

Chapter 11

MAPPING INTERNATIONALISM: CONGRESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

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The Union of International Associations' documentation on international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) is a treasure trove for historians and social scientists alike. INGOs are part and parcel of the modern world. They both reflect and influence social, political, cultural and economic conditions around the globe. They occupy a space of human activity in between, but connected to, the market and the state, and this space seems to be growing.¹ The present chapter seeks to show how a historical investigation into this space might benefit from the use of UIA data.

As other contributions to this volume have noted, the UIA aims to register the key activities of all INGOs that exist or have ever existed. As anyone familiar with historical databases would immediately admit, a database with such a large geographical (the globe) and temporal span (in principle that of human history, though in practice mostly the past two centuries) cannot, and never will be, complete in its coverage. This is also acknowledged by the UIA and is partly caused by the fact that most of the data is provided by the organizations themselves.² For the present purpose – namely the visualization of various long-term developments – we will, however, assume that it can nonetheless offer a representative picture. For practical reasons, we focus on the period between 1800 and 1970, concentrating on two UIA datasets: the annual congress calendar and the *Yearbook* series, featuring all organizations that meet the UIA's definition of an INGO.

Mapping International Congresses

The UIA's material is a testimony to the internationalization of science and technology over more than a century. But it is, first and foremost, a means for understanding the internationalist movement itself and, in particular, its Brussels epicentre. The establishment of an institution responsible for federating international associations, congress bureaux and other technical organizations is in itself of significance, especially if it collects information on its own activities. UIA

data can help to shed light on specific kinds of international congresses, but also support enquiries into the broader phenomenon of 'the international congress'.³ Such material can complement existing studies that mostly focus on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, owing to the early availability of data for this period.⁴

Before conducting a global analysis of the data on international congresses, we need to consider the UIA's role when it started gathering information in the early twentieth century. Without challenging the intrinsic value of cataloguing projects for congresses, international organizations or centralized summaries of their decisions and publications, it appears that these initiatives were based on two pragmatic strategies that sought to place the UIA at the centre of the 'network' of internationalism. First of all, the UIA did not as such create links within a well-defined subject community like other organizations that bring together experts in a specific field. However, by providing a central service, it could boast of participating fully in internationalist work. In the logic of communication, the one that offers visibility to all the others is soon considered an important player, since, if its publications are echoed sufficiently, it is through them that the public become aware of the activity of these organizations. By becoming a servant of this community, the UIA sought to establish itself as an unavoidable factor.

To this internal perspective, which sought to ensure the UIA's credibility among international bureaux – some of which had already existed for several decades and did not necessarily have any reason to rely on such a 'union' – we can add a second, external perspective related to the relationship between the UIA and society. Assessing the visible manifestation of internationalism was also a way to prove to the world that this internationalism existed. Accordingly, UIA lobbying activities sought to convince decision makers and the wider public that internationalism was not a temporary phenomenon but rather a long-term trend that was progressing rapidly. And what better way than statistics on congresses and organizations to objectify this reality?

The UIA and its founders were, of course, not the only ones to make this observation. In the early twentieth century, several individuals sought to describe internationalism and provide figures to demonstrate its extent. Pierre-Yves Saunier's chapter in this volume has noted Alfred Fried's work, which subsequently resulted in a collaborative venture with the UIA. Other examples included the legal scholar – and later Governor of Connecticut – Simeon Eben Baldwin, who in 1907 discussed international congresses 'as forces working towards the solidarity of the world'.⁵ Moreover, John Culbert Farie devoted his 1913 doctoral thesis to documenting *The Rise of Internationalism*. The preface to its published version in 1915 inevitably referenced the outbreak of the First World War, while noting that his work sought to provide 'evidence of the extent of the growth of internationalism and the magnitude of a crime which retards its growth'.⁶ His own listing of international congresses had slightly fewer elements than the UIA's, but he adopted a similar quantitative approach. He found that 'there are several reasons for thinking that ... private congresses afford a truer index of the real growth of internationalism than official conferences',⁷ because they were more spontaneous, because the discussion there was less conditioned by official rigidity and because they were more varied, moving beyond the traditional questions of diplomatic

conferences (health, standardization, measures, conservation, communications, trade, security and international legislation).⁸

It is important to note that collection logic has evolved over time. As far as the pre-1945 years are concerned, it was only between 1907 and 1914 that the UIA possessed the resources to register congresses as they were being held. Staff directly entered information into a large card directory when these events were announced by the associations organizing them. It was also during these early years that the UIA's founders gathered information on earlier international congresses. When it eventually published two volumes of past international congresses much later, in 1960 and 1964, the data for the pre-1919 period was based on the work of La Fontaine and Otlet before the First World War.⁹ Yet even in the UIA's formative years, greater emphasis was placed on the listing of organizations than of congresses. After the First World War, the production of congress lists was not a priority either: in addition to the *Répertoire des Organisations Internationales*, which partly replaced the *Annuaire de la Vie Internationale*, the UIA published the *Code des Voeux des Associations Internationales*, which grouped together their resolutions.

