was possible only within a just and well-organized community. In that respect, each individual was considered to have the potential for the pursuance of the moral end of self-realization and thus entitled to the recognition and maintenance of certain rights within a society. In the post Great-War period the younger generation of British Idealists defended the idea that individual's rationality, morality and sociability were universal attributes and thus each and every individual had a capacity for self-realization irrespective of his nationality, race, and religious

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[938] Nussbaum, 33.

[939] Nussbaum, 34.

[940] J. S. Mackenzie, *Review of Animal Rights, Considered in Relation to Social Progress*, by Henry S. Salt, *International Journal of Ethics* 26, no. 4 (1916): 568.

creed. So, they defended that every well-organized state had the obligation to recognize a minimum set of rights that were indispensable for the pursuance of the moral end by their citizens. Nussbaum does not incorporate such a 'maximalist' justification of human rights into her capabilities approach. She argues that to be able to include the "people with cognitive disabilities" into the sphere of human rights, the capabilities approach "grounds rights claims in bare human birth and minimal agency, not in rationality or any other specific property."[941] Instead, she incorporates 'human dignity' as a justificatory basis for human capabilities and human rights. Although, Nussbaum claims that the theory "articulates more clearly than most standard rights accounts the relationship between human rights and human dignity," the term dignity remains to be an 'intuitive notion.'[942] Without diving into this highly controversial matter, it would suffice to note that British Idealists' emphasis on the moral end of self-realization based on their belief in human's rational, moral, and social nature does not necessarily exclude 'people with cognitive disabilities' from an international order of human rights. It is telling that both Green and the younger generation of British Idealists repeatedly uses the ancient Greek practice of disposing unfit children as an example of moral deficiency in the Greek polis.[943] With reference to this specific practice Green argued, for example:

> We treat life as sacred even in the human embryo, and even in hopeless idiots
> and lunatics recognise a right to live, a recognition which can only be rationally
> explained on either or both of two grounds: (1) that we do not consider either
> their lives, or the society which a man may freely serve, to be limited to this
> earth, and thus ascribe to them a right to live on the strength of a social capacity
> which under other conditions may become what it is not here; or (2) that the
> distinction between curable and incurable, between complete and incomplete
> social incapacity is so indefinite that we cannot in any case safely assume it to be
> such as to extinguish the right to live. Or perhaps it may be argued that even in

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[941] Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, 63. Nussbaum, 30.

[942] Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, 63.

[943] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 157.
Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, 314.
Muirhead, *The Service of the State*, 70.

cases where the incapacity is ascertainably incurable, the patient has still a social

function (as undoubtedly those who are incurably ill in other ways have), a

passive function as the object of affectionate ministrations arising out of family

instincts and memories; and that the right to have life protected corresponds to

this passive social function.[944]

According to Green those with insufficient social or rational capacity were still part of

the system of rights so far as they had the potential to have an increased capacity in

the future. When even this possibility was not present, Green perceived in them a

passive capacity to be the recipient of others' moral and social concern and thus be a

valuable part of the social whole. While people with disabilities definitely had a right

to life as members of an ethical community, their enjoyment of other rights was

dependent on their capacity to do so. So far as there was not a threshold of self-

realization that must be met by each member of the society to be a worthy subject of

rights, those with disabilities were not excluded from the system of rights and duties

that prevailed in their society. Thus, it can be concluded that Nussbaum's concern for

the inclusion of the cognitively disabled does not necessitate giving up a more

comprehensive philosophical justification for the existence of rights based on man's

rational, moral and social nature. In comparison with such justification her choice of

'human dignity' as an intuitive justificatory notion for human rights seems to be quite

weak.

Contemporary literature on human rights and human dignity also points to the weak

metaphysical and/or ontological status of human dignity as a justificatory concept for

universal human rights. For Nussbaum's capabilities approach it is often argued that

her work fails in supplying the notion that "every human being is sacred" with enough

justification.[945] The main reason for Nussbaum's failure is often found in her

preference of an intuitive understanding of human dignity that is not supported by a

well-established understanding of human nature. Thus, the concept of human dignity

not only fails in supporting Nussbaum's list of human-capabilities that are argued to

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[944] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 158.

[945] Michael J. Perry, "Are Human Rights Universal? The Relativist Challenge and Related Matters,"
*Human Rights Quarterly* 19, no. 3 (1997): 464.

be indispensable for human flourishing but it also cannot carry its own weight as it depends merely on "moral intuitions or sensibilities."[946] Thus, Uyl and Rasmussen argue that Nussbaum ends up "offering an account of human flourishing without an anthropology that takes metaphysical realism, essentialism, natural theology, individualism, and forms of sociality seriously."[947] Yet, they recognize that Nussbaum's preference is a conscious one, so far as she is an advocate "of a pragmatic realism that seeks to avoid the need to ground values in facts or some ontology."[948] The apparent reason for Nussbaum's unwillingness to engage in an essentialist discussion of human nature appears to be her quest to establish a truly universal understanding of human rights that does not exclude severely mentally disabled, people with dementia, and very young children. By severing the links between the concept of human dignity and its Kantian justification based on human reason and autonomy, Nussbaum aims to include those without reason within the sphere of human rights. Yet, this position leaves her intuitive understanding of 'human dignity' and the list of capabilities it is supposed to support with little to no base. As Stark puts it "the harmony between the list and out intuitions about human dignity represents, Nussbaum claims, a state of reflective equilibrium."[949] Yet, without a discussion of human nature, her account of human dignity cannot answer the question of "whose moral intuitions, sensibilities, or discourses are to be consulted" in determining "the set of relevant capabilities."[950] Apparently, an intuitive belief in human dignity, claimed to be shared by all peoples does not offer a persuasive or stable ground on which to base universal human rights. While it can be accepted that "all societies possess conceptions of human dignity" it would be a far-fetched claim to say all those conceptions are equally capable of supporting a universal understanding of human rights.[951]

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[946] Douglas J. Den Uyl and Douglas B. Rasmussen, "Liberalism in Retreat," *The Review of Metaphysics* 62, no. 4 (2009): 876.

[947] Douglas J. Den Uyl and Douglas B. Rasmussen, 908.

[948] Douglas J. Den Uyl and Douglas B. Rasmussen, 892.

[949] Cynthia A. Stark, "Respecting Human Dignity: Contract Versus Capabilities," *Metaphilosophy* 40, no. 3/4, (2009): 371.

[950] Douglas J. Den Uyl and Douglas B. Rasmussen, "Liberalism in Retreat," 876.

[951] Rhoda E. Howard and Jack Donnelly, "Human Dignity, Human Rights, and Political Regimes," *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 03 (September 1986): 801.

