Chapter 3

International

From Legal to Civic Discourse and beyond in the Nineteenth Century

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If the nineteenth century was the age of nation building, it was also crucial for constructing an international imaginary. This imaginary expanded hand in hand with the gradual breakthrough of the nation as a essential unit in ordering the world. While the national perspective was overwhelmingly positive (although not completely), the international imaginary was more ambiguous. Comparing different things, ranging from habits to goods and laws, as nationally delineated enforced the idea of the nation state as a unit and had mostly positive connotations. A more sinister element, relating to international threats to the local way of life, also formed an important part of the late nineteenth-century international imaginary. Both the positively and negatively laden connotations form layers of meaning (Koselleck 2000) that are still with us in public discourse around what is truly international and whether it is good for us.

In this chapter, we trace the conceptual history of the international from the coinage of the word in the late eighteenth century to its considerable expansion in meaning and increased variation in how it was valued in the second half of the nineteenth century. It pays special attention to international civic organizations as bodies that epitomize the transformation in how the international sensibilities were established. These came about as a result of the international imaginary and also helped to change notions of what was international. As such, international organizations do not form a coherent category for collective action. Everything from international NGOs to governmental bodies or criminal organizations can be included under this umbrella (Götz 2008). Nor is it self-evident how international

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an organization needs to be in order to achieve international status. While scholars of international NGOs have paid much attention to what aspects of these organizations are international and what is non-governmental today (Reinalda 2009; Davies 2014), we pay more attention to the historical language use. The aim is to write a history of transnational concepts that deals with how they circulate and are adapted in crossing borders (Marjanen 2017). Organizations that labelled themselves international did it for a purpose, and in the course of the nineteenth century the word itself started to lend organizations and activities called international a certain prestige. In this chapter, we seek to understand how this came about, but also point out that the prestige of the international was contested. In doing so, we draw on earlier work published in the lexicon *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Friedemann and Hölscher 1972; see also Chapters 1 and 2), but expand the focus by using digitally available newspapers from several different countries and aiming for more robust quantification.

As organizations started to label themselves as international, the term became generally more appealing. The International Committee of the Red Cross (1863), the International Workingmen's Association (First International, 1864), the Institute of International Law (1873), the International Council of Women (1888), and the International Olympic Committee (1894) are prominent cases of organizations with high levels of influence in their respective fields. All of them consciously used the word 'international' rhetorically. For the early organizations this might have been a bold move, as other terms such as universal or general were available and might have worked better, but as more organizations, exhibitions and meetings were labelled international, the word gained higher status. The early international organizations and events were, in the spirit of Reinhart Koselleck's famous phrasing, indicators and factors in how the vocabulary of the international evolved in the latter half of the nineteenth century (Koselleck 1972).

Before this important juncture in the transformation of worldviews, eighteenth-century organizations also crossed borders and had contacts that in today's vocabulary are often termed transnational (see Chapters 1 and 2). To address the novelty in nineteenth-century conceptualizations of international civic life, in this chapter we also discuss how eighteenth-century Freemasons and economic societies conceptualized their cross-border activities and reconceptualized them after the language of international became common in the context of associations. Studies on internationalism rightly focus on the twentieth century (Sluga 2013; Sluga and Clavin 2017) but do not go back as far as the eighteenth century as is customary in literature on Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. In this chapter, we shift the focus back

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into the nineteenth century, in order to highlight the connections in how both international and national imaginaries developed.

As the term 'international' grew in popularity during the course of the nineteenth century and entered new domains of language, it helped to shape a worldview that saw nations as equal in the sense that they could reasonably be represented in international organizations. Nations were obviously not seen as being equal in terms of development, progress or power, but in the sense that most had a more or less equal right to exist and were part of a shared historical trajectory. The language of the international was crucial in facilitating the synchronizing of different nations (Jordheim 2014; 2017). Before it, the language of crossing borders in civic organizations was different. The synchronizing aspect means that today's distinction between the transnational and international is sometimes confusing in a nineteenth-century setting. Today, the term 'transnational' is used to describe cross-border migratory patterns and civic engagement as distinct from more rigid international activities based on individuals or organizations representing their nation states (e.g. Dahinden 2017). This distinction was not relevant for the nineteenth century because of the strength of the national framework; then, the word 'international' did not yet yield such rhetorical power that the coinage of related terms could be transformed into cultural capital.

The Introduction of International Law

The word 'international' was famously coined by Jeremy Bentham in his *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, first printed in 1780 (Friedemann and Hölscher 1972: 369; also Chapters 1 and 2). Bentham's intention was not to propose a word for general use, but to find a specific term for understanding legal issues between nations. He was unsatisfied with the terminology and explanations offered by his teacher, William Blackstone, as to what the law of nations was really about. Bentham thought that Blackstone's definition of the law of nations was not specific about how it related to natural law, or even clear whether or not it was about law at all (Janis 1984). Bentham hence introduced a distinction between internal and international jurisprudence. He wrote that persons who are the object of the law 'may, on any given occasion, be considered either as members of the same state, or as members of different states: in the first case, the law may be referred to the head of *internal*, in the second case to that of *international* jurisprudence' (Bentham 1780: cccxxiv). At first glance, this division appears mechanical and not even very important for Bentham: He was simply seeking terminological clarity by introducing a neologism that was not meant to carry a lot of weight in his overall analysis. He reserved

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the word for relations between sovereigns only, and excluded legal matters relating to individual persons from different states, which indicates not an ad hoc coinage, but a term he had thought through (Suganami 1978; Sylvest 2004; Mazover 2013: 19–22). In a footnote, Bentham even remarked that the 'word *international*, it must be acknowledged is a new one; though, it is hoped, sufficiently intelligible. It is calculated to express, in a more significant way, the branch of law which goes commonly under the name of the law of nations' and that the chancellor Henri François d'Aguesseau (1668–1751) had made a similar remark by proposing the term *droit entre les gens* (law between peoples) (Bentham 1780: cccxxiv; see also Vollerthun 2017: 1–8; Roshchin 2013).

