



Before BISA: the British Coordinating Committee for International Studies, S.H. Bailey, and the Bailey Conferences

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Abstract

The story of how International Relations in Britain was organised before the setting up of BISA in 1975 has been largely forgotten. This paper recovers that history and shows that it links directly back to the interwar years, when the British Coordinating Committee for International Studies was set up as part of the League of Nations-linked International Studies Conferences. S.H. Bailey, a long-forgotten junior scholar at the LSE, almost single-handedly pioneered what was after 1945 to become the norm of national academic associations and conferences for IR.

Keywords S.H. Bailey · British Coordinating Committee for International Studies · British International Studies Association · International Studies Conference · Susan Strange

In the institutional history of International Relations (IR) as a discipline, the story of the first chairs, departments, and think tanks founded right after the First World War is well known and provides the beginning of a pattern that extended directly into the great expansion of IR after 1945. Also well known, though more contested, is the discipline's intellectual evolution from the interwar period to the present in terms of various 'great debates', starting with the alleged one between realism and idealism in the 1930s. Added to this more recently has been awareness of the significant international institutionalisation of IR during the interwar years by the League of Nations-linked International Studies Conference, and in a different way by the Institute of Pacific Relations (Hooper 1988; Long 2006; Riemans 2008, 2011; Kuru 2017; Roberts 2018). Within all this, the story of academic associations for International Relations/Studies, both national and regional, is seen as something that did not begin until the 1950s: in the USA (1959), Japan (1956), and South Korea (1956)

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(Acharya and Buzan 2019, pp. 143–148, 219–222). Within that, it is a bit of a puzzle that despite Britain having been a leading light in the development of IR since 1919, the British International Studies Association (BISA) formed relatively late (1975).

This paper solves the British puzzle by unearthing the largely forgotten story of a continuous national organisation of IR that stretches back to 1928, and links directly to the founding of BISA in 1974–1975. British IR was in fact nationally organised almost from its formal beginning, with two of its best-known institutions—the IR Department at the LSE, and the think tank Chatham House—centrally involved in the process. In recovering this story, the paper raises the question of whether similar stories exist elsewhere, particularly in the USA, France, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, and Japan.

For the British story, it is acknowledged, usually in passing, that BISA somehow grew out something called the Bailey Conferences in 1974–1975, but beyond that little is said. Charles Manning (1962, p. 354) notes that the British Coordinating Committee for International Studies organised ‘occasional Conferences’ at the LSE just for British IR people. Fred Northedge (2003, p. 14) adds that the originator and organiser behind these British meetings was S.H. Bailey, a colleague of Manning’s at the LSE. The BISA website puts it as follows:

British International Studies Association (BISA) was proposed by the British Coordinating Committee for International Studies (BCCIS) in 1973, following much debate and discussion about creating a multi disciplinary forum for the study of international affairs. In January 1974 an inaugural meeting was held at the 14th Bailey Conference on International Studies at the University of Surrey, and at that time, a draft interim constitution was agreed. The first, and an interim executive committee was: Professor A Buchan Chairman, RJ Jones Secretary, Susan Strange Treasurer, Professor PA Reynolds, Professor G Goodwin, Professor D Wightman, Dr CM Mason, Dr T Taylor, Professor A James and Professor J Spence. The Interim Committee proposed that BISA should serve the needs, and reflect the interests, of those engaged in research and teaching of international studies at advanced levels. The following members were Co-opted onto the committee at the first Executive committee meeting 23rd January 1974 Professor I MacGibbon, Professor Colin Cherry, Professor Dilks, Dr M Nicholson and P Oppenheimer. The BISA Foundation Conference was entitled “The New Dimensions of Foreign Policy”, and was held at Lincoln College, Oxford. On 2nd January 1975 the first AGM was held and that was the moment at which BISA was formally founded.¹

There seems to be no available story of either the BCCIS or the Bailey Conferences that preceded BISA. Discussion of the interwar period organisation of British IR has been mainly focused on the International Studies Conference (ISC) and has not attempted to link the organisation of British IR in the interwar years to post-1945 developments (e.g. Long 2006; Riemens 2008, 2011). In what follows, I sketch out

¹ <https://www.bisa.ac.uk/index.php/history-of-bisa> (Accessed 16 January 2019)



this story as a way of providing depth and background to the story of organised IR in Britain. I do not go deeply into either the academic debates, or, with one exception, the characters, involved in this story, though the archival material referred to would support anyone wanting to do so.² Nor do I look in much detail at the agendas and subjects of the various conferences, or at the teaching of IR in the UK, though again the archival material would support such research. Indeed, a book could, and perhaps should, be written telling the whole story of IR in Britain. My purpose here, however, is just to tell the institutional story and show that IR in Britain was organised and active from 1928 and that this connects directly to the founding of BISA. Britain was not a late starter in 1975, but in the game right from the beginning.