Apart from the specific case of Nussbaum's capabilities approach, the concept of human dignity itself as a basis for universal human rights has been attracting increased criticism. Doris Schroeder for instance argues that the concept of human dignity was no longer useful in solving "the justification problem for human rights" but it was rather aggravating it.[952] According to Schroeder, "the self-evidence of the dignity axiom" has been negatively impacted by the increased secularization of the world. When the dignity claim was not supported with a reference to God it begged an alternative form of justification that it simply lacked.[953] The Kantian alternative argues Schroeder necessitates excluding certain segments of humanity from the sphere of human rights due to their lack of moral self-legislation: small children, people in a permanent vegetative state, with severe mental disability, or with dementia.[954] Thus, concludes Schroeder it was better for the advocates of human rights to cut its link with the concept of human dignity so far as they were no longer willing to base their argumentation on religious foundations. Glenn Hughes raises a similar argument, although the necessity of a religious foundation for the concept of human dignity is accompanied with a secular alternative: the metaphysical concept of the absolute.[955]According to Hughes, for the proper functioning of the concept of human dignity reference to transcendence seems inescapable so far as

> it is only the presumption of the ontological rootedness of persons in an absolute unchanging reality that allows us to grant elemental human dignity, the status of an absolute truth, a truth that admits of no exceptions and no perishability, and to embrace it as a permanent basis for the human rights that belong to all people of all times and places.[956]

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[952] Doris Schroeder, "Human Rights and Human Dignity: An Appeal to Separate the Conjoined Twins," *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 15, no. 3 (2012): 323.

[953] Schroeder, 327.

[954] Schroeder, 330–31.

[955] Glenn Hughes, "The Concept Of Dignity In The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 39, no. 1 (2011): 17.

[956] Hughes, 17.

Yet, the necessity to root the concept of human dignity in transcendentalism seems counter-productive so far as the appeal of the concept is closely tied to its rootlessness in any religious or metaphysical meta-doctrine. From Hughes' perspective, the concept of dignity looses all its appeal for those who do not believe in the existence of a religious or metaphysical transcendental reality.

There remain two alternative arguments for the continuing use of the concept of human dignity as a basis for universal human rights. The first, and most commonly accepted one is focusing on its practical use and leaving the matter of its source to individuals or groups of people who would like to appropriate it in specific conditions. From such a perspective Jurgen Habermas defines human dignity as a "portal through which the egalitarian and universalistic substance of morality is imported into law."[957] According to Habermas, human dignity acts as a 'conceptual hinge' between the universal moral claims and its specific embodiments in 'constitutional political communities' that protect the rights of their citizens. With reference to the historical significance of the concept of 'dignities' that were "attached to specific honorific functions and memberships," Habermas argues that modern concept of human dignity bestows each individual with social recognition of its peers in society, that is embodied in "the status of democratic citizenship" in todays world.[958] Thus, in Habermas's scheme the concept of human dignity functions as a convertor. Those moral claims that have the capacity to be translated into law are converted into "equal actionable rights" which are applicable to all members of a democratic political order through the gateway of human dignity. While Habermas's account explains the practical use of the concept of human dignity in todays' human rights order, it adds little to the philosophical discussions in regards to its source and justification.

The second solution may be combining the concept of human dignity with an alternative justificatory concept of human rights such as human flourishing. In such an attempt Kleinig and Evans argue for instance "despite differences between the

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[957] Jürgen Habermas, "The Concept Of Human Dignity And The Realistic Utopia Of Human Rights," *Metaphilosophy* 41, no. 4 (2010): 469.

[958] Jürgen Habermas, 464.

metaphors of human flourishing and dignity, they capture important complementary facets of human self-understanding that can also be usefully linked with discussions of human rights."[959] In their account, while the concept of human flourishing provides the moral end and justification for human rights, human dignity appears to be a auxiliary to the end of flourishing. Furthermore, the relation between dignity and flourishing is defined as "not one of logical necessity or sufficiency."[960] While, within social structures where individual's human dignity is not recognized their chances of achieving human flourishing is argued to be "extremely limited," it does not remove the possibility. In Kleinig and Evans' account human dignity seems to be dependent on the Kantian model of individual autonomy and morality. Thus, it argues that for human beings to be able to flourish freely, their human dignity that encompasses their capacity to make rational and informed choices about their life plans should be recognized by their fellow human beings. When compared with Nussbaum's use of intuitions about 'human dignity' as a grounding value for the protection of human capacities, Kleinig and Evans' attempt appears to be more convincing so far as they ground human dignity on individual capacity for autonomy and morality and establish the relation between human dignity and human flourishing on a more practical basis. Yet, such an understanding of the concept of human dignity does not serve the end Nussbaum pursues as it depends on an understanding of individuals as capable of making 'rational and informed choices about their life plans.'

The practical use of the concept of human dignity has long been established in the literature. Its must important attribute seems to be its ability to 'eschew' "any religious or metaphysical justification" for its affirmation.[961] When its role in substantiating a practical agreement among diverse actors during the ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 is considered, its detachment from any ideological and/or religious foundation seems to be highly beneficial. According to Hughes, the drafters of the Declaration chose the concept of human dignity as the foundation of universal human rights so far as it was "universally

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[959] John Kleinig and Nicholas G. Evans, "Human Flourishing, Human Dignity, And Human Rights," *Law and Philosophy* 32, no. 5 (2013): 539.

[960] John Kleinig and Nicholas G. Evans, 558.

[961] Glenn Hughes, "The Concept Of Dignity In The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights," 1.

understandable and corresponding to equivalent words or ideas in non-Western cultures. Committee members from countries representing Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, and Confucian traditions recognized the term *dignity* as a reference to the distinctive value or worth of, and the respect owed to, every human being."[962] So far as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and following international documents constitutes the basis on which states and individuals think about and make use of human rights today, the centrality of the concept of human dignity in the way we think about human rights becomes apparent. It would be fair to say that from a practical stand point the concept of human dignity has proved to be equal to its task. Yet, from a theoretical/philosophical perspective it draws increasing criticism so far as the concept itself lacks a ground when severed from its possible religious/metaphysical basis. Thus, continuing attempts to come up with alternative and/or supporting justifications for universal human rights proves to be a worthwhile engagement.

The above discussion in this chapter in regards to the role of the concept of self-realization as a basis for universal human rights in British Idealist moral and political theory draws attention to such an attempt. Although a quick research shows that the concept of self-realization lost its appeal for theorists by the end of the 1940s and since remained a minority taste, the example of the internationalist human rights system the younger generation of British Idealists put forward shows that it can support a human rights theory as well as –and maybe better than- the concept of human dignity. Renewed interest in the Aristotelian concept of human flourishing – mostly thanks to Nussbaum's work- also supports this possibility.