Both Bentham and d'Aguesseau proposed new expressions, but did not regard international law or law between peoples as something new. They simply attempted to propose more accurate descriptions of an old phenomenon. While d'Aguesseau's term did not catch on, Bentham's terminology gradually became more commonly used than the discourse on the law of nations, also in French translation as *droit international*. The term spread from Spanish and Portuguese in the South and to Danish and Swedish in the North. In German and other Germanic languages, however, the term *Völkerrecht* (or translations of it) remained predominant. Regardless of the terminology, the practice of emphasizing a continuity from the early modern discourse of the law of nations to the modern discourse of international law was and still is commonplace (Sylvest 2004).

Perhaps unsurprisingly the term 'international law' spread internationally, to use the word in a modern way, but for Bentham and many early nineteenth-century authors, this remark would not have made sense. For them, the international was strictly reserved for the legal sphere and it was about a collision between national systems or, perhaps more accurately, about conflicting legal matters between states. In this period, phenomena (like the spread of a word) were not conceived as international. Books with 'international' in the title, like Frederick Eden's (1823) *An Historical Sketch of the International Policy of Modern Europe* or Henry Wheaton's (1836) *Elements of International Law*, also reserved the word for the legal sphere.

Newspapers in different European countries show similarly early employment of the concept in legal discourse. In the Netherlands, the adjective 'inter-nationale' appeared for the first time in 1818, when the *Leydse Courant* (12 April 1818) included a report translated from English on the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, where the Sixth Coalition against Napoleon had discussed the 'permanence and utility of [this] inter-national agreement'.[1] The concept was adopted more widely in the late 1820s and early 1830s. The Francophone newspapers were important in this process,

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as were newspapers printed in the Caribbean and Indonesian colonies (e.g. *Le Journal de la Haye*, the *De Curaçaosche Courant* and the *Surinaamsche courant*). Although the adjective was employed predominantly in a legal sense, it was by no means void of political connotations. As early as 1835, *Le Journal de la Haye* (19 August 1835) spoke of 'principes de justice internationale et le patriotisme élevé' and the increasingly vocal liberal press frequently employed the concept in their pleas for 'free international exchange' (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, 24 February 1838).

One by-product of the coinage of 'international law' was the gradual appropriation of 'international' as a modifier for other nouns, for a broader application than its first users intended. Use of the word changed in parallel with changes in the use of 'nation' as a super concept of the era. While the language of nationhood certainly involved much disagreement and contestation, in general the nation was gradually attached to almost everything in society from economy to political institutions and culture (Kemiläinen 1964; de Bertier de Sauvigny 1970; Gschnitzer et al. 1978; Hengchen et al. 2021). It became especially closely associated with state matters, which may have made the term 'international' more flexible. As more things could be conceived as national, more things could potentially be international.

Contemporaries noted the growing popularity of the term (Mazover 2013: 21–22), which can also be evidenced through quantitative assessments of its use in historical data. At the moment, the largest dataset available is Google Ngrams, which, despite errors in optical character recognition and some uncertainty in the contents of the different language corpora, indicates a gradual growing relative frequency for the word 'international' in Spanish, French, English and German (Figure 3.1). Our use avoids most of the pitfalls of Google Ngrams which have been thoroughly discussed in the literature (see Pechenick, Danforth and Dodds 2015) and shows that in all four languages occurrences are rather few in the first part of the nineteenth century, whereas the latter part shows growth. Relative frequencies provide some comparability over time and across languages, but based on the graph alone it is hard to observe more than a general growing trend.

The relative frequency plots show that while 'international' entered the lexicon in the late eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century at least in English, German, French and Spanish (and clearly many other languages), it did not become frequent until towards the middle of the century (see also Friedemann and Hölscher 1972).[2] The first uses of terms are often instructive, but looking at frequencies helps us to get beyond the 'religion of the first occurrence' (Dufoix 2017: 15) that often ascribes more influence to early linguistic innovators than they deserve. To trace the development in the mid-nineteenth century, we looked at which words (mostly nouns)

