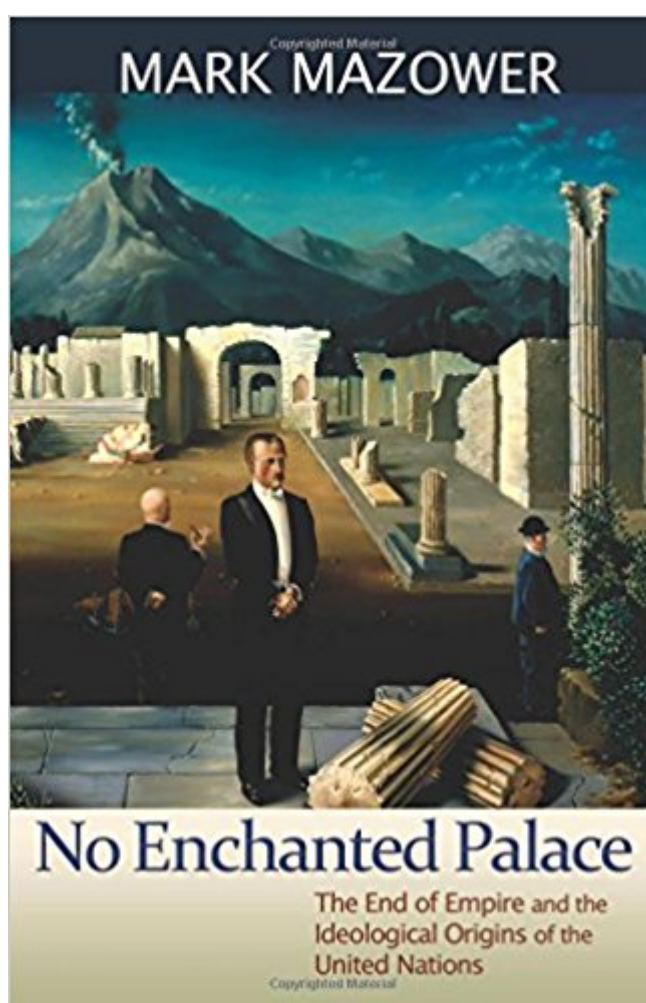


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No Enchanted Palace: The End Of Empire And The Ideological Origins Of The United Nations (The Lawrence Stone Lectures)



Synopsis

No Enchanted Palace traces the origins and early development of the United Nations, one of the most influential yet perhaps least understood organizations active in the world today. Acclaimed historian Mark Mazower forces us to set aside the popular myth that the UN miraculously rose from the ashes of World War II as the guardian of a new and peaceful global order, offering instead a strikingly original interpretation of the UN's ideological roots, early history, and changing role in world affairs. Mazower brings the founding of the UN brilliantly to life. He shows how the UN's creators envisioned a world organization that would protect the interests of empire, yet how this imperial vision was decisively reshaped by the postwar reaffirmation of national sovereignty and the unanticipated rise of India and other former colonial powers. This is a story told through the clash of personalities, such as South African statesman Jan Smuts, who saw in the UN a means to protect the old imperial and racial order; Raphael Lemkin and Joseph Schechtman, Jewish intellectuals at odds over how the UN should combat genocide and other atrocities; and Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, who helped transform the UN from an instrument of empire into a forum for ending it. A much-needed historical reappraisal of the early development of this vital world institution, No Enchanted Palace reveals how the UN outgrew its origins and has exhibited an extraordinary flexibility that has enabled it to endure to the present day.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"[Mazower] has identified a gigantic contradiction in the United Nations' very DNA that may explain how the ambitious, well-intentioned body evolved into Mess-on-East River."--Marc Tracy, New York Times Book Review

"One of the most distinguished historians of his generation."--New York Review of Books

"In tracing the intellectual and ideological threads that went into the creation of both organizations, Mazower's main theme is the importance of British imperial tradition and policy."--Brian Urquhart, New York Review of Books

"The finest historian of twentieth-century Europe."--Jonathan Keates, Times Literary Supplement

"Mark Mazower sets out to challenge two notions: first, that the UN's creation in 1945 was uncontaminated by association with the League; and second, that it was above all an American affair. . . . This book offers interesting glimpses of the UN's origins."--Adam Roberts, Times Literary Supplement