The International Studies Conference and the British Coordinating Committee for International Studies During the Interwar Years

This story begins with the setting up of the ISC in 1928 under the auspices of the Paris-based League of Nations International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) (Olson and Groom 1991, pp. 70–91; Long 2006; Riemens 2008, pp. 7–8, 2011, 916–20).³ Long (2006, p. 604) suggests that the ISC was originally ‘formed on the prompting of’ German and French institutes (see also International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation 1937, pp. 12–16). There was nevertheless British participation at the first ISC in Berlin in 1928: F.B. Bourdillon and A.J. Toynbee represented LSE and Chatham House, and Alfred Zimmermann was also there, representing the Geneva School of International Studies.⁴ As Long (2006, p. 604) notes: the ISC was ‘a loose aggregate of national coordinating committees’, of which the BCCIS was one, with people from the LSE and Chatham House taking the lead (Northedge 2003, p. 14). Not surprisingly, the ISC was heavily concerned to define the scope and content of the still very new subject labelled International Relations/Studies and to promote the teaching and development of it, as a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for an informed public opinion to support the more ordered international society envisaged by the League of Nations. As well as this, again not surprisingly, the ISC also addressed some of the dominant policy issues of the day.

The ISC held meetings annually from 1928 to 1939 (1928 in Berlin, 1929 in London [LSE], 1930 in Paris, 1931 in Copenhagen, 1932 in Milan, 1933 in London, 1934 in Paris, 1935 in London, 1936 in Madrid, 1937 again in Paris, 1938 in Prague, 1939 in Bergen⁵, with three post-war meetings in 1946, 1949, and 1950. Initially in

² On some of the academic debates at the time, see Kristensen (2019).

³ The ISC was originally called the Conference of Institutions for the Scientific Study of International Relations, which gives an accurate flavour of its concerns and proceedings. The name was simplified to ISC in 1933, and I use the shorter form throughout this paper for simplicity.

The IIIC was generated by the Assembly at the League of Nations in 1921–1922, but only established in 1925 with the financial support of the French government (Bailey 1938, pp. 6–9).

⁴ I am grateful to Michael Riemens for this information.

⁵ Because of the war, there was no British participation at the 12th ISC in Bergen (BCCIS 10/1e1 1938–40).



1928 there were representatives from only seven countries, but by 1937 there were 17 countries represented, showing how the ISC itself helped to promote the organised study of IR in a widening circle of countries (Bailey 1938, pp. 22–3). Formal participation in the ISC required the formation of a national coordinating committee, and this was also true of the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR). The ISC was shut down in 1954 by UNESCO, which, along with its American sponsors, preferred the newly established International Political Science Association (Manning 1962, pp. 355–67; Long 2006, pp. 607, 612).

The BCCIS appears to have been founded as a response to the call from the 1926 International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) of the League of Nations for the setting up of national coordinating committees on international studies.⁶ BCCIS met first in December 1928, after the Berlin ISC, as a joint committee of the LSE and Chatham House to prepare for the 1929 ISC in London. A second meeting in January 1929 and a third in March 1929 decide to establish a standing body and call it the BCCIS (which was the standard form of title for national bodies affiliated with the ISC). From the beginning, the Committee was a network of university IR departments and IR think tanks, consisting of three representatives each from the IR Department at LSE and from Chatham House, plus the professors of IR at Aberystwyth (Webster) and Oxford (Zimmern) (Porter, personal papers: BCCIS Report 1930–1931 to the Copenhagen ISC). The main business of the BCCIS was preparing for the annual meetings of the ISC. This was a lot of work. Not only was the BCCIS one of the major players within the ISC, but also it acted as host to three ISCs (1929, 1933, 1935). In its 11 years of functioning before the war, the BCCIS met on average more than four times a year, its final, 48th, interwar meeting being in January 1940. Once the war got underway, the BCCIS suspended its work, resuming with its 49th meeting in November 1945.⁷ Its immediate post-1945 focus was on reviving the ISC within the new UNESCO framework. This had some initial success, but by 1954 it was clear that the ISC had lost support, especially in the USA, and was going to be wound up. By eliminating its primary function, this created something of an existential crisis for the BCCIS. However, by that time, the British-based Bailey Conferences were already well established as an activity of the BCCIS, and at its 67th meeting in May 1954, it began to move towards staying in business by making that its principal activity (BCCIS 10/1hh, 1955). Thereafter, with a short gap in the mid-1950s, it met about once a year, having its 82nd, and probably last, meeting in January 1974.