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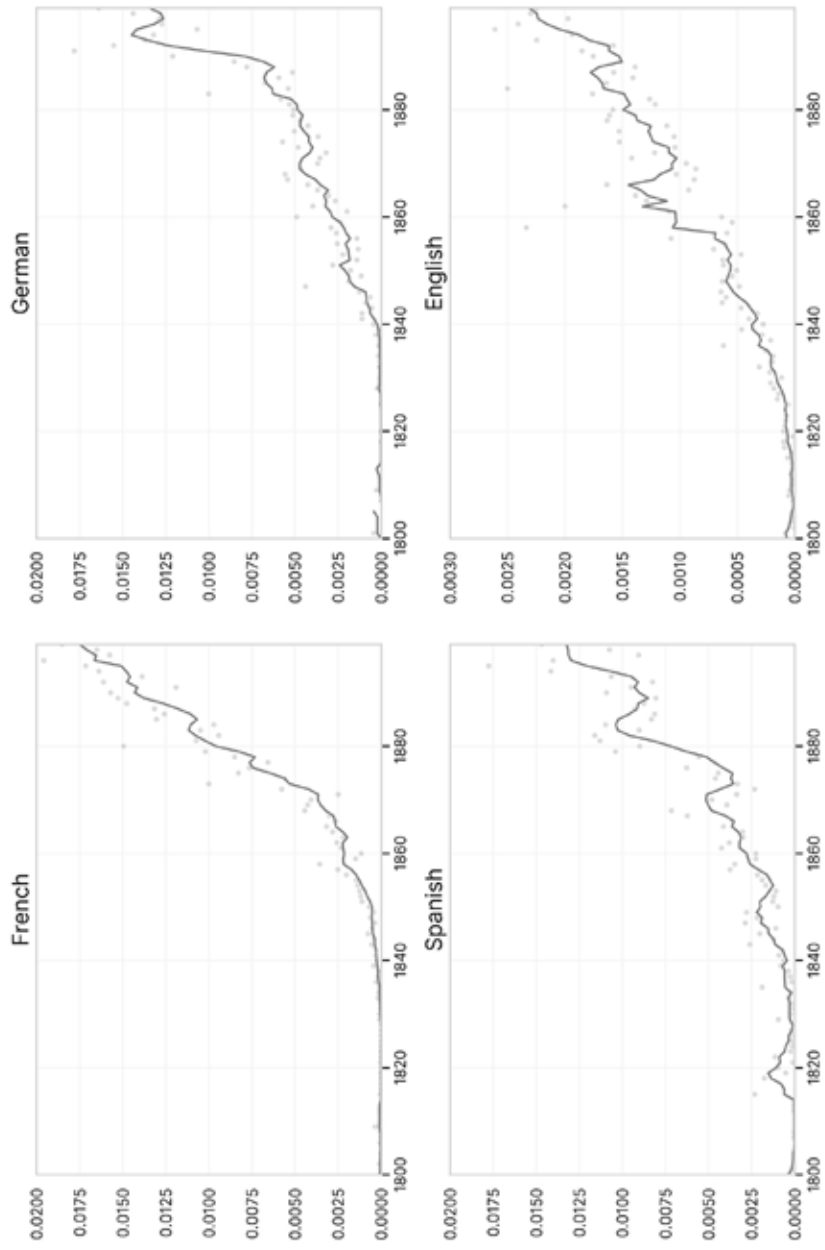

Figure 3.1 Relative frequency of the word 'international' in French, Spanish, English and German on Google Ngrams (https://books.google.com/ngrams).

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the word international modified. We did this for the Gale Cengage dataset of nineteenth-century British newspapers (Hengchen et al. 2021). A plot showing the yearly number of unique bigrams (sets of two words) with international as the first word indicates that not only did 'international' become used more frequently, but also that it was used to modify a growing number of different nouns, meaning that its use expanded in this period.

Because bigrams contain two words, they provide minimal context in which the word international was used. Based on word embeddings and *k*-means clustering, we can group the accompanying words thematically (for more elaborate examples, see Hengchen et al. 2021). In short, the embeddings can be used to compare the context in which a particular word usually appears in the data (its distribution), and group words that have similar distributions (Gavin 2018; Wevers and Koolen 2020). This models the context of language use, but not the material context of newspapers or different sections within them.

Figure 3.3 portrays fourteen groups of words that are analysed for the whole nineteenth century. Similarity in distribution often entails some sort of semantic or thematic similarity, but the division into a particular number of groups leads to groups that are regarded as similar in distribution, but do not necessarily appear to naturally belong together. Some groups seem more coherent than others. We explored the same data with different numbers

Figure 3.2 Annual number of unique bigrams with 'international' as the first word in nineteenth-century newspapers in the British Library. Gale Nineteenth Century British Newspaper Collection.

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of groups, and while the groups themselves are different in those cases, the main ruptures and trends are the same with fewer or more groups.

Using word embeddings and *k*-means clustering, the complete vocabulary was placed in fourteen clusters. The frequency of the words in similar clusters is summed and normalized for every year. After experimentation with different cluster sizes (4–20), a *k* of fourteen proved to yield the best insight into long-term changes.