First and foremost the concept of self-realization diverts attention from the highly controversial issue of the source of universal human rights and redirects it towards the moral end human rights are supposed to serve. It argues rights are indispensable 'powers' for each and every human being in their personal quest to realize their best-possible self within human society. While it acknowledges the 'animal' needs of individuals for their basic survival, it attributes much more importance to 'truly' human attributes such as rationality, morality, autonomy, and creativity and shows

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[962] Hughes, 5.

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that for individuals to achieve the moral end of self-realization they have a legitimate claim to not only basic liberal rights but also to social and economic rights within their own social and political community.  Furthermore, while acknowledging a unique potential in every individual for a form of self-realization it leaves scope for individual autonomy by leaving the end product –the realized self of the individuals- undefined. It is perceived that the best version of an individual can become is dependent not only on the specific social and cultural context in which he/she is located but also on his/her personal attributes and choices. The aim of rights is not to enforce a pre-described form of the best human on individuals but to endow each individual with powers necessary for him/her to become his/her best self. In that regard, the end of self-realization carries certain similarities with the concept of human dignity understood as 'an ideal achievement.' When rights are understood as tools necessary for the realization of an individual self that automatically embodies dignity as an agent with reason, morality, and autonomy, there is no obstacle to relate the end of self-realization with the end of pursuing a dignified life. Thus, from the idealist perspective a realized self, or a self that pursues the end of self-realization seems also to be a dignified self. Thus, Green mentions for instance the "formation of a manly conscience and sense of moral dignity" which becomes possible only when individuals are granted the freedoms and rights that enable them to pursue their self-realization with autonomy.[963]

Although the main focus of self-realization as a grounding principle for human rights is with the end it serves, it requires acknowledging certain human attributes that are common to all humanity and that distinguishes it from other orders of beings such as animals, plants and inanimate objects. In line with the idealist tradition these attributes are understood to be the basis for individual autonomy and free will. Thus, for an individual to pursue the end of self-realization, he/she needs to be endowed with certain potentialities such as rationality, morality, and sociability. Yet, as it is discussed above, this seems to be a controversial point in contemporary literature so far as acknowledging these potentialities as a condition for human rights is argued to leave certain human beings out of the sphere of human rights. Yet, so far as these truly human attributes do not refer to their constant employment but to their existence

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[963] Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, 39.

as a potential in every human being, the concept of self–realization does not leave children and criminals outside of the sphere of human rights. While children are understood to have human potentials that are to be realized further in their life, their rights are recognized yet to a certain degree regulated by their parents. In the case of criminals, the possibility of their rehabilitation through punishment and/or guidance from others shows that they are understood to be agents endowed with rationality, morality, and sociability though realization of their human potential is temporarily curtailed. With reference to their potential they remain within the sphere of human rights. The cases of people with dementia or with cognitive disabilities prove to be more challenging. While those with milder cognitive disabilities might be argued to have the potential for self-realization although on a level that is different from the majority of human beings, others who cannot have any potential to be realized seems to fall out of the moral sphere in which the concept of self-realization operates. Yet, Green's reference to human sociability as a protective net for those who cannot pursue self-realization might form a derivative guarantee for the human rights of those with severe cognitive disabilities. Thus, from the British Idealist perspective, it can be argued that, while the end of human rights for all individuals –including those with cognitive disabilities, children, and criminals- is to create scope for the realization of a better version of themselves, no matter how trivial the actual betterment of the individual may seem to others, for those who does not have any scope for improvement, human rights ensures their continual well-being with reference to their "passive function as the object of affectionate ministrations" arising out of human potential for sociability and empathy. Evidently, the moral end of self-realization as a basis for human rights makes use of a certain understanding of human ontology. It is based on a certain perception of human nature, being rational, moral, and sociable. Yet, these attributes are not in contrast with the understanding of human nature often endorsed by liberal political and legal theorists who reflect on human rights today.[964] Even Rawls, who aims to avoid basing his political theory on any metaphysical perceptions, employs a definition of a human being who is "committed to the ideal of society as a fair system of cooperation among free and equal persons,

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[964] Gerald F. Gaus, *The Modern Liberal Theory of Man* (London : New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1983), 2.

who recognizes the "burdens of judgment," and who accepts the duty of civility."[965] Evidently, such a human being is to have certain potentialities in regards to being reasonable, social, and moral.

Furthermore, while the British Idealist perception of human nature can be grounded with reference to a transcended being or a transcended order as Green did with his reference to an 'eternal consciousness,' it does not require such justification. Alternatively, for instance, it can be explained with the historical evolution of individuals within predominantly social settings, or the material necessities to pursue a flourishing life in a world with limited supplies of material goods and adverse natural conditions. Thus, while the concept of 'intuitive' human dignity requires a religious/metaphysical justification or else becomes an empty formula, the end of self-realization employs a certain conception of human nature that does not necessarily depend on a belief in the transcendental although it is open to such justification.

Although it seems out of scope in this study of British Idealism and Human Rights, extensive attention is paid to Nussbaum's capabilities approach so far as it has important similarities with the idealist position. First, it pays considerable attention to the function of rights as enabling powers for human flourishing. Second, it takes rights orders within specific political unities as indicators of their justness. Third, it combines the universal characteristic of human rights with the particular necessities of specific political orders and leaves scope for reasonable amounts of variation for the implementation of human rights within those communities. Fourth and last, there appears to be striking similarities between Nussbaum's list of capabilities that are indispensable for human flourishing and Mackenzie's list of human rights as necessary powers for individuals' self-realization. Yet, there exists a fundamental difference between the justificatory tools employed by Nussbaum and the British Idealists in their discussion of human rights. While Nussbaum attempts to employ a merely 'intuitive' understanding of human dignity as a basis for human rights, British Idealists identifies the moral end of self-realization as the justificatory power for human rights. The moral end of self-realization operates with reference to a certain

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[965] Cynthia A. Stark, "Respecting Human Dignity: Contract Versus Capabilities," 378.

understanding of human nature, being reasonable, moral, and sociable. As it is discussed above, especially with reference to growing dissatisfaction with the concept of human dignity in the literature on human rights, British Idealists' version of justification may prove to be a better option. Further research may investigate the possibility of incorporating a version of British Idealist justification of rights into the capabilities approach to human rights. It appears to be a reasonable project so far as there is no fundamental contradiction between the basic theoretical contentions of Nussbaum's capabilities approach and the younger generation of British Idealists' internationalist system of human rights.

