

## The Genevans of International Geneva: an elite and its networks

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International Geneva is a matter of institutions and, just as much, a matter of people: the families that founded the Red Cross belonged to the same milieu as those that ran the banks. The Dunants, Moyniers, Dufours, Appias and Maunoires of 1863 moved in the same circles as the private bankers of the rue de la Corraterie, sat on the same boards and shared the same Protestant culture of commitment and discretion.<sup>1</sup> This proximity continued into the twentieth century: Geneva bankers have chaired or funded international institutions, Swiss diplomats from Geneva have carried the policy of hosting international bodies, and the foundation boards of the organisations regularly include representatives of the financial centre.

This shared elite has eased the relationship between the financial centre and International Geneva, and it has also sustained a blurring of roles that critics have pointed out: a city in which the same families run the banks and the humanitarian works lays itself open to the reproach of turning charity into a shop window. The professionalisation of the international organisations and the diversification of the financial centre, with the arrival of foreign banks and of executives from elsewhere, have loosened this bond without breaking it. The Fondation pour Genève, the circles of International Geneva and the philanthropic initiatives described in Chapter IV are its contemporary heirs.

## 1 Notes

1. Dictionnaire historique de la Suisse (DHS), art. “Gustave Moynier” (Jean de Senarclens, 2007, revised 2008): born on 21 September 1826 in Geneva, died on 21 August 1910 at Sécheron, son of André, a watch merchant, and of Laure Deonna; studied law in Paris and Geneva from 1846 to 1850; married in 1851 Jeanne Françoise (Fanny) Paccard, daughter of the Parisian banker Barthélemy Paccard; member of the Société genevoise d'utilité publique from 1855, which he chaired ten times between 1858 and 1884; president of the International Committee of the Red Cross from 1864 until his death. ↩

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