The story of the Bailey Conferences goes back to the early years of the BCCIS. The ISC was concerned not only with defining the scope, content, and methods of IR as an independent subject area, but also with how it was taught in universities, and how to promote its development as an autonomous subject within academic curricula. The university teaching (and research) of IR was a regular topic at most ISCs

⁶ 'See LNA Geneva, ICIC, Minutes of the Tenth Session [C.533.M.160.1928.XII.], 83. I am grateful to Michael Riemens for this information.

⁷ Its component parts continued to operate during the war, with Chatham House playing a notable part in the British war effort.



and was the main theme of the Prague ISC in 1938 (BCCIS 10/1d 1936–1937; Riemans, 2008, pp. 9–11). Then, as to some extent still, there was a lot of debate about whether to construct IR as a wide, multidisciplinary, subject (International Studies), or as a narrow sub-discipline (International/World Politics). Thinking hard about the nature of IR was thus a regular part of the preparatory work that the BCCIS had to do for the annual ISCs.

A key figure in the institutional development of British IR was S.(Stanley) H. Bailey. After graduating from Cambridge with a first in 1926, Bailey was hired into the IR Department at LSE in 1927, working with Charles Manning. According to all accounts, he was energetic, enthusiastic, personable, honest, hard-working, and a good organiser. At university, he had been a notably effective leader of the League of Nations Union, and at LSE, he rose quickly in the ranks from Assistant to full Lecturer.⁸ He had a passionate interest in spreading education about IR to all levels of education in Britain (secondary schools, adult and workers colleges, and universities) and abroad. Like many others at the time, he believed that internationalist education was a vital key to the informed public opinion that was necessary both to making the more peaceful world promised by the League of Nations and to countering the insidious effects of extreme nationalism. This belief was strongly reflected in his three books (Bailey 1932, 1933, 1938), all of which were closely linked to his work for the BCCIS and the ISC. As he noted: ‘the present economic and political crisis’ and the work of the League of Nations Union, ‘has done much to stimulate interest in International Affairs’ (Bailey 1933: 68).

Amongst his many other activities, Bailey became a secretary of the BCCIS at its 6th meeting in January 1932 (BCCIS 10/1a 1928–1933) and immediately took up the cause of IR education and made it his own. Already in March 1932, at the 7th BCCIS meeting, he proposed a British meeting of teachers of IR, and by the 8th meeting in June, he was actively preparing a survey of the teaching of IR in Britain, which became his 1933 book (BCCIS 10/1a 1928–1933). Indeed, Bailey’s 1933 book *International Studies in Great Britain* was commissioned by the 1932 ISC as one of several national studies (Bailey/8). At the 9th BCCIS meeting in October 1932, Bailey submitted a memo (Appendix B, pp. 156–59 of BCCIS 10/1 1928–1933) on promoting the study of IR in Britain. In this, he recommended a subgroup of BCCIS to pursue this idea, and his framing was not just universities, but his whole concern with IR at all educational levels, using all available media including gramophone, radio, and movies (BCCIS 10/1a 1928–1933; Bailey 1933, 1938). At its 10th meeting in December 1932, the BCCIS set up a subcommittee of Bailey, Alfred Zimmern, Arnold Toynbee, and C.K. Webster to take forward the British IR initiative. This subcommittee met in January 1933 and decided to convene an all-British meeting to discuss how to promote IR in Britain. This idea was discussed and approved at the 11th and 12th BCCIS meetings in March and June 1933. Given the nature of the times, there was a strong concern about the need to be ‘scientific’

⁸ On Bailey’s character, and excellent standing with his colleagues, see the various letters of recommendation for him in: LSE/Staff Files/Bailey Stanley Hartnell.



and not propagandistic and to give a clear sense of IR as a subject (BCCIS 10/1a 1928–1933).