The collection of information on congresses was only really initiated after the resumption of the UIA's activities around 1950. It no longer undertook a large and sometimes heterogeneous census of all congresses; instead, it was limited to a core group of the main international organizations, whose congresses were then listed on a self-declaration basis.¹⁰ When viewing Figure 11.1, this needs to be borne in mind: at first sight, it seems to suggest that from 1920 until the mid-1950s, the number of international congresses was much smaller than in the pre-war years. However, this apparent drop was not simply a consequence of the First World War, but reflected the fact that information was gathered on a more limited basis. The nature of the corpus changed, and all interpretations of the data must take this into account. In more recent decades, the activities of the UIA have seen further changes and its selection of organizations varied according to the needs of the UN, especially after 1978.¹¹ Moreover, the acceleration in the number of congresses from the 1960s led to an unparalleled expansion of the corpus, which makes it more difficult to compare it to the early years. For this reason, our analysis – which, after all, is a preliminary exploration – confines itself to the period before the 1960s.

With regard to the dataset and its limits, it should also be noted that the two world wars clearly interrupted the continuity of the congresses. In the case of the Second World War, the UIA database lists a few dozen meetings outside Europe, but the lists published by the UIA indicate no congresses being held during the First World War. While it is evident that only a very limited number of events could have taken place during these years, this complete void was due to a conscious decision made by the publishers of the second volume not to integrate the 275 congresses contained in their original files and covering the period August 1914 to December 1918. They regarded the vast majority of them as mere announcements of conferences that were then cancelled.¹² This kind of decision is obviously problematic, but the intervention was probably necessary and reminds us that a historical dataset is always the product of such a construction. It is therefore certain that other events appearing in Otlet and La Fontaine's files were also congresses announced but that did not materialize, whatever the year.