## 5.5 Conclusion

As it was maintained in the introductory part of this chapter, the younger generation of British Idealists' work in the post-Great War era did not necessarily put forward a human rights theory that deviated from the teaching of T. H. Green. On the contrary, this was a period they distanced themselves from the imperialist vocabulary of 'spreading civilization' and returned to the Greenian vocabulary of morality and rights. They discussed at length the possibility of international cooperation and searched for the basis of such cooperation of nation states in the universal dictates of teleological morality. Instead of a world-state, they advocated liberty at the national and fraternity at the international level. As a concrete example of such an international organisation, the younger generation of British Idealists unilaterally supported the project of the League of Nations. A more seasoned idealist, Bosanquet was skeptical in regards to the chances of success of such organization without the existence of an international general will. Instead, Bosanquet emphasized the importance of ensuring a just internal organization within each society. He focused on the form of patriotism adopted within each society as an indicator of the ends they pursued, and argued that a society, which adopted a healthy form of patriotism, would not be war-like in nature. Yet, the variation in the perspectives of the younger generation and Bosanquet was not based on a fundamental difference between their approaches to international relations. It was rather a difference in emphasis. All British Idealists in the post-Great War era perceived relation between the satisfactory political organization of independent states and maintenance of a peaceful and

cooperative international order to be interdependent. A satisfactory political organization was described as a just 'republic' that had a civic form of patriotism and an international outlook. The most significant indicator of its fulfillment of these conditions was the system of rights and duties each state maintained. Although the specifics of each society's system of rights and duties were expected to change due to the particular material and historical conditions, they were to comply with the dictates of universal morality. The moral threshold was to ensure that each individual had the necessary rights to fulfil his moral and rational nature; i.e., he/she had the opportunities to pursue self-realization. While Green and Bosanquet referred to the rights to life, liberty, and property in their fundamental works before the Great War, Mackenzie's list of human rights by 1928 included the rights to liberty, property, security, education, franchise, work, maintenance, and leisure. With reference to these human rights he argued

> These rights and obligations are, of course, very largely affected by the special organization of the State within which the citizen happens to live; but it would be a mistake to regard them as being created or entirely determined by that organization. There is a sense in which rights and obligations may properly be described as 'natural' and independent of any kind of political sanction.

The sense in which rights were independent from the political sanctions of states was the moral end with reference to which their existence was justified. In this universal moral sense they were antecedent to the existence or recognition of any state. On the contrary, their satisfactory recognition and maintenance was perceived to be a condition against which states' legitimacy was judged. Yet in another and more practical sense, rights' actual enjoyment was dependent on states' recognition, and to that extend, maintenance of a universal system of human rights was dependent on states' willingness and cooperation. It was this internationalist aspect of the younger generation of British Idealists' approach to human rights that was most clearly represented in Hetherington's report on the first Conference of the International Labour Organization. Especially in relation with the establishment of international organizations, such as the League of Nations, the younger generation of idealists foresaw "development of international ethics" that would constitute a basis for an

international order of human rights.[966] While the international ethics to be developed was understood to be a reflection of universal moral end of self-realization its realization was possible though states' continual cooperation. When evaluated with respect to Michael Perry's typologies of relativism, British Idealists' international approach to human rights accepted only a mild form of cultural relativism, which condoned that "the optimal specification" of human rights "might be relative to cultural particularities."[967] Yet, the universal moral source of human rights denied 'anthropological relativism' that denied the existence of a universal human nature, or 'epistemological relativism' that argues, "there is little possibility, of any, for productive dialogue between or among cultures" about human rights.[968] Thus, the British Idealists' internationalist approach to human rights incorporates a certain amount of variation in terms of codification and implementation of human rights *as long as* those practices are in line with the dictates of the universal moral end of individual self-realization. Considering the mounting dissatisfaction with the concept of human-dignity as a founding value for human rights, an internationalist approach to human rights based on the universal moral end of self-realization appears to constitute a significant alternative.

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[966] Peter Sutch, "Human Rights as Settled Norms: Mervyn Frost and the Limits of Hegelian Human Rights Theory," *Review of International Studies* 26, no. 2 (2000): 231.

[967] Michael J. Perry, "Are Human Rights Universal? The Relativist Challenge and Related Matters," 505.

[968] Perry, 501.

# CHAPTER 6

# CONCLUSION

This study traces the shifts the younger generation of British Idealists has experienced in their approach to international relations and human rights in connection with the historical context of the long 19$^{th}$ century and post-Great War period. Its main purpose is to reveal the significant changes that occurred in the younger generation of British Idealists' perceptions of key phenomena in international relations such as the British Empire and imperialism, cultural and religious diversity, conditions for perpetual peace, materialism, militarism, cosmopolitanism and internationalism before and after the Great War. In conclusion it suggests that the younger generation of British Idealists were able to put forward a tenable approach to human rights only after the Great War when they distanced themselves from the imperialist sentiment they entertained before the Great War along with the majority of British liberal intelligentsia. Furthermore, it reveals the impact of the rising internationalist sentiment in the post-Great War period, which enabled them to develop an internationalist approach to human rights that incorporated the basic tenets of Green's theory of rights into the rising enthusiasm for the League of Nations. Instead of taking the British Idealist school of thought as a monolithic body of literature that floats free from the historical context in which it has operated, it focuses on the relations between the highly turbulent international phenomenon that marked the last decades of the 19$^{th}$ century as well as the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ century and British Idealists' reactions to the changing political, international and intellectual circumstances on

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which they commented. By offering a historical reading of the younger generation of British Idealists' works published after the out-break of the Great War, it traces the roots of their internationalist approach to human rights to the prevailing internationalist sentiment among the British Intelligentsia in the post-Great War period as well as to Green's moral and political teachings.

As it has been discussed in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, within the secondary literature on British Idealism, disproportionate attention has been paid to the works of T. H. Green so far. Admittedly, being the pioneer of the British Idealist school of thought and a prominent intellectual and public figure in Britain during his lifetime, Green's work has proved to be an enduring source of inspiration not only for his students and fellow idealists but also for contemporary theorists of rights and human rights. By his students and fellow idealists he has been called "the most distinguished thinker in recent times," "the greatest force of his time in the university," "the first and most powerful representative of idealism in Oxford," and the author of "the most considerable contribution to ethical science that has been made in England during the present century."[969] Contemporary theorists of rights have also used his work as a point of reference in their works in regards to the moral and social basis of rights and human rights. Rex Martin, Gerald Gaus, Derrick Darby, David Boucher, Andrew Vincent, Darin Nesbitt, Ann Cacoullos, Matt Hann were among those thinkers who turned to Green's original work for guidance and inspiration. Evidently his work offered much in terms of offering an alternative to the commonplace natural rights approach that dominated the intellectual landscape back in his time and which retains its predominance to this day.[970] Furthermore, historiographies of 19th century intellectual thought acknowledge Green to be a

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[969] john S. Mackenzie, *A Manual Of Ethics*, Fourth (New York City: Hinds, Hayden & Eldredge, Inc., 1901), 248.