The first meeting of what was much later to become known as the ‘Bailey Conference’ was on the theme of ‘International Studies in Britain’ (Bailey 1938: 142) and had his 1933 book as its basis. The conference took place at the LSE on 23 June 1933, with 31 people attending including Charles Manning and Arnold Toynbee. The main focus of the meeting was on extending the teaching of IR in universities and schools and expanding the supply of suitable materials for teaching IR (BCCIS 10/1b 1933–1934). This conference was modestly reported as a success to the BCCIS 14th meeting in July 1933 and triggered a long discussion about how to follow-on from this initiative (BCCIS 10/1b 1933–1934). Bailey was away in the USA for a year during 1933–1934 with a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship. He made a very good impression there, and, amongst other things, laid the groundwork for his 1938 book.⁹ During his absence, the BCCIS seemed to drag its feet over whether and how to take responsibility for this new mission of promoting IR as a field of study in Britain. By October 1934, at the 21st BCCIS, Bailey was back and picking up the threads of various discussions about IR education and teaching that had taken place in his absence (BCCIS 10/1b 1933–1934).

For the next several years, there was no repeat of this first British IR conference. Bailey’s activity was partly at the ISC level, for which he was preparing the big international survey of IR teaching that became his 1938 book. He continued his involvement with promoting the teaching of IR in schools, but the BCCIS was cool on this idea, preferring to focus mainly on IR at the university level. By 1937, looking towards the Prague ISC, he had become the BCCIS representative on the university teaching of IR. This was the main ISC theme for its 1938 Conference, and Bailey was given considerable autonomy in representing the BCCIS (BCCIS 10/1d 1936–1937).

Alongside the ISC work, Bailey organised a second British conference on the university teaching of IR. This was held in March 1938 at the LSE, with a couple of dozen people attending. Within the BCCIS Bailey was pushing to make such conferences a regular feature of the BCCIS’s activity. But by the middle of 1938, Bailey had become seriously ill and could not attend the Prague ISC even though he had been made part of the British delegation. This did not prevent him from applying to the Carnegie Endowment (which was already involved in funding the ISC and the BCCIS) for a third meeting of British university IR teachers, and getting the support of the BCCIS for it. By the time of the 43rd BCCIS meeting in December 1938, Bailey had become too ill to carry on, and Manning took over organising the third British conference on the university teaching of IR. This was held at LSE 17–18 March 1939, funded by Carnegie, and with 32 participants (BCCIS 10/1e1 1938–1940; BCCIS 10/1 mm 1939).

Sydney Bailey died at the age of 34 just before Christmas in 1938, leaving behind a wife, three small girls, an unfinished manuscript on telecommunications, and the

⁹ See the letter from N.F. Hall to the Director of the LSE, 2 November 1934 in: LSE/Staff Files/Bailey Stanley Hartnell, which pronounces Bailey as ‘a great credit... to himself and to the School’.



foundations of the project that would eventually become BISA. At the 44th BCCIS meeting in March 1939, he was honoured by his colleagues as follows:

Death of Mr. S.H. Bailey, Hon. Secretary of the Committee

Lord Meston referred to the very great loss which the British Coordinating Committee had sustained in the death on December 20 last of Mr. S.H. Bailey who had served as Honorary Secretary of the Committee since April 1933. He asked the Committee to endorse the following reference to Mr. Bailey which it was proposed to insert in the report which the Committee was submitting to the Administrative Meeting at the next Session of the International Studies Conference:

It is impossible to over-estimate Mr. Bailey's service both to the British Coordinating Committee and to the International Studies Conference. His faith in the work and perseverance in furthering its purposes made an immeasurable contribution to its progress. Mr. Bailey will particularly be remembered for his work on the subject of the University Teaching of International Relations, to the study of which he contributed the two volumes "International Studies in Great Britain (1933) and "International Studies in Modern Education" (1938). Mr. Bailey was also responsible for the initiation of two conferences on the subject in London, which were attended by a representative gathering of personalities interested in the study of international relations in Great Britain. At the time of his death he was planning a third Conference on the University Teaching of International Relations. (BCCIS 10/1e1 1938–1940).¹⁰