"Provocative. . . . Mazower argues that the United Nations, like the League of Nations before it, did not emerge from a pristine liberal vision of universal rights."--G. John Ikenberry, Foreign Affairs

"Mazower offers a scholarly review of the origins of the UN and a timely reminder that those origins need not shape its future. The UN should not be judged for what it is not."--Harvery Morris, Financial Times

"Mark Mazower warns in his elegantly written intellectual history of the organization, the U.N. is not--and has never been--quite what it seems. In their rush to portray liberal internationalism as the height of human achievement, too many historians have forgotten what Mazower regards as the real ideological impulse behind the U.N.'s creation: preservation of the British Empire and white rule over Europe's colonial possessions."--Sasha Polakow-Suransky, American Prospect

"A slim yet provocative volume that reveals the UN's origins in colonial imperialism."--Anna Mundy, Boston Globe

"Mark Mazower's stimulating and insightful book casts new light on the organization's ideological prehistory, and in the process offers a corrective to previous, somewhat uncritical accounts of the UN's formation. . . . This book is an illuminating contribution to the debate about the United Nations."--Kirsten Sellars, International Affairs

"Historian Mark Mazower takes a whack at the prevailing perception of the U.N.'s founding fathers as a band of farsighted idealists seeking to mold a truly universal institution out of the ruins of the World War II. . . . Mazower examines the darker side of the U.N.'s creation, highlighting a handful of influential figures who participated in drafting the U.N. Charter."--Colum Lynch, Foreign Policy

"No Enchanted Palace is essentially an exercise in demystification, which aims to strip the UN of the halo of piety that surrounds it. But it is also a work of historical investigation, and Mazower brings to light many neglected details of the UN's formation and development."--John Gray, Harper's Magazine

"An important book and a good example of the way history can inform current debates."--Bernard Porter, History Today

"Opens some novel perspectives. . . . Mazower offers a disturbing picture of the ambiguous ideological foundations of

this great sacred cow of post-war international institutions."--Sunil Khilnani, *Outlook India*"In *No Enchanted Palace*, his fascinating and revealing study of the intellectual origins of the United Nations, Mark Mazower, a British historian now teaching at Columbia University in New York, focuses on the ideas and ideologies that shaped the international body before and during its inception."--Adam Lebor, *Jewish Chronicle*"Mazower is a historian of rare penetration who writes with a verve and sparkle seldom met in members of his profession. *No Enchanted Palace* is an original contribution to historical understanding which brilliantly charts the ideological origins of the United Nations. The book is a powerful blast against utopianism and unrealistic expectations."--Vernon Bogdanor, *Spectator*"Well written and documented."--*Choice*"Mazower demonstrates that there is more than one side to the story of the creation of the UN, and does so in a highly readable style. This is a sophisticated work of intellectual history with implications for international institutional law. . . . Mazower's work provides a solid and intellectually stimulating basis for trying to re-think this fundamental starting point."--Jan Klabbers, *Global Law Books*"This work should interest not only political scientists and historians, but anyone who is concerned about the UN's fate."--Pamela A. Jordan, *Canadian Journal of History*"Mazower's thesis serves to illuminate enduring questions and recent debates concerning the role of the UN. . . . Perhaps most importantly, Mazower provides a sound case for dismissing those voices within contemporary accounts that call for the UN to return to its lofty origins."--James Upcher, *Oxonian Review*"*No Enchanted Palace* adds greatly to our understanding of the UN's intellectual foundations."--*Survival*"This is a sophisticated work of intellectual history with implications for international institutional law. Mazower forces the discipline to rethink one of the premises on which the paradigmatic theory of functionalism rests. . . . Mazower's work provides a solid and intellectually stimulating basis for trying to re-think this fundamental starting point."--Jan Klabbers, *European Journal of International Law*"*No Enchanted Palace* is a model of the new international history. Forceful and engaged, it will likely provoke a wide range of readers. . . . Short, readable, and challenging, *No Enchanted Palace* would make an ideal book for courses on internationalism, empire, global politics, and human rights."--J. P. Daughton, *H-Net Reviews*"Mark Mazower is one of the most original and interesting historians at work on Europe's modern history. In this book, he turns his attention to the broader theme of world order, and to the various ways in which it was being reimagined at the moment when the United Nations was created in 1945. The result is a lucid, perceptive, and indispensable study."--John Darwin, *American Historical Review*