John Henry Muirhead, *The Service of the State: Four Lectures on the Political Teaching of TH Green* (J. Murray, 1908), 3.

J. H. Muirhead, *Bernard Bosanquet and His Friends: Letters Illustrating the Sources and the Development of His Philosophical Opinions* (Routledge, 2014), 56.

[970] Marie-Bénédicte Dembour, "What Are Human Rights? Four Schools of Thought," *Human Rights Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (2010): 1–20.

prominent figure of his time.[971] Admittedly, this study also traces back the younger generation of British Idealists' internationalist approach to human rights, at least partially to Green's moral and political theory. Still, it remains essential to realize the temporal limitation exposed on the secondary literature by the almost singular focus given to Green's work. While it remains unknown what Green would have accomplished if his life were not such a short one, it remains true that his work was produced during a period of international stability where empires were still able to maintain a balance of power amongst themselves. Although, Green's foresight enabled him to comment on the potential dangers of an imperialist world-order, the matter was not a central one to his work, nor was it a central concern for the British intelligentsia up until the Second Boer War.

Thus, this study starts its historical pursuit of tracing British Idealists' changing attitudes towards international relations at the turn of the 20th century with special attention paid to the intellectual reflections on the Second Boer War. By identifying three different positions maintained by British Idealists towards international relations at this period, it locates the younger generation of British Idealists at the intermediary position of liberal imperialism. While Jones, Mackenzie, Muirhead, and Haldane are argued to embody a position that was called 'civic imperialism' by Duncan Bell, Green and Bosanquet's earlier reflections reveal a deep-seated distrust towards

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[971] Melvin Richter, *The Politics of Conscience;: T.H. Green and His Age* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964).

Denys Leighton, *Greenian Moment: T. H. Green, Religion and Political Argument in Victorian Tain Britain* (Exeter, UK ; Charlottesville, VA: Imprint Academic, 2004).

Duncan Kelly, *The Propriety of Liberty: Persons, Passions, and Judgement in Modern Political Thought* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

Jeanne Morefield, *Covenants without Swords: Idealist Liberalism and the Spirit of Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 24–25.

Duncan Bell and Casper Sylvest, "International Society in Victorian Political Thought: T. H. Green, Herbert Spencer and Henry Sidgwick," in *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 237–65.

Casper Sylvest, *British Liberal Internationalism, 1880-1930: Making Progress?* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

imperialism in general.[972] On the other end of the spectrum, Bradley and Ritchie are argued to occupy a militarist form of imperialism that incorporates certain Darwinian arguments into the frame of Idealists political philosophy. Due to Bradley's lack of interest in international matters from 1900 onwards and Ritchie's death in 1903, this strand of imperialism in British Idealist thought remained as a deviation from the general British Idealist approach to international relations. The "softer" form of imperialism advocated by the younger generation of British Idealists on the contrary continued to be effective until after the outbreak of the Great War. In fact, they perceived an improvement in the way Britain conducted its relations with its colonies at the end of the 19th century. They thought that Britain was no longer approaching the territories it occupied as sources for material gain but as wards trusted to its care for the purpose of 'civilizing' them. It was the duty of the mother country to ensure that its children had the means to achieve the level of civilization enjoyed by European countries and settler colonies. Thus, the imperial crown was not seen as a symbol of power and riches, but as a 'crown of thorns' that entrusted the duty of civilizing peoples from all over the world to the British people.[973] It is important to note that, the younger generation of British Idealists in their defence of a civic form of imperialism was in compliance with the general popular and intellectual sentiment in Britain. Especially the years during the Second Boer War were marked by the rise of jingoism in Britain.[974] The Fabian Society under the guidance of Bernard Shaw supported the imperial agenda as well as the majority of liberal intellectuals and a considerable part of socialists.[975] Even the most ardent critics of the British Empire and the Second Boer War, the New Liberals like Hobhouse and Hobson did not

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[972] Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of the World Order, 1889-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 139.

[973] J. S. Mackenzie, "The Source of Moral Obligation," *International Journal of Ethics* 10, no. 4 (1900): 477.

[974] Stephen M. Miller, "In Support of the 'Imperial Mission'? Volunteering for the South African War, 1899-1902," *The Journal of Military History* 69, no. 3 (July 11, 2005): 695, https://doi.org/10.1353/jmh.2005.0173.

[975] Bernard Porter, *The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism, 1850-2004*, 4th ed (Harlow, Essex, England ; New York: Pearson/Longman, 2004), 201.

engage in a full-blown criticism of imperialism.[976] Thus, the younger generation of British Idealists in their support of civic imperialism and the arguments they supplied for its justification were not deviating from the popular and intellectual presuppositions in Britain at the end of the 19th century. Still, their failure in recognizing the subjects of the British Empire as individuals with a capacity for self-realization signified a paternalistic approach to non-Western peoples. So far as the peoples perceived as 'savages' by the Idealists were taken to be children of humanity whose bestowment with rights was conditional on their compliance with the norms of the Western civilization, their recognition as human beings with basic human rights was postponed to an indefinite future.

This period of 'civic imperialism' in the works of the younger generation of British Idealists reveals a potential danger in the idealistic line of thinking when certain conceptual cornerstones of their work is replaced with a paternalistic mind set. When the moral end of self-realization was equated with a certain form of 'civilization,' the idealist concern for peoples' need for free will in pursuance of the moral end was deemed to be secondary. This was mainly due to the British Idealists' understanding that peoples with 'inferior forms of civilization' lacked the means to pursue the moral end; they were devoid of the capacity to pursue a meaningful moral life or a common good so far as their human capacities were curtailed by the conditions in which they lived. Additionally, this mission to 'civilize' the 'savages' curtailed an equally important attribute of this idealistic line of thinking. The possibility for particular expressions of the human potential either in individuals or by societies were discarded in the pursuance of creating a monolithic civilization which was deemed to be superior. Thus the essential link between the universal end of advancing humanity and enabling particular expressions of human experience was severed. The valuable contributions that could be made by particular communities to the overall human experience were sacrificed in the pursuance of creating a monolithic civilization. That civilization was understood to be the highest that existed in the world at that time and the most secure way to achieve the absolute end of human progress. This imperialist mind-set proved that when essential attributes of British Idealism were

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[976] David Boucher and Andrew Vincent, *A Radical Hegelian: Political and Social Philosophy of Henry Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993), 154.

abandoned in pursuance of an alternative world view such as imperialism, there was a real possibility that not only individuals' but also nations' freedom turned out to be expendable values in the pursuance of an absolute end. Admittedly, this was not a position in keeping with British Idealism as Green put it forward. It was more a deviation from the basic theoretical attributes of Idealism under the influence of the popular and intellectual sentiment in Britain at the beginning of the 20th century. Still, it constitutes a valuable example in terms of revealing the possible pitfalls a British Idealist theory of rights and/or human rights should be aware of.