His more durable memorial was the 11 'Bailey Conferences' that picked up again after the War, and ultimately BISA, to which those conferences led.¹¹

The Bailey Conferences

1st	1933 LSE
2nd	1938 LSE (BCCIS 10/1e1 1938–1940, minutes of 41st BCCIS)
3rd	1939 LSE (BCCIS 10/1e1 1938–1940, minutes of 44th BCCIS; BCCIS 10/1mm 1939)
4th	1949 LSE (BCCIS 10/1e2 1946–1949; BCCIS 10/1nm 1949; BCCIS 10/1ss 1949–1950; BCCIS 10/1ss 1949–1950)
5th	1950 LSE (BCCIS 10/1oo 1950)
6th	1952 LSE (BCCIS 10/1ee 1952)
7th	1954 LSE (BCCIS 10/1uu 1954)

¹⁰ A similarly moving tribute to Bailey was made by the Professorial Council of the LSE on 17 January 1939: LSE/Staff Files/Bailey Stanley Hartnell. They later acknowledged his contribution by endowing at the LSE the S.H. Bailey Scholarship in International Studies, which was still being offered in 1974 (personal correspondence with Jeffrey Golden).

¹¹ The first actual use of the name 'Bailey Conference' I have found is in a letter from Geoffrey Goodwin dated 15 January 1952 concerning the sixth Bailey Conference (BCCIS 10/1hh 1955). In retrospect, the whole sequence became referred to as 'Bailey Conferences'.



8th	1958 LSE (BISA/1, and BISA/11, BCCIS 1951–1970)
9th	1962 LSE (BISA/1, and BISA/11, BCCIS 1951–1970)
10th	1966 LSE (BISA/1, and BISA/11, BCCIS 1951–1970)
11th	1968 LSE (BISA/1, and BISA/11, BCCIS 1951–1970)
12th	1970 LSE (BISA/1, and BISA/11, BCCIS 1951–1970)
13th	1972 Lancaster (BISA/11, BCCIS 1951–1970)
14th	1974 Surrey

There seems also to have been a meeting at Cumberland Lodge in March 1950 to discuss the University Teaching of International Relations, but this is not counted as part of the Bailey Conference sequence (BCCIS 10/1xa 1949–1950)

Post-War: from the Bailey Conferences to BISA

The post-war Bailey Conferences retained much of the character of the three pre-war ones. They were quite centralised affairs, dominated by the Montague Burton Professor at the LSE (Manning, then Goodwin) who set the tone and the agenda. Probably, though I am not certain about this, Chatham House played less of a role in the BCCIS once the ISC was dead. Following the pattern of the ISC and the BCCIS, participants were invited to the Bailey Conferences as representatives of their institutions. Those who attended were chosen, and paid for, by their institutions. This reflected the structure of the BCCIS, which, as noted, was always a network of affiliated universities and think tanks. The early post-war Conferences, like the pre-war ones, were fairly small affairs of two to three dozen people, though that has to be taken in the context of how small IR in Britain still was until the 1960s.¹² A sense of the scale and organisation of the Bailey Conferences can be gleaned from the fact that even as late as 1970, the 12th Bailey Conference was entirely held in the Shaw Library at the LSE.¹³ Many of them had a feature that was a hangover from Bailey's preoccupations in that they had a separate meeting about the teaching of IR between university academics ('dons') and teachers from secondary schools ('beaks').

With the expansion of the universities in Britain from the 1960s, the numbers teaching and researching in IR in Britain increased. The 8th Bailey Conference in 1958 had a couple of dozen attendees, but by 11th Conference in 1968 at LSE, there were 105 participants from 47 universities and institutes, the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence, a few journalists and four participants from Europe (BCCIS, BISA/1). The BCCIS agendas and minutes suggest that it was in pretty good shape after the existential crisis of the mid-1950s. It adapted reasonably well to the expansion of IR in Britain during the 1960s, with the Bailey Conferences reaching out to sixth form schools, think tanks, and relevant government ministries. The Conferences kept up with the evolving 'great debates' in IR during those years. Although

¹² See Bailey (1933, pp. 1–37) for a survey of just how small IR was in Britain at that time.