"This is a sprawling tale told with great energy, verve, and insight. Mazower offers an original and

disturbing picture of the ideological foundations of the great sacred cow of postwar international institutions. No Enchanted Palace will be a much discussed volume in what is likely to be a continuing debate over the future of the United Nations."--Sunil Khilnani, author of *The Idea of India*"This is a superb, highly readable account of the ideas and some of the events that informed the creation and early history of the United Nations. No Enchanted Palace is an engaging and penetrating work, and a timely reminder of the need to think historically about the UN and its place in world affairs."--Peter Wilson, London School of Economics and Political Science

To most people the United Nations was created after World War II to provide an international organization that would help prevent armed conflicts throughout the world. After suffering through two world wars and the failure of the League of Nations, the United Nations was to provide the vehicle to prevent these catastrophes from happening again. The above scenario describes the so-called sanitized version of the forming of the United Nations. What Mazower brings to the table is something very different. The Author goes into the imperialistic ways of the League of Nations with an in depth look at the thoughts and politics of Jan Smuts whose perception of an international organization would resemble the likes of the British Commonwealth. In essence the victors of World War I, along with the demands of The Treaty of Versailles created the League of Nations which was nothing more than a vehicle to dictate terms to the vanquished. In essence the very European imperialistic attitudes prevailing in the League of Nations caused its failure. It was ineffective. Mazower goes into depth on the political thoughts and actions of Alfred Zimmern whose interests also included Commonwealth ideas which still leaned toward European imperialism. When the United Nations finally came to fruition the controlling old remnants of empire still were prevalent with the Security Council commanding the most power. The five permanent members holding veto power were the main victors of World War II. Mazower continues his thesis of the death of all European empires with the fall of Nazism as explained in his book "*Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe*". The Author explains that politicians from the British Commonwealth wanted to extend the remnants of the old British Empire through the inner workings of the United Nations. This book is groundbreaking and provides all historians with a much needed eye opener. Mazower explains why the United Nations never did become that utopia it was meant to be. The book shows the Author's expertise and knowledge of 20th Century Europe. No one is better. Mazower is the eminent scholar in this area, bar none. Excellent read offering a new perspective of an area of history not really explored before. 7 Stars!! No Problem!!!

Another interesting book from Mark Mazower. This short book is essentially a set of lectures given by Mazower on origins of the UN. Mazower argues that much discussion of the UN is marred by anachronistic concepts of its founding purposes. Mazower stresses the continuity of the UN with the League of Nations. He highlights also the League's role, as developed by the British and the South African politician Field Marshal Smuts, in maintaining colonial empires. The League framework was apparently driven to a large extent by a perceived need to maintain a strongly racially demarcated world. The League also inherited some preoccupation with international law and within Europe, a role in maintaining minority rights. The UN differed in more explicitly incorporating great power dominance and after the experience of the 30s and WWII, largely abandoned minority rights in favor of emphasizing nation-states and population transfers. There is an interesting discussion of how some Jewish intellectuals, including the anti-genocide activist Raphael Lemkin, fit into this process. In a rather ironic process, as the UN de-emphasized minority rights and exalted national sovereignty, a renewed emphasis on individual human rights emerged as a side-product. In a similar ironic process, the UN emerged as a forum for de-colonialization, this time driven to some extent by conflicts within the former British colonies of South Africa and India. This is far from a systematic work but insightful and a strong reminder of the need to carefully examine the real history of important institutions.

Manzower traces the origins of the UN Charter signed in 1945 and the ways in which it succeeds, and more often fails, to live up to our expectations for this international organization. Our hindsight view of the UN's original mission might be altruistic, even Utopian, but as the motives of the primary players are revealed we get the unsanitized reality behind the UN's first decades. The charter was a document of its time, drafted as an optimistic response to the devastating aftermath from a second World War. However, it was more or less a continuation of the failed League of Nations, and created to secure the power of the ruling countries and keep imperialism alive and well. The charter's European focus, led by Anglophile Jan Smuts, who dreamed of whites settling and improving Africa, completely--one might say intentionally--ignored the rights of minorities; it was in their best interest to be led by those who knew better. The chapter dealing with the resettlement of displaced European Jews in the Middle East, thus displacing Arabs and causing tensions that remain today, was the most fascinating section in light of current events. Luckily the UN has changed with the times, and though it may not be a perfect organization, the charter did leave the door open for smaller countries with less powerful voices, who have recently become more visible.

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