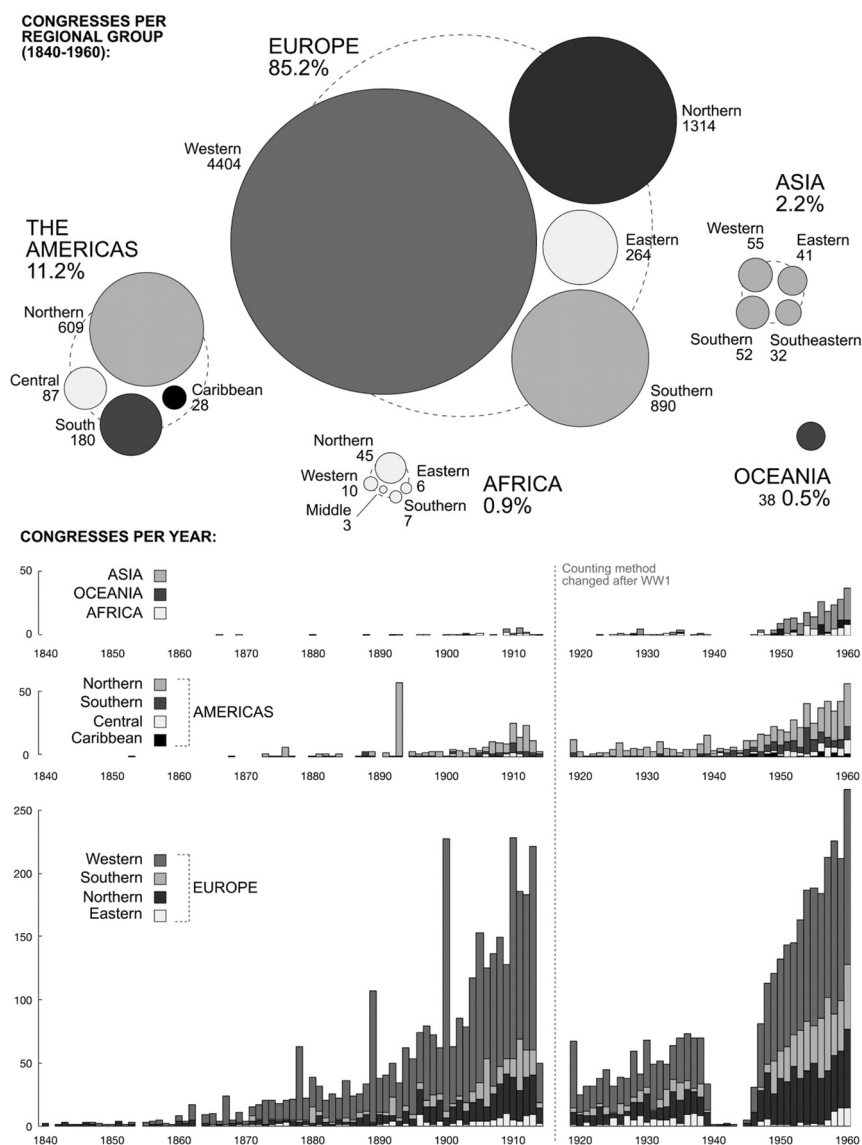


Figure 11.1 Sub-continental distribution of international congresses, 1840–1960. Above: Distribution of the total number of congresses between 1840 and 1960 in the main sub-continental divisions (United Nations geoscheme). The colours do not indicate a concentration but help to identify the regions in the histograms. Below: Annual breakdown by continent/sub-continent. *Source:* UIA database / Martin Grandjean.

If we look at the global geographical distribution of international congresses between 1840 and 1960 (Figure 11.1), we notice that this internationalism remained an essentially European phenomenon for a long time. Hosting more than 85 per cent of congresses during the whole period, Europe accounted for almost 92 per cent

of such events prior to the First World War. Apart from this, only the Americas hosted a significant proportion of congresses – at just over 11 per cent (7 per cent before 1914). A sub-continental division offers another image of this distribution. Indeed, even if a more detailed classification is far from perfect,¹³ it makes it possible to highlight the unbalanced situation in these two continents, with in both cases one region hosting two-thirds of the congresses. In Europe, most congresses were organized in the West (Germany, France and their Belgian, Dutch, Swiss and Austrian neighbours), although we see a gradual diversification from the 1950s onwards with the development of Northern Europe (Great Britain and Scandinavia) and Southern Europe (the Iberian and Italian peninsulas, the Balkans and Greece) as destinations for international meetings. In America, the North (the United States and Canada) hosted more congresses than the rest, but as the rest was less affected by the Second World War, diversification reached it earlier. From 1940, Latin America hosted half of the international congresses. On the other hand, it is only since the 1950s that international organizations gradually turned to Asia for their meetings.

But beyond these descriptive statistics, which make it possible to set the framework, to characterize the dataset and to contextualize ‘the congress’, the most obvious lesson from this brief quantitative survey is the confirmation that universal expositions played a central role in structuring the activity of international organizations in the late nineteenth century. The world’s fairs in Paris were particularly important since, as Figure 11.1 shows, there were indeed clear peaks in 1867, 1878, 1889 and 1900.¹⁴ As for Europe, we also note the early influence of the London international exhibition of 1862, as well as the peak recorded for Brussels in 1910, the richest year for congresses before the First World War (n=259) and the year that saw the final step towards the creation of the UIA. Even this did not equal the popularity of Paris a decade earlier, since only eighty-three congresses were held in Brussels in 1900 compared with a little over 200 in the French capital. On the subject of world’s fairs, we refer in particular to the work of Claude Tapia and Jacques Taieb, who carried out a similar study of congress data, focusing on Paris’s particular position as well as some thematic issues.¹⁵ Outside Europe, the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893 is also perfectly visible on the American histogram, since in that year fifty-eight congresses were held in the United States, including fifty-five in Chicago itself (the world total was ninety-five).

However, the logic that prevailed during the organization of a congress did not rest solely on the choice of country but rather on the choice of city with conference facilities, with means of transportation for maximum international access and, above all, with an international reputation for hosting institutions directly related to the congress theme. Consequently, among the states in question, only a handful of cities hosted the majority of congresses. Between 1840 and 1960, the twelve states most frequently hosting an international congress represented 85 per cent of the total number of events, a proportion that was actually as high as 90 to 95 per cent before 1914. And inside these few countries, one city, usually the capital, accounted on average for two-thirds of the congresses held in that country.