¹³ The Shaw Library is a single room in the Old Building of the LSE with a maximum capacity of 120 people.



the big names of traditional British IR remained prominent, the more radical people such as Susan Strange and John Burton, who wanted to push the development of IR in new directions, were also given a platform. Hedley Bull sharpened what became his (in)famous traditionalist attack against US-led behaviouralist approaches at a Bailey Conference (Bull 1966).

As more British universities began to teach IR, participation in both the BCCIS and the Bailey Conferences widened. This adaptation to a wider base was manifested in two ways. First, the BCCIS decided ‘to adapt the format of the Committee to changing circumstances, and to make it more fully representative’ (BISA/8: letter from Susan Strange as Honorary Secretary of BCCIS to ‘Joseph’ 23 March 1972. Probably Joseph Frankel). Susan Strange implemented this by getting universities with an interest in IR to affiliate with the BCCIS by paying £2 per year to support its operations and receive communications. The second sign of adaptation was the holding of the last two Bailey Conferences not at the LSE, but at Lancaster and Surrey.

Not everyone approved of the Bailey Conferences. Although Susan Strange (1989, p. 435) did not speak for all, she was certainly not the only person who thought they were far too top-down in their organisation and format, with what she characteristically referred to as ‘the barons’ choosing the subject, picking the speakers and inviting the participants. She had nevertheless participated in them from at least the early 1960s, and in its last few years she was Honorary Secretary of the BCCIS (BISA/8). She had also engaged herself with the teaching of IR in schools (BCCIS, BISA/11). But she wanted ‘an antidote to conferences organised by the male “barons” who had dominated British academic International Relations’—‘the dreadfully constipated and hierarchical Bailey conferences that Charles Manning used to run at the LSE’ (Strange 1989, p. 435). Despite their adaptation to the expanding IR community and evolving academic debates in Britain, the BCCIS/Bailey arrangements were increasingly seen as inadequate to the needs of a larger, more diverse and more dynamic profession. The BCCIS was still a loose network held together by an informal, and somewhat ad hoc, committee. It was not a proper disciplinary organisation and seemed to have little in the way of resources, living financially from hand to mouth. The Bailey Conferences, although, since 1968, held every 2 years rather than every 4 years as earlier, were still not held every year.

By the 1960s, the expanding IR community in Britain was already generating activities and organisations outside the BCCIS/Bailey framework. Under the leadership of Alastair Buchan, the Institute for Strategic Studies started in 1958 as a new think tank with a specific focus on the Cold War and military dynamics. The British Committee on the Theory of International Politics (generally referred to as ‘the British Committee’) started meeting in 1959. The British Committee was more in the nature of a working group on a specific topic, than any kind of IR organisation in the making. It is now generally seen as the beginning of what became the study of international society, eventually labelled ‘the English School’. Despite the curious similarity of the ‘British Committee’ label, there is no evidence for any connection to BCCIS/Bailey, and indeed, the British Committee excluded Manning, whose main work was on international society, and who at that time was the central figure



in the BCCIS.¹⁴ That did not stop members of the British Committee, such as Bull, Wight, and Butterfield, from attending some of the Bailey Conferences. There was a major IR conference at Aberystwyth in 1969 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Woodrow Wilson Chair and the IR Department as the founding moment for the discipline of IR. The results of this were published as *The Aberystwyth Papers* (Porter 1972), and there is no evidence that this had any link to the BCCIS (Porter, personal papers). By 1971, Susan Strange had spun the International Political Economy Group (IPEG) off both from her activities at Chatham House and from the 12th Bailey Conference in 1970 (BISA/11, 76th meeting of BCCIS; BISA/14, BISA Newsletter No. 1 Spring 1976 p. 2; Cohen 2008, pp. 44–48). Supported mainly by Chatham House, IPEG held its impressive inaugural conference in July 1972 at Cumberland Lodge with some 40 people meeting for 10 days (Brown 1973). Like the British Committee, IPEG took the form of an independent working group. Another independent working group on international political theory was also formed in 1974, based at the LSE but involving like-minded people from several other universities. Finally, there was a flurry of new IR journals being launched: *International Relations* at Aberystwyth in 1957, *Coexistence* in 1964 (became *International Politics* in the late 1990s), and *Millennium* at the LSE in 1971.¹⁵