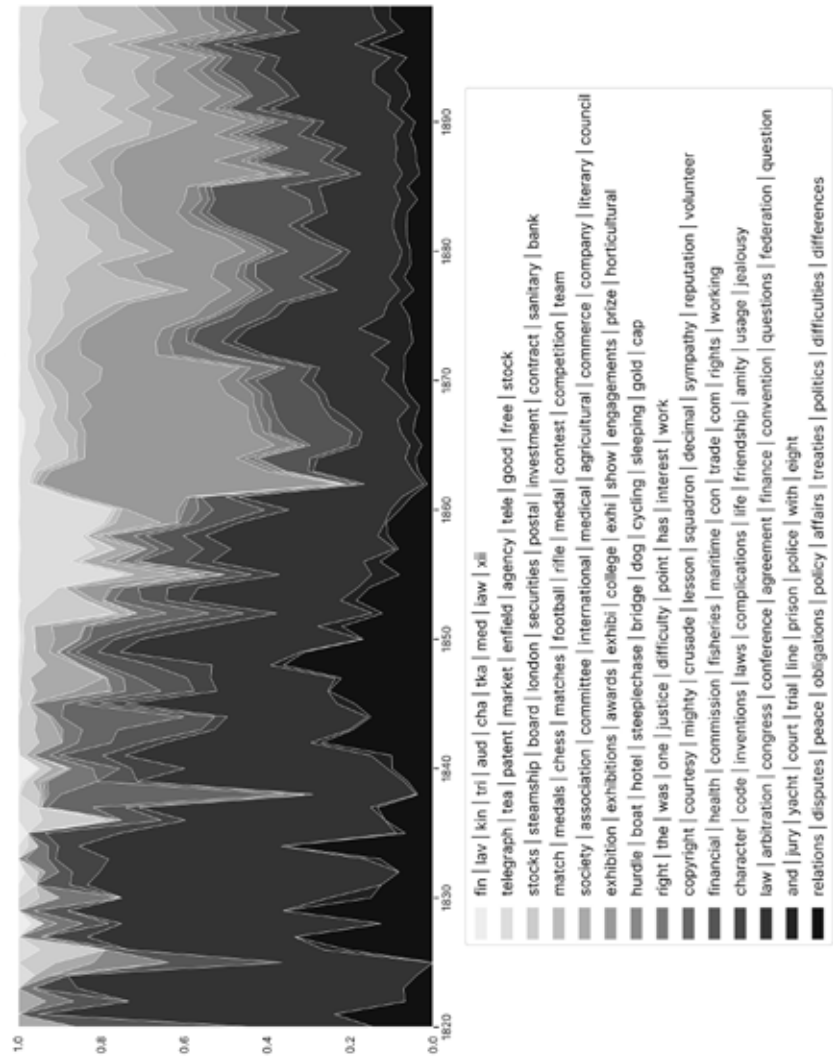

Figure 3.3 Normalized cluster distribution of the bigrams with 'international', 1820–1900 in nineteenth-century British newspapers. Gale Nineteenth Century British Newspaper Collection.

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Like the bigram frequencies (Figure 3.2), the diachronic cluster distribution (Figure 3.3) shows a rather sudden rupture in the mid-nineteenth century. Until the 1840s the discourse of international law (visible in the 'relations, disputes, peace' and 'law, arbitration, congress' clusters) remained dominant. However, the figure also shows that the legal discourse itself changed. Driven by the conflicts that erupted in the late 1840s and 1850s, the legal language of the term 'international' became geared towards the political questions surrounding the European balance of power. The cluster of words such as 'relations', 'disputes' and 'peace' demonstrates this focal shift toward diplomacy. Instead of philosophical considerations on 'morality' and 'principles', legal discourse gravitated towards 'dissensions', 'grievance', 'crisis' and 'antagonism', words that first appeared in the international vocabulary in 1854, 1855, 1858 and 1859, respectively. While the immediate post-Napoleonic era has been interpreted as a new period in European security culture (de Graaf, de Haan and Vick 2019), the discourse on international disputes and peace became common only mid-century. The word 'international security' did so even later, in the twentieth century.

The lexical shift toward international diplomacy as manifested in the cluster distribution also offers clues for the sudden rise of clusters related to 'exhibitions', 'awards' and 'engagements'. When, in the 1850s, 'international' was used to denote a sphere of diplomatic action, other gatherings and activities at the international level were also increasingly named international. The early 1850s appear as a turning point in the extension of the concept beyond diplomacy. It is here that we find examples of contestation and terminological competition. The 1851 London Exhibition, for example, was initially referred to as the 'Universal Exhibition'. Four years later, the event in Paris was called the 'Paris International Exhibition'. Similarly, the Belgian mathematician Adolphe Quetelet, who was inspired by the London Exhibition, drafted a plan 'to invite scientists from over the world who are engaged in statistical work to gather in a universal congress of statistics'. In 1853, by the time Quetelet had organized the congress in Brussels, it was branded the 'International Congress for Statistics' (Prevost and Beaud 2015: 5). Although 'universal' remained in use in the context of exhibitions and conferences, it was 'international' that became the prime denominator for these events. It seems that 'universal' captured cross-border activities, but 'international' was perhaps more apt for incorporating the national perspective that had become so dominant by the mid-nineteenth century. International was not only a way of crossing borders; it was a way of enforcing the nation.

Exhibitions and conferences were not the only contexts to embrace the vocabulary of the international. A decade before the sudden rise in the

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'exhibition' cluster, the 'telegraph, college, board' cluster displays an increase in frequency, caused primarily by the establishment of the International Postage Association (1851) and the spread of 'international postage' as a concept (Murphy and Yates 2015).

Besides the labelling of civil and political actors, 'international' was gradually used more in terms related to the world economy. Many products originating abroad were referred to as international, as were a multitude of companies that aimed to increase their stature by using the adjective. Moreover, the rise of terms such as 'markets' (1871) and 'capital' (1873) indicates an understanding of international trade not just as exchange between nationally rooted parties, but as a distinctively international or global system of commerce. The conceptual emergence of the 'world economy' (a bigram used extensively after 1880; see Chapter 7) was accompanied by new discussions (e.g. on bimetallism and standards of measurements) and the reframing of old ones (on tariffs) as related to international trade.