In Europe, as shown in Figure 11.2, the vast majority of congresses took place in the highly urbanized and industrialized region running from Manchester to Milan.¹⁶ In addition to being the most densely populated part of Western Europe, it is

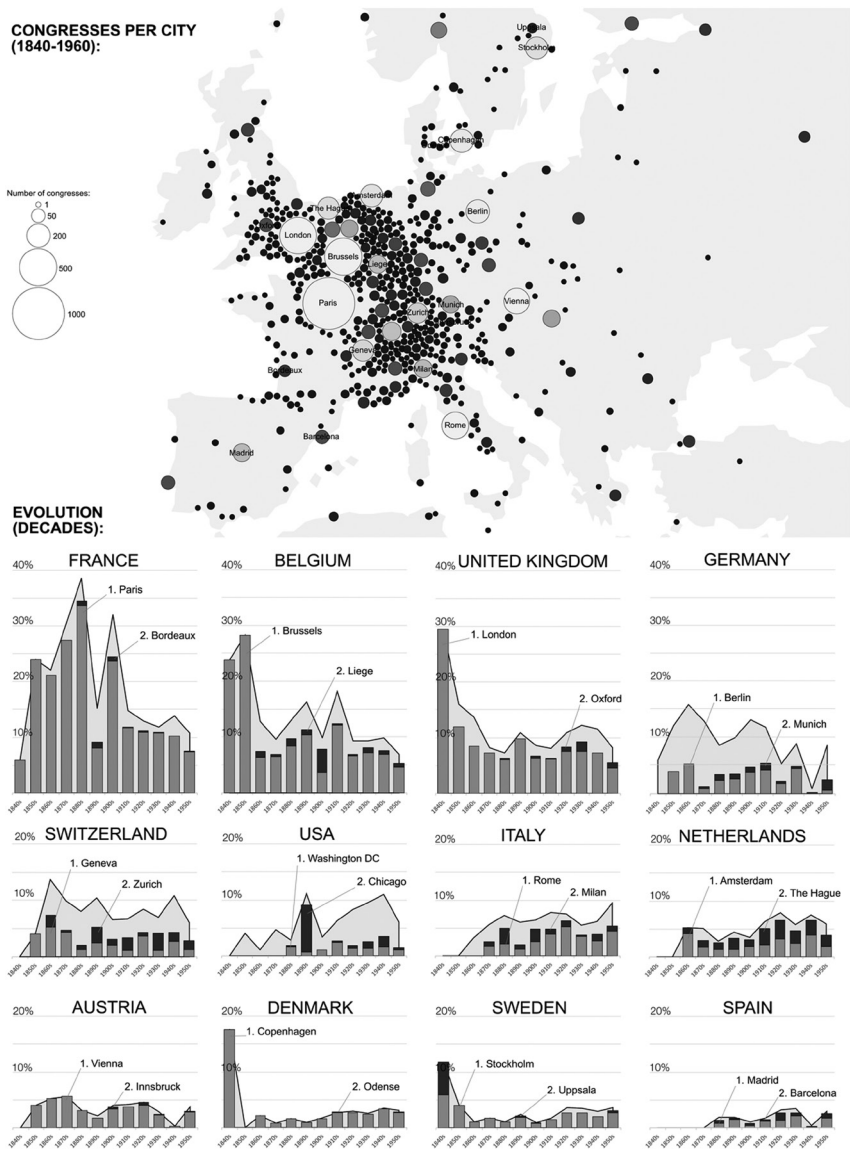


Figure 11.2 Congresses by city, 1840–1960. Above: Cartogram displaying the distribution of congresses by city between 1840 and 1960. The map is lightly anamorphic to expand areas where dots might overlap, especially in the European Megalopolis between Milan and Manchester. Only the two principal cities of the twelve principal countries are named. Below: Evolution in the twelve first countries, by decade, as a percentage of the world total. The surface is the percentage for the country, the light bar is the principal city and the dark bar is the second city (stacked). *Source:* UIA database / Martin Grandjean.

also its geographical centre. But of the more than 700 congress cities, only 102 hosted ten or more meetings between 1840 and 1960, and only fourteen of them hosted hundred or more.¹⁷ This very inequitable distribution, which cannot be fully explained by the universal expositions, shows that certain cities were rapidly becoming true poles of internationalism. France hosted the largest number of international congresses by far – more than 20 per cent of the total up to 1914, with peaks of over 30 per cent in some decades, followed by stabilization at around 13 per cent during the interwar years and after the Second World War. Not surprisingly, the most popular French congress city was its capital, hosting more than three quarters of the international events organized in France. The difference with the province is striking.