Like many British intellectuals, the younger generation of British Idealists experienced immense disillusionment with the imperial project with the outbreak of the Great War. Yet, unlike many other British intellectuals, they faced with an almost impossible task of justifying the Germanic roots of their philosophical position without appearing to be supporters of Prussia during the Great War. Especially Hobhouse's attack towards Bosanquet in particular and the Idealist tradition in Britain in general proved to be a matter of concern for the British Idealists. In defence of their school of thought, Muirhead wrote *German Philosophy in Relation to the War,* and just after the end of the Great War Haldane tried to justify his idealistic outlook as well as his political actions with his book *Before the War.*[977] Their attempts to distance themselves from German intellectuals like Treitschke and von Bernhardi while acknowledging their philosophical debt to Kant and Hegel forced them to give up the vocabulary of 'civilization' and the ideal of 'civic imperialism.' They contended that the German intellectuals and the military caste disfigured Kant and Hegel's philosophy into a crude form of materialism. In their attempt to distance themselves from Prussian militarism they designated materialism as the underlying cause of the Great War and recognized imperialism as its political embodiment at the international sphere. Based on this shift in their perception of the empire as a primarily militarist and materialist endeavor that doomed the world, they engaged in self-criticism. The object of their self-criticism was both the British Empire and their previous exaltation of imperialism. Thus Jones wrote in 1914, "I do not think we can claim that, while other nations were entangling one another's ways through conflict of

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[977] J. H. Muirhead, *German Philosophy in Relation to the War* (London: John Murray, 1915).

R. B. Haldane, *Before the War* (London: Cassell And Company, LTD, 1920).

low aims and the clash of their material ambitions, doing and suffering great wrong, our own nation stood aloof in the 'splendid isolation' of innocence."[978] The only way forward from the moral wrongs committed in the previous century was to transform the British Empire into a Commonwealth of independent and equal nations and work towards establishment of a League of Peace. Again, the younger generation of British Idealists were in tune with the general intellectual sentiment in Britain. This fundamental shift in their attitude towards a moral international order enabled them to return to the teachings of Green and transform his theory of rights into an internationalist approach to human rights. Instead of embracing the 'civilizing mission' of the Western people, they re-adopted the end of self-realization as a guiding principle for all nations, which stood in equal and cooperative relations with their counterparts at the international level.

The decade following the end of the Great War was marked by the rise of internationalism in Britain. Former supporters of the imperial project were now defending its transformation into a Commonwealth and there was a boom in the literature on the institutional basis of a League of Nations. While the British Idealists did not engage in the highly technical discussions in regards to international law and organizations, they participated in the internationalist turn of sentiment experienced by the British intellectuals. As they were no longer invested in the civilizing project of the "savages," they looked for an alternative source for international peace and cooperation. Going back to Green's moral and political theory, they designated the universal moral end of self-realization as a shared aspect of all humanity and argued that each well-ordered state was to sustain a social and political order in which every individual had the means to pursue the universal moral end of self-realization. Furthermore, Bosanquet's volume of collected essays *Social and International Ideals,* published in 1917 seemed to be affective in reminding them the vitality of cultural particularity of nations along with the moral universality of humankind.[979] Instead of aiming at a monolithic form of unity in which all nations were to comply with the dictates of the "Western civilization," they perceived cultural diversity as enabling

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[978] Henry Jones, "Why We Are Fighting," *Hibbert Journal* XIII (1915 1914): 55.

[979] Bernard Bosanquet, *Social and International Ideals: Being Studies in Patriotism* (London: Macmillan, 1917).

different and valuable expressions of human potential. They regarded the principles of liberty and fraternity of nations as basic tenets of a stable and cooperative international order. In such an international order each state was to be a self-governing political unity free from the hostile intervention of other states. Only under such conditions each particular expression of human potential through unique and independent nation-states was incorporated into the overall unity and progress of humankind. Still, their endorsement of cultural multiplicity did not amount to total relativism. According to the younger generation of British Idealists a League of Peace had the immense potential to facilitate effective communication and cooperation among nation-states as well as to set minimum standards that were to be maintained by independent states for the well being of their citizens. The underlying rationale was that an internally well-ordered nation would not harbor hostile intentions towards other states and engage only in cooperative relations with others for the advancement of humanity.

In his final book *The Fundamental Problems of Life,* Mackenzie combined the overriding internationalist sentiment of the 19290s with T. H. Green's theory of rights.[980] By designating the universal moral end of self realization as the justificatory reason for the necessity of recognizing a minimum set of human rights in every-nation state he offered a preliminary list of human rights. His list was comprised of the rights to liberty, property, security, education, franchise, employment, maintenance, and leisure. One of the most distinguishing aspects of his list of human rights was his accompanying list of duties. According to Mackenzie recognition of these most fundamental rights were dependent on individuals' willingness to respect these rights in their fellow men. Furthermore, each individual had a moral duty to use his rights in the pursuit of the moral end understood to be his self-realization. So far as the primary duty of ensuring a satisfactory system of rights and duties was entrusted with nation-states, a well functioning international organization such as the League of Nations was perceived to be a valuable instrument for communication and cooperation of states as well as a mechanism for ensuring their compliance. Hetherington's report on the first Conference of the International Labour Organisation offered important

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[980] John Stuart Mackenzie, *Fundamental Problems of Life: An Essay on Citizenship as Pursuit of Values*, Library of Philosophy (London: Allen & Unwin, 1928).

insights into the possibility of reaching international agreements on the matter of rights, especially applying to vulnerable groups such as children in the labour force.[981]

As it has been pointed above, the imperialist period of some of the younger generation of British Idealists points to the possibility that when combined with incompatible forms of reasoning, there is a possibility that idealism would endorse a patriarchal form of government that eschew individual and national freedoms. Yet, the younger generations' post-1914 writings show that this is not an intrinsic feature of British Idealism; on the contrary it is a deviation from their norm. Thus, while not denying that some Idealists' endured an imperialist phase in their long intellectual career, it is not representative of their overall approach to politics and international relations. Focusing on their post-1914 writings gives one the opportunity to have a more comprehensive view of what an 'ideal' international order would look like from the British Idealist perspective. In this scheme, human rights appear to be a central ingredient for a peaceful and cooperative international order and their reflections on the matter offers important insights into contemporary discussions on human rights.