From a purely quantitative perspective, the nineteenth century saw a gradual increase in international public discourse. Judging from the British newspaper data, it seems that much of this has to do with the breakthrough of civic organizations, fairs and exhibitions as international. The legal discourse dominant in the early century did not disappear, but rather the language of international expanded into new domains. This development can be traced in book titles containing the word international. The word first appeared in the catalogue of German-language books in the Berlin State Library[3] in Friedrich List's *Das nationale System* (1841); the first volume dealt with 'international trade' (*international Handel*). We must bear in mind that international law was discussed in German as *Völkerrecht*, so that excludes much of the legal discourse that we would expect to be labelled international in other European languages at this time. Still, the legal discourse is strong. In 1848, we find a book that deals with 'international relations' (*international Verhältnisse*) from a legal point of view (Stedmann 1848). In 1855, books were published on international patent legislation (Kleinschrod 1855) and international publishing contracts (Enslin 1855). Words included in the titles of books signal key matters for the author or publisher, and are as such signs of the discourse on the international becoming more established. The number of titles that included the word 'international' increased from the mentioned two in the 1850s to fifteen titles in the 1860s. We find ninety-one titles in the 1870s, 110 titles for the 1880s, and 109 for the 1890s, meaning that the last three decades of the nineteenth century saw a steady stream of books about something international. As in the British newspaper data, we encounter a broadening of the scope of the term, with print material about the international exhibition in

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Paris in 1867 (Internationale Ausstellung 1867) and an organization called the International Association for the Advancement of Social Sciences (Neumann 1863).

Were the Freemasons, Economic Societies and Bible Societies International?

Bentham and d'Aguesseau, who introduced the word international, thought that international law had existed before, but was poorly described. Similarly, present-day scholars of transnational and international civil society, like Thomas Davies, argue that the roots of what he calls transnational civil society can and should be sought between the 1760s and 1860s, when new international NGOs emerged alongside existing international religious organizations (Davies 2014: 3–4, 19–44). Another scholar of international organizations, Bob Reinalda, sees the Congress of Vienna as a turning point for international non-governmental and governmental organizations alike (Reinalda 2009: 37–42). Both Davies and Reinalda point to organizations that did not describe themselves as international; here, however, we are more interested in what terminology such organizations did use and what changed once they introduced the language of the international to describe themselves.

The Freemasons are an early civic organization that crossed borders, with lodges all over Europe and beyond. Their forms of organization as a brotherhood, with a hierarchical structure between lodges, entailed cross-border activity. Their membership also transcended national boundaries as representatives were frequent visitors to lodges in other countries and were instrumental in creating networks among elites in different parts of the world (Jacob 1991; Harland-Jacobs 2007; Prescott 2013). Most outsider assessments of the Freemasons have had a critical tone ever since the eighteenth century. Part of this criticism was the recurring accusation of cosmopolitanism directed toward the Freemasons from the 1780s onwards in the German-speaking lands (Hardtwig 1990: 799; Jordheim 2018). Within the Masonic movement the word 'international' was introduced into the names of organizations such as the Bureau international de relations maçonniques and the Association maçonnique internationale, both established in the 1870s (Berger 2020: 8), which corresponds with the overall internationalization of the language relating to civil society.

Outsider critiques of Freemasons as cosmopolitans also picked up the language of the international. For example, conservative Vienna newspapers wrote in 1893 about the 'internationally allied Freemasonry' that had brought misfortunes upon the ruling families of Tuscany and Naples (*Das*

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Vaterland, 20 January 1893: 1)[4] and in the following year about 'the influence of the foreign international-Jewish Freemasonry' (*Ostdeutsche Rundschau*, 8 May 1894: 1). In 1895, *Das Vaterland* (26 September 1896: 1) reported on the 'first international congress against Freemasonry', but lamented how internationality did not really materialize as the event was dominated by Italians speaking their language. The sentiment in the report and later commentary was that while the 'Masons were international, also the anti-Masonic movement must be international' (*Das Vaterland,* 3 October 1896: 2). A further trope in the same genre used the label *Freimaurerei international* (*Grazer Volksblatt*, 4 March 1906), as a reference to the Communist international. In this case, the label 'international' was used to discredit both Freemasons and communists, but associating the two served to rhetorically evoke a sense of dangerous and radical politics.

It is clear that Freemasons were described as international only after other organizations had been labelled as such. But doing so introduced new themes to the discourse; the description of the Freemasons as international follows the earlier traditions of discrediting Freemasons as cosmopolitan. In these critical texts, it is not only the organization that is seen as 'international' and therefore dangerous, but also every individual Freemason.

Other eighteenth-century organizations with arguably border-crossing imaginaries were labelled international only after the term made a breakthrough in the mid-nineteenth century. While Freemasons were often portrayed as suspiciously cosmopolitan and indifferent to the domestic good, another form of eighteenth-century civic life, the economic societies, were seen as devoted to local improvement, many with a geographically defined area of interest such as a country or town. The origins of societies aimed at improving local economic conditions through the production and dissemination of new knowledge relating to agriculture, manufacturing, commerce and the arts can be located in the establishment of the *Honourable Society of Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture in Scotland* (1723) and *The Dublin Society for Improving Husbandry, Manufactures and Other Useful Arts* (1731). Further societies were established around Europe, especially around the Seven Years' War and after the French Revolution, by which time most bigger towns in Europe hosted such a society (Stapelbroek and Marjanen 2012).

By the mid-eighteenth century, we find statements in which economic societies from elsewhere are regarded as models (or at least predecessors). The economic societies did not constitute any kind of international organization, with national or local chapters, but rather held notions of comparability across borders and cultivated contacts. The London-based Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (founded 1754)

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noted in its early publications that 'there are Societies for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce in the Part of *Great Britain* called *Scotland*, and also in *Ireland*' (*Premiums by the Society, Established at London, for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce*, 1758: 31). In a similar statement the Economic Society of Berne (founded 1759) pointed to other peoples as a source for emulation: 'It is our noblest intention to teach our countrymen to make use of the examples of other peoples who have taken useful sciences to a higher level' (*Ökonomische Gesellschaft zu Bern* 1761: IV).