The histograms that accompany Figure 11.2 compare these values by decade for the top twelve congress host countries between 1840 and 1960 (as a proportion of the global total). By comparing the total proportion for a country (area marked by a line) with the score for its first two cities (light grey bars for the first and dark grey bars for the second), it becomes very clear that the dominance of the French capital was characteristic of states whose political, cultural and social activity was very strongly centralized. In contrast, in federal states and those that history and geography have organized around several urban centres (Germany, Switzerland, the United States and, to a lesser extent, Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands), the proportion of events hosted by the two principal cities compared with the national total was much smaller. As a sign of the diversification of congress venues at the end of the nineteenth century, the three great classical destinations of Paris, Brussels and London gradually lost ground in relative terms, stabilizing at around 10 per cent for the French capital and 8 per cent for the Belgian and British from the beginning of the twentieth century. Note that the very high proportions recorded during the first three decades, especially in France, Belgium, the UK, Denmark and Sweden, reflected the very low frequency of congresses and should not be interpreted as a trend but as an edge effect. It is also observed that among the twelve countries hosting the most international congresses, Switzerland was the only one whose first city was not its capital (Geneva and Zurich were more popular than Bern). In the United States and in the Netherlands, the capital narrowly took first place, ahead of Chicago and The Hague (the seat of government and parliament).

As already observed in the histograms for the main congress cities, temporality is an aspect difficult to combine with the spatial approach that interests us here. As the global displacement is fairly invisible on a short temporal scale, we may summarize the annual ‘centre of gravity’ per decade. This type of representation (Figure 11.3), which is generally used in studies dealing with the planet’s economic or demographic centre of gravity,¹⁸ makes it possible to globalize an analysis that would otherwise have been complicated. It shows a clear evolution in annual averages, from black (1840) to white (1960), from north-east to south-west. This trend is even more evident when looking at the averages by decade.

Logically, the annual centre of gravity of international congresses is generally located in a region close to the London-Brussels-Paris triangle. The extreme years

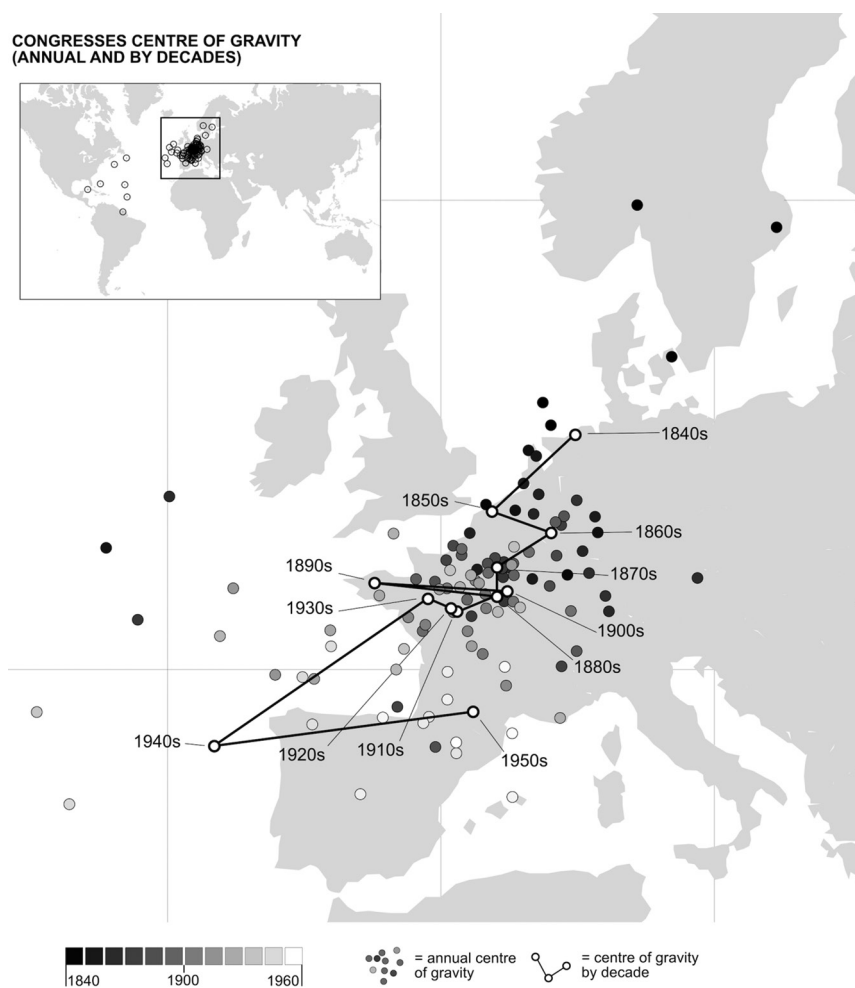


Figure 11.