All of this suggests that the growth and vitality of IR in Britain were outpacing the somewhat thin and staid BCCIS/Bailey structure. By the early 1970s, there was a movement both within and outside the BCCIS to respond to the increasing size and activity of IR in the UK during the 1960s and 1970s, by creating a more modern, democratic, academic professional association for IR in Britain. Susan Strange looked to the more open and democratic model of the North American ISA as an alternative (Strange 1995, p. 289), though there was also a strong sense, represented by IPEG, the international political theory group, and the English School, that British IR was different from the positivist, and political science-dominated, US mainstream in some quite fundamental ways, and that this difference needed to be maintained.¹⁶ By 1973, there was a ‘BISA Steering Committee’ that was a subcommittee of the BCCIS, hard at work thinking about how to set BISA up, and what functions it should have (BISA/3). The purpose of this subcommittee was to submit a proposal for BISA to the 82nd BCCIS meeting in January 1974 at Surrey University. From the discussion papers prepared by R.J. Barry Jones, and the correspondence, the main aims and concerns of the subcommittee are pretty clear. There was a desire for an annual conference, and an understanding that if BISA took over the Bailey Conferences, the BCCIS would have no function. There was an interlocking desire, reflecting the ISA model, for both a BISA journal, and a proper organisation based

¹⁴ On the British Committee, see: Dunne 1998, pp. 89–135; Sukanami 2003; Vigezzi 2005; Cochran 2009; Epp 2010; Buzan 2014.

¹⁵ I was involved with the founding of *Millennium*, which was done by Fred Northedge and a group of PhD students at the LSE. It was seen very much as an LSE project, and no mention was made of the BCCIS or the Bailey Conferences, of which I was completely unaware at the time.

¹⁶ Interestingly, at BISA/ISA discussions at the 17th ISA Convention in Toronto early in 1976, Susan Strange had to fend off ISA attempts to incorporate BISA (BISA Newsletter No. 1, 1976, personal correspondence with R.J. Barry Jones).



on a paying individual membership. It was understood clearly that people would not pay a membership fee unless they got something back for it, and having a BISA journal, and an annual conference, were therefore part of the financial, as well as the academic, plan for BISA. Individuals would have to pay to be members of BISA and attend its conferences, whereas it was universities that had covered the cost of the Bailey Conferences. There was also a desire to have a regular Newsletter and to set up and support specialist working groups as a key part of the Association's activities.¹⁷

The BISA steering committee's proposal was the main item on the agenda at the 82nd BCCIS meeting. It was decided to go ahead with the formation of BISA from January 1975 as an individual membership organisation. An Interim Executive Committee for BISA was set up and began to operate immediately. The chairman was Alastair Buchan, the Secretary was R.J. Barry Jones, and the Treasurer Susan Strange, all of whom had been very active during 1973 in the Steering Committee.¹⁸ Other members of the Interim Executive Committee were: Geoffrey Goodwin (LSE), Christopher Mason (Glasgow), Alan James (Keele), Jack Spence (Leicester—tagged as the first editor for the new BISA journal), Trevor Taylor (North Staffordshire Polytechnic), and David Wightman (Birmingham). This Committee set about creating a constitution for BISA, undertaking a membership drive (based on the BCCIS/Bailey mailing lists), getting the journal up and running, and preparing for the inaugural BISA conference at Lincoln College Oxford on 2–4 January 1975, where BISA was formally launched.

The documentary record, and the memories of those involved, gives a very clear impression that the baton of IR was being passed from the BCCIS/Bailey arrangement to BISA as an act of modernisation. There was a desire to follow the general trend in the organisation of IR in other places, most obviously the USA, yet whilst still retaining the distinctiveness of British IR. The larger and more dynamic British IR community needed something more than BCCIS/Bailey could offer, and BISA was the answer to that. The consensual nature of this handover is indicated by the formal approval within the BCCIS of the creation of BISA, knowing that this act would void the BCCIS of its sole remaining purpose. It is also indicated by the leading roles in BISA of many of those active in BCCIS, most obviously Susan Strange, but perhaps more tellingly Geoffrey Goodwin and Philip Reynolds. Yet whilst the documentary record is clear about this, it is a bit hazy about the precise end of the BCCIS. Perhaps that 82nd BCCIS meeting in January 1974 at Surrey was its last. I have found no records of any subsequent meeting. From January 1974, all energy seemed to transfer to the BISA Interim Executive Committee, and there is a passing note from R.J. Barry Jones (BISA/3: 21/5/1974) that a BCCIS meeting scheduled for 23 May 1974 was cancelled. A draft for a BISA Brochure says that it came into

¹⁷ IPEG decided to incorporate into BISA in December 1975 (BISA Newsletter No. 1, 1976), but the British Committee did not, and neither did the LSE-based international political theory group.