The transnational imaginary of similar societies is manifested in lists of predecessors and models from other countries. In Sweden, the Patriotic Society (founded 1766) wrote how 'Patriotic and Oeconomic Societies in Berne, in London, in Dublin, in Brittany, in Saren and in Silesia [have in their] encouragement of Agriculture, the Arts and Commerce become so well known … that they need no further introduction at this particular moment' (*Hushållnings Journal*, 1776: 3–4). Such lists became a general feature of the foundation of any new society, and functioned as a way of creating prestige for the foundation (and its founders) by laying claim to a tradition of similar societies. This tradition would not be called international, but it involves expressions like 'other countries' and, in the early nineteenth century, 'foreign'. At the same time, comparative remarks presented other countries as predecessors or models that could and should be emulated, thus turning improvement and development into issues of lagging behind and catching up (Marjanen 2013).

The societies were also similar in that they had networks of corresponding and honorary members abroad; scientific societies and academies used cross-border networks as sources of information and prestige, but economic societies focused more on the local state and applying knowledge (Stapelbroek and Marjanen 2012). Activities that would undoubtedly be called international or transnational today were discussed in terms of the honorary, corresponding and foreign. Talking about something as international did not lend prestige to the activities.

Besides economic societies, other bodies shared structural similarities. Early nineteenth-century bible societies, relief programmes or campaigns for the abolishment of slavery all had local structures, but also engaged in exchanges across borders and dealt with issues that could not be addressed solely in a domestic context (Davis 2013; Reinalda 2009). However, the language of the international was not used to describe their activities then as it would today. Instead, this collective action in organizations that required input from different nations was described as civic. As legal systems met in Benthamian international law, associations met in international civic life.

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Explicitly International Civic Organizations

It is difficult to identify a clear turning point when it started to make sense to perceive civic organizations as and consequently call them international. This renaming required three gradual changes in civic life. First, associations were increasingly seen as fulfilling a societal task. While associations designed to focus on a particular problem had existed for quite some time, by the early nineteenth century most European countries had associations that dealt with a large array of topics ranging from music, economy, education and literature to very specific tasks like drainage. These associations were at least meant to take care of issues relating to the common good (Im Hof 1982; Dülmen 1992). Second, they were perceived as nationally delineated. Associations that were specifically Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, Dutch, Spanish or Swiss, to mention a few interesting cases of economic societies, decided to define their area of influence as coinciding with the nation (Marjanen 2013). As the nation became increasingly considered a unit to identify with politically, associations became one forum among others in which the nation could be represented. Different countries, regions and imperial substructures had their particular circumstances, but nonetheless associations provided a channel for citizens to be part of the nation by advancing the common good on a national level. Third, the membership of the associations in general was growing. While scientific societies, lodges and secret societies were aimed at a select elite, associations started to recruit more broadly and accepted paying members if they subscribed to the society's aims without necessarily (or even probably) being active in meetings or on a personal level (Stenius 1987). Some associations, like the London Corresponding Society, even aimed to maximize their membership to ultimately include everyone (Thompson 1968: 24; see Chapter 2).

With associations that sought to benefit the common good, and included a larger crowd that participated in representing the nation, the door was open for coming together internationally. At this time, the international was primarily reserved for representing the nation and happened when representatives met – an idea best crystallized in the 'principle of the Olympic games' (Stenius and Haggrén 2005: 81; see Chapter 9). For most of the nineteenth century, phenomena were not generally described as being international in themselves, as in the 1890s' examples for Freemasons mentioned above or phrases like 'international fame'.

The first associations to describe themselves as international seem to have been rather ephemeral. The International Association founded in Scotland in the 1830s aimed at evoking solidarity and peace with the motto 'all mankind are brothers', but was short-lived (Davies 2014: 30; Saunders

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1847: 29). What was remarkable about this association was the brevity of its name and the assumption that one organization could cover issues related to the international. This may be a sign that the International Association saw itself as the only one of its kind and did not expect that other such organizations would be needed in future.

According to Davies, the first international organization by name and structure was the Société générale des naufrages dans l'intérêt de toutes les nations, founded in 1835. The society was the product of its founder Auguste Godde and his extensive networks in France and abroad. Through active branding and networking, the secretariat of the society in Paris managed to organize chapters on several continents and raise large amounts of funds for the cause of lifesaving and preventing shipwrecks. By the early 1840s Godde faced criticism for the way in which he led the society, which ultimately split into two. A competing faction started publishing the journal *L'Internationale* in 1842 (Davies 2018). At some point the society started using the name Société internationale des naufrages, but this seems to have been a gradual process as both names were used in parallel. In the publications of the society, we cannot find a reason for the change in name. It seems that 'international' was simply introduced as a variation on the word 'general' (e.g. Godde de Giancourt 1841). In British newspapers from 1840 onward reports that refer to the International Shipwreck Society indicate that the new name was established by then (*Southampton Herald*, 11 January 1840).[5]