The younger generation of British Idealists' internationalist approach to human rights contributes to contemporary discussions by offering a middle-ground between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism as the sphere of operation for human rights. While there appears to be contemporary visions for a cosmopolitan political order that would sustain a cosmopolitan system of human rights, such a project is mostly received with a high level of skepticism. Andrew Linklater, for instance, argues for a cosmopolitan form of citizenship that rejects "the statists' argument that citizenship properly so-called, can only have meaning within the confines of the bounded sovereign state."[982] According to Linklater the project of cosmopolitan citizenship would challenge the idea that "the interests of fellow citizens necessarily take priority over duties for eliciting their support for global political institutions and

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[981] H. J. W. Hetherington, *International Labour Legislation* (London: Methuen & Co. LTD., 1920).

[982] Andrew Linklater, "Cosmopolitan Citizenship," in *Cosmopolitan Citizenship*, ed. Kimberly Hutchings and Roland Dannreuther (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, London: Macmillan Press LTD, 1999), 49.

sentiments."[983] Others however note that a truly political project of cosmopolitanism that aims at world governance or the "visions of a doctrinally united global society" are long gone.[984] While the project of the European Union constitutes an encouraging prospect for some theorists of cosmopolitan citizenship and world governance, others argue, "one does not become a cosmopolitan citizen because the state one belongs to is subject to a body of international law."[985] While such an understanding of cosmopolitan citizenship does not qualify the basic tenets of citizenship according to David Miller, it also runs the risk of undercutting "the basis of citizenship proper."[986] It would be fair to say, the cosmopolitan project faces increasing criticism although there is an apparent globalization trend observable today:

> The various cosmopolitan schemas for global transformation currently doing the rounds, whether 'thick' or 'thin', Westphalian or post-Westphalian, are being resisted because they are either seen to be flying in the face of trans-historical international political realities, or the value-amalgam legitimating them should be seen as essentially contested… Although globalization may appear to facilitate the emergence of cosmopolitan global regimes of say, law enforcement or economic regulation, because of their overwhelmingly neoliberal character and the ideological commonalities between the states likely to be pre-eminent within them, their costs and benefits, critics argue, will flow in very particular directions. [987]

On the other end of the spectrum, the communitarian challenge to liberalism was born as a reaction to the neo-liberalism of the 1980's. According to Newman and De Zoysa, communitarian challenge to liberalism establishes itself against the "emphasis

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[983] Linklater, 36.

[984] Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government: Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Political Thought* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, London: Macmillan Press LTD, 1996), 209.

[985] David Miller, "Bounded Citizenship," in *Cosmopolitan Citizenship* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, London: Macmillan Press LTD, 1999), 74.

[986] Miller, 79.

[987] Peter Lawler, "The Good State: In Praise of 'Classical 'Internationalism," *Review of International Studies* 31, no. 3 (2005): 432.

on individualism and freedom of choice that had arisen since the rose of the Reagan-Thatcher policies in the 1980's."[988] Against the atomized individual that constituted the basis of the liberal position, communitarians chose to emphasize the collective societal roots of the individual and the civic moral order that supplies individuals with a moral compass, with "a set of moral values, that guides people toward what is decent and encourages them to avoid that which is not."[989] At least some of the proponents of the communitarian position perceive an insurmountable contradiction between 'politics of rights' that prevails in the contemporary order of human rights and a 'politics of the common good' that the communitarians defend.[990]  Berger's account of human rights clearly reflects such a position:

> It [human rights/dignity] pertains to the self as such, to the individual regardless of his position in society. This becomes very clear in the classic formulations of human rights, from the Preamble to the Declaration of Independence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. These rights always pertain to the individual 'irrespective of race, colour or creed' –or indeed, of sex, age, physical condition or any conceivable social status. There is an implicit sociology and an implicit anthropology here. The implicit sociology views all biological and historical differentiations among men as either downright unreal or essentially irrelevant. The implicit anthropology locates the real self over and beyond all these differentiations.[991]

From the communitarian perspective human rights are taken to be an "abstractly constituted list" that stands aloof of the social, cultural, and personal specifities of

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[988] Otto Newman and Richard De Zoysa, "Communitarianism: The New Panacea?," *Sociological Perspectives* 40, no. 4 (December 1997): 628, https://doi.org/10.2307/1389466.

[989] Amitai Etzioni, *The Spirit of Community* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1993), 24.

[990] Michael J. Sandel, ed., *Liberalism and Its Critics*, Readings in Social and Political Theory (New York: New York University Press, 1984), 6.

[991] Peter Berger, "On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honour," in *Liberalism and Its Critics*, ed. Michael Sandel (New York: New York University Press, 1984), 153.

individuals whose very identity are constituted by the community they live in.[992] Thus, the matter of rights are mostly equated with civic rights that are recognized by nation states and do not have any implications at the international sphere.

Yet, from 2000's onwards, the dichotomy between communitarianism and cosmopolitanism has started to attract criticism, mostly because it has been perceived as a 'false dichotomy' operating on undue simplifications that does not do justice to either communitarian or cosmopolitan concerns. In this light, for example, David Morrice asks, "are individuals said to be wholly constituted, or only partially shaped by their respective communities? Does not an individual have to exist before or she can be shaped? If so, this pre-existing individual may be possessed of natural rights or human needs which transcend all political boundaries, and which should be recognised, protected and fulfilled by all political communities."[993] As an alternative to this reductionist dichotomy, Morrice offers an alternative that is based on 'morality of states position.'[994] Similarly, Lawler offers a third way solution to the ongoing intellectual conflict between communitarianism and cosmopolitanism. According to Lawler, this middle-way position is called internationalism, which "is centred on the seemingly modest, but still demanding idea of the state as a cosmopolitan-minded agent… or a 'local agent of a world common good.'"[995] The match between Lawler's 'classical model of internationalism' and the younger generation of British Idealists' approach to international relations and human rights in the post-Great War period is quite striking. It is one of the contentions of this study that this historical approach to the subject matter of human rights may constitute an example of the third way approach Lawler perceives to be a solution to the communitarian-cosmopolitan dichotomy.

Without delving into the details of the British Idealists' internationalist position that has been discussed at length throughout this dissertation, it would suffice to attract

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[992] Henry Tam, *Communitarianism: A New Agenda for Politics and Citizenship*, 1. publ (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), 224.