¹⁸ Buchan had not been part of the BCCIS/Bailey world. He had helped to set up and run the IISS, and was an outsider with a fresh view. He moved more into the domain of academic IR when he took the Montague Burton chair at Oxford in 1972. He was one of the key figures in setting up BISA, but died shortly thereafter in 1976.



being to replace ‘a moribund organisation started many years ago called the British Coordinating Committee on International Studies’ (BISA/7). An early BISA letterhead has underneath BISA: ‘(To incorporate the British Coordinating Committee on International Studies)’ (BISA/8). A letter from Susan Strange to university Vice Chancellors in 1975 followed up her correspondence from 1972 as Honorary Secretary of BCCIS, noted above. She thanked them for their support for BCCIS over the past 3 years and asked them to continue to support their staff to attend BISA: ‘now the BISA has been set up we can safely allow the BCCIS quietly to expire’ (BISA/8).

The transition was not without a certain cost. BCCIS and the Bailey Conferences embodied the view that IR was multidisciplinary, and were successful in attracting international lawyers such as Georg Schwarzenberger, and historians such as A.J.P. Taylor, Martin Wight, Donald Watt, Herbert Butterfield, and Arnold Toynbee. Despite attempting, with some initial success, to continue this tradition, BISA, with its more professionalised take on IR, has had difficulty retaining such links. Chris Brown (personal correspondence), recalls that many were concerned about hiving off a specifically IR academic association, and the tensions that would create for some either having to choose between BISA and the Political Studies Association (PSA), or be a member of both. Unlike in the USA, where IR was always tightly linked to Political Science (Richardson 1989, pp. 287–288; Schmidt 1998, p. 55; Ashworth 2014, p. 13; Kuru 2017, p. 46), quite a few IR types in Britain did not see IR as just ‘international politics’ but looked also to history, international law and political theory for inspiration. Many of these saw the PSA as somewhat indifferent to IR, and favoured a separate organisation.

Conclusion

The shift to BISA abandoned Bailey’s name, and much, though not all, of his concern with the teaching of IR in both schools and universities. Like other academic member associations, BISA became more professional, focusing mainly on research and publishing journals. But this development should not overshadow the formative influence that this young, and tragically short-lived LSE lecturer had on the organisation of IR in Britain. In his own way, and despite being largely forgotten¹⁹, he left as substantial a legacy to British IR as the big names of the period such as Zimmern, Carr, and Manning.²⁰ Without Bailey’s interest and commitment, it is far from clear that any specifically British IR organisation and conference would have got under way during the interwar years, to be revived after the war. And without that, it is far from clear that the BCCIS would have carried on after the death of the ISC removed

¹⁹ An article in an early number of BISA’s new journal on the teaching of International Studies in schools did not mention Bailey’s work (Heater 1976).

²⁰ E.H. Carr, despite his substantial intellectual influence on IR from the late 1930s, is conspicuously absent from this story. As Cox (2001) notes, Carr did not enter academia until 1936. He had little sympathy for the League of Nations project and its liberal assumptions, and little interest in the construction of International Relations as a discipline.



its founding rationale. It is not clear whether any of the other national coordinating committees for international studies that were set up during the interwar years in relation to the ISC, also spawned IR associations and conferences at the national level.²¹ No doubt, the *Zeitgeist* of the 1950s and 1960s, and the model of the ISA, would have led to some kind of 'BISA' being formed. But that would have been a different story from the one that carried British IR to its current position.

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²¹ I wonder if there is a similar story to be told about the USA? ISA mentions no precursor organisation on its website, but there was definitely a US counterpart to the BCCIS: the American Coordinating Committee for International Studies (ACCIS), composed of three think tanks and six universities (Riemens 2011, p. 920). In 1936, this took over from the Council on Foreign Relations as the US member of ISC. Did the ACCIS also evolve a domestic conference that was a predecessor to ISA? Are there analogous stories to be told about France, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, and Japan?



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