While the International Association and the International Shipwreck Society remain isolated examples, international cooperation gained more formal organizational structures in the following years. The best-known cases are perhaps the International Committee of the Red Cross (founded 1863) and the International Workingmen's Association in Britain (from 1864), both of which combined physical meetings of participants from different countries and causes that involved different nationalities. Like in the word clusters in Figure 3.3, what was mostly described as international were the exhibitions, conferences, committees and meetings. While of course the organizations themselves can be seen as international, contemporaries mostly used the word to talk about their activities. For instance, the Dutch *Rotterdamsche Courant* mentions how 'the Count Lallemand and Doctor Fauvel will represent France on the international sanitary conference that will gather in Constantinople' (14 December 1863). Similarly, a typical report in the Swedish newspaper *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* (8 April 1892) narrates how Edvard Edholm travelled as the representative of the Swedish Red Cross to the 'international Red Cross conference in Rome'. While other texts write about the Red Cross itself as international, its internationality

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stems from the conferences and meetings. Henry Dunant's book, *Une souvenir de Solférino* (1862) helped to spark enthusiasm for the foundation of the International Committee of the Red Cross; it was a call for an international relief society (Société internationale de secours), but here too, the gatherings were central. Dunant argued that if jurists, industrialists, statisticians, agronomists, economists and others organized international congresses, so should people dealing with relief (Dunant 1862: 107, 113).

The International Workingmen's Association revolved around congresses organized in London and Continental Europe, but it was soon called 'The International' giving both the noun and the adjective new layers of meaning as well as increased political valence. Its most important resolution was an 'international combination of efforts, by the agency of the Association, in the struggle between labour and capital' (International Workingmen's Association 1868: 3; Chapter 4). As in the case of the Red Cross, international cooperation was seen as paving the way for dealing with problems in the future, but in the First International the term itself gained a layer of meaning with a set of connotations of socialist and anarchist activity, making it politicized in a new way (see especially Friedemann and Hölscher 1972 and Chapter 4).

At this time, the international had become something that went beyond congresses and meetings and was also an arena of action that could feed into other levels in society. This is most visible in the field of jurisprudence and the establishment of the Institute of International Law in 1873, which marked in very concrete terms the rise of international law as a field. The men who engaged with the Institute used the international arena to formulate political objectives that could then be argued for in the national arena of politics. Some ideas were realized nationally, whereas others morphed into something quite different in their transition from international to national (Koskenniemi 2001: 2–6, 11–97). Nevertheless, the international had become a space of its own that was tied to the nation but that could also be used as an additional platform for states and individuals to perform politics.

International Contested: Truly International and Internationalism

The powerful rhetoric of international cooperation and especially its role in the workers' movement led to reactions. Predominantly positive perceptions of the international became coupled with fear of foreign or international influence. The Dutch newspaper *Algemeen Volksblad voor Nederland* (19 December 1872) included a letter to the editor warning against the wrong kind of international activism:

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> I do know men amongst the so-called 'Internationals' that I value highly because of their honesty, but the horrors of their commune and the programme of the International in France and Spain makes me doubt their honesty and makes uniting with them impossible for the true Dutchman. Moreover, they are not *truly* [original italics] international; when pointing them to the needs of Spain, France and Italy, to what they did there or want to do there, the answer is 'yes, but you cannot blame the Dutch chapter, in every country the International complies to national laws'. Why? Do they not believe in eradicating the differences between the nations? Otherwise they would not be bothered by the laws of individual nations …

At this point the internationals, the International as an organization and what it meant to be truly international was contested both within the working men's movement and from the outside. The claim that some things could be truly international is revealing: it supposes that some things pretend or fail to be international for various reasons. In the above case, 'true international' means following international ideals everywhere and not compromising with local conditions. In other cases, it could be about attracting authors from '*all* countries' (*The Aldine Press* 1870), or about elevating something (e.g. a collection of historical documents) to be truly international by adding foreign material to it ('Gleanings' 1872), but calling something truly international could give it negative connotations.

A further sign of contestation and a marker of negative valuation toward the discourse of the international is the emergence of the term 'internationalism'. As with most isms, the relationship between the root and the suffix is complicated. Typically, the introduction of the ism is late and inverts the valuation of the word. Similarly, while there is a relationship between national and nationalism, the nineteenth-century discourse on things national was largely positively laden, whereas the ism, nationalism, became popular at the turn of the twentieth century and was predominantly used in a negative sense. Some isms have been coined as positive descriptions of self-identified doctrines or practices, but in most cases the coinage of an ism is a sign of contestation and criticism (Kurunmäki and Marjanen 2018a; 2018b; Kettunen 2018; Chapter 4).

The word 'internationalism' was first used in the 1840s and occurred in the 1870s as a clear reaction to the First International, but became common at roughly the same time as nationalism, that is the turn of the twentieth century (as is evident from Google Ngrams and the newspaper datasets consulted). It is not surprising that the two words go hand in hand as speaking of things international was clearly tied to the change in discourses about the nation, as also indicated by the shift from universal to international exhibitions.

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Internationalism lent itself to other juxtapositions than nationalism. Our survey of newspapers published in France, Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden provides ample examples of this in the use of 'internationalism', which can be roughly grouped in five categories. First, it was used to describe practices of crossing borders in the form of conferences (*Neue Freie Presse*, 24 November 1875: 8). Second, it could refer to the present state of things, as in a Dutch statement about international crises: 'In this time of cosmopolitanism and internationalism all our plagues and afflictions become cosmopolitan and international plagues and afflictions' (*Arnhemsche courant*, 28 August 1877). Third, it was often a synonym of socialism or a particular strand of it: 'An agreement was reached to squash internationalism, communism, socialism and all kinds of "ism" that could lead to a revolution' (*Bohusläns Tidning*, 15 October 1872). Fourth, it could be used as a very negatively laden label for conspiratory internationalism with antisemitic and anti-Masonic overtones: 'Carbonism in Italy, Freemasonry in France, in England and in Austria, internationalism in Switzerland and Belgium, socialism in Germany – that all is the same thing under different names. It is a single society that at this moment holds the fate of Europe' (*De Grondwet*, 21 April 1878). Fifth, it could be used as a policy pursued by states, but then it was often connected either to socialism or to internationalism as a description of our times. In the latter three cases the tone was most often negative, but some positively laden examples also occur. Regardless of the valuation, at this time 'internationalism' did not refer to any kind of established ideological position of its own, although the suffix might lead one to think so (cf. Mazover 2013: 2).