[993] David Morrice, "The Liberal-Communitarian Debate in Contemporary Political Philosophy and Its Significance for International Relations," *Review of International Studies* 26, no. 2 (2000): 242.

[994] Morrice, 246.

[995] Lawler, "The Good State," 433.

attention to certain aspects of this position that makes it 'internationalist' instead of a cosmopolitan or communitarian one. First and foremost, the idealist approach to human rights takes rights as powers that are recognized and maintained by specific communities. This is mostly observable in the 'rights recognition' aspect of their approach, which acknowledges that for rights to be truly operative communities, and/or the states as their political embodiments must recognize individuals' claims to certain rights. Without such recognition rights remain as moral claims to certain powers that lack the social/political recognition that is essential for their maintenance. While such claims are not valueless or none-existent, they cannot practically operate as rights proper. Furthermore, the idealist position takes rights as the products of the outcomes of a historical process of ethical progress. While, the extent and scope of rights are expected to be limited in pre-modern societies, human history is understood to be the process of a continually growing awareness as to the worth of every human being and their entitlement to certain rights. Thus, it is acknowledged that specific codifications of rights naturally vary from society to society. This is an outcome of not only societies' level of ethical development but also of the specific natural and historical circumstances in which each society comes to recognize certain rights as necessary powers for individuals. Last but not least, the rights claim and rights recognition processes in every society is understood to be a political process with republican implications. Within the British Idealist political theory, individuals are constituted as citizens who are equal participants in the decision making process in regards to which rights and duties are contributive to the common good of their society. In that light, for instance, the younger generation of British Idealists insists on the necessity of constituting each society in the Kantian 'republican' form so that individuals' can become active contributors to the codification of the rights and duties they enjoy within their society. When perceived as such, British Idealists' approach to human rights complies with the sensibilities of the modern communitarians.

Yet, the British Idealists also recognizes a universal human nature that constitutes the basis of their moral and political theory. They acknowledge in every human individual the potential for rationality, morality, and sociability. They maintain that it is these universal attributes of the human kind that makes ethical life possible that prevails to varying extent in every known human society. Most importantly, they argue that in each society exists the moral awareness that for individuals to realize

their truly human potentials they must be endowed with certain powers. These powers that enable individuals to pursue the moral end of self-realization without undue constraint are called rights. While the scope of the recognized rights varies from society to society, British Idealists argue for the necessity of the recognition of at least minimum rights for the maintenance of any ethical society. For Green these minimum rights are constituted of rights to free life, property, and family, by 1920s Mackenzie offers a more comprehensive list that includes rights to franchise, education, maintenance, occupation, and leisure. The underlying justification for the universality of these rights are established with a reference to the end they serve which is the universal moral end of self-realization. Yet, the moral end of self-realization is substantiated with reference to the universal human nature that distinguishes human beings from 'lower orders of animals.' The truly human attributes of reasonableness, morality and sociability substantiate the universal moral end of self-realization irrespective of the race, nationality, and religion of individuals. From, this perspective, the British Idealist position seems closer to the cosmopolitan approach to human rights.

The British Idealists brought these two spheres of morality: the nation states with their established ethical orders, and the universal morality, through their support for international organizations as spheres of communication and cooperation. While, their belief in the commensurability of particular ethical orders were justified with reference to the 'metaphysics of self-realization,' it did not aim for a homogeneous ethical order world wide. On the contrary, human rights were construed as a set of minimal powers without which individuals in any society did not have a reasonable chance for self-realization. Yet, human rights' specific codification and maintenance within nation-states were argued to be dependent on the particular conditions that prevailed in these communities and were mostly left to the states as political embodiments of truly 'republican' nations. The scope they left for the particular adaptations of human rights within nation-states were most obvious in the emphasis they put on the ideal of self-determination for every nation in the post-Great War period. They condoned foreign intervention only in extremely rare conditions when citizens of a tyrannous state lacked all the means of resistance. In an international order that was construed by equal nation-states, human rights were understood to be moral criterions for the assessment of states' fulfillment of its duties towards its

citizens. As these rights were claimed and recognized with reference to a universal end, certain basic rights were expected to be recognized by each and every republican form of government. While the list of rights by which all states were expected to abide by were open to change and improvement, the moral end of self-realization was taken as a universal constant. Thus, the seemingly controversial positions of communitarianism and cosmopolitanism were circumvented by the British Idealists' approach to human rights. Arguably, their position seems too good to be true.

The realist challenge to any position that prescribes a certain level of morality to international relations can find ample material to argue for the opposing view that international sphere is in a perpetual 'state of nature.' States' singular interest in their material wealth or military power in opposition to the interests of other states can be substantiated with numerous examples. Yet, it is also possible to find, in line with the British Idealist argument that when states are true republics with a healthy form of patriotism, the international sphere can be constructed as a peaceful and cooperative arena that can operate with reference to universal moral concerns. While this proves to be an outcome that requires constant effort on the part of the states as well as their citizens, it is not a utopian position. The relative success of the United Nations in creating a sphere of communication for nation-states on the matter of human rights can be deduced from the high levels of acceptance among states of the Declarations on Human Rights.[996] While the level of compliance with the terms of declarations varies from country to country, the high number of signatories shows that there exists an ideal of international cooperation in pursuance of the betterment of human condition in the persons of individuals regardless of their race, nationality, and religious creed. In line with the British Idealists, it seems more productive to focus on the possible ways of improving international cooperation as well as compliance with already existing human rights norms, instead of devaluing the ideal of human rights altogether based on its failures. When human rights are understood as ideals that are in the process of realization, individuals' and states' duty to contribute to the process becomes more apparent. In his 1919 book, *Some Suggestions on Ethics,* Bosanquet reflects on the future of international relations with such sentiment:

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[996] Michael J. Perry, "Are Human Rights Universal? The Relativist Challenge and Related Matters," *Human Rights Quarterly* 19, no. 3 (1997): 481.

You do not want mere "moral" motives, *i.e.* desires for peace and happiness; you want their adequate development into ideas which "have hands and feet."… The more careful study which is now being devoted to the needs of other countries, and the deep-lying conditions of a peaceful atmosphere, is changing the situation, and bringing with it some promise of a good will adequately furnished for the promotion of peace.[997]

Human rights today, turn out to be such an idea whose hands and feet are the people who continually strive towards its realization. So far as nation-states retains their primacy in world politics and citizens are dependent for the recognition and maintenance of their rights on their respective states, an international order that enables communication among peaceful and cooperative states constitutes the best possibility for the further advancement of universal human rights.

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[997] Bernard Bosanquet, *Some Suggestions on Ethics*, ed. William Sweet, vol. 16 (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1999), 144.

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