While the discourse of internationalism differs somewhat from that of the international, the emergence of the former is nonetheless a sign of the semantic and political tensions that arose once the whole notion of the international became more laden with semantic baggage toward the end of the nineteenth century. At this point the international was partly detached from the conferences and exhibitions; several things were described as being international in themselves. As a result, the word became useful as a rhetorical device in individual speech acts. In criticisms of Masonic activity, the Freemasons were presented as an international threat regardless of whether or not they met in congresses. The policy of internationalism pursued by particular states was not necessarily tied to representing one's nation abroad, but was oriented towards shaping a different future world through political activities. The future was international regardless of whether particular authors liked it or not.

The new political nature and temporal directionality of internationalism ran parallel with several tonal shifts in the discourse on the international

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in the last decades of the century. As tensions rose between the European powers, terms such as 'international agitation', 'international jealousy' and 'international frictions' (re)surfaced frequently in the 1880s and 1890s. Compared to earlier periods of interstate tensions, the discourse on the international in these decades appears to be slightly different. From the 1890s onwards, newspapers all over Europe came to speak of international space on a higher level of generality. It was 'international politics' (another bigram that rose rapidly in frequency after 1880) that was in a permanent state of crisis. Terms such as 'international catastrophe' (first appearing in 1880), 'international fear' (1880), 'international panic' (1890) and 'international turmoil' (1898) reveal how the optimistic internationalism showcased in the exhibitions, conferences and associations was mirrored by an understanding of the international order as being in a permanent state of dissension and deadlock (Atkinson and Dodds 2002: 27–30). This crisis imaginary also speaks to a heightened actuality, as becomes clear from the rising frequency of 'current international problems, questions and trends' (Jordheim and Wigen 2018).

In this context of an increasingly abstract notion of 'the international' with its connotations of crisis and conflict, we encounter the emergence of other concepts. Most important in this respect is the concept of the 'world'. Both the noun 'world' and the adjective 'global' have a long history, but only in the 1890s were they used to refer to a unified space consisting of competing nations, cultures or civilizations (Jordheim and Sandmo 2018; Braun 1992). This relatively new conception of the world contained aspects that also marked the concept of international(ism). 'World politics' was used to refer to international diplomacy as a whole, but also to describe specific state policies aimed at both friendly cooperation and imperialist expansion. The latter aspect became dominant in line with fin-de-siècle fears for the near future. In *World Politics*, one of the first works to explicitly discuss the term as such, Ernest Hargrove wrote about the 'gloomy prospects' of 'the condition of the world at the present time', arguing that 'all classes, no matter their trade or occupation, are affected by events occurring on the other side of the globe', and for this reason 'correct diagnosis [of world politics] is necessary if malady is to be cured' (Hargrove 1898: 1–18). The German concept of *Weltpolitik* added an extra dimension to the concept: the German Kaiser used the term to refer to an aggressive expansionist foreign policy (Bach and Peters 2002). Similarly to the conception of internationalism as a specific policy outlook, *Weltpolitik* was used to denote policies of intervention. This, in turn, opened the door for discussions on the desirability of such policies.

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Conclusion

The rise of an international imaginary was heavily intertwined with the emergence of the national perspective as a dominant way of structuring the world. When coined in the late eighteenth century, the term 'international' was designed to grasp the encounter of national legal traditions. After the term extended from the legal sphere to cover financial and civic activities, it still was bound to the nation. Apparently an alternative to describing exhibitions as universal, talking about them as international allowed for national variations and comparison rather than universalization (see also Steinmetz 2020). At the same time, the comparability of national peculiarities in an international setting provided a kind of synchronization that made nations part of the same trajectory of progress and decline (Jordheim 2014; 2017). As more and more organizations established international meetings, led by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Workingmen's Association, the word 'international' started to acquire more layers of meaning, making it contested and more frequent in public discourse. In this process a more abstract notion of the international arose; it gained a future orientation as it represented a promise or a threat. In this sense, it became detached from representatives of different nations coming together, but rather became something in itself. It was now possible to have an international reputation or stand for internationalism as a loosely defined doctrine. Whatever was described as international was no longer only the sum of its national parts, but something more.

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Notes

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1. Dutch newspapers have been accessed at https://www.delpher.nl/.
2. Apart from Google Ngrams the claim is also based on the *Oxford English Dictionary* (https://www.oed.com), *Svenska Akademiens Ordbok* (https://www.saob.se), *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* (https://www.dictionnaire-academie.fr/) and *Deutsches Textarchiv* (http://www.deutschestextarchiv.de/).
3. http://stabikat.de.
4. Austrian newspapers have been accessed through Austrian Newspapers Online at https://anno.onb.ac.at/.
5. British newspapers have been accessed through British Library Newspapers at https://www.gale.com/intl/c/british-library-newspapers-part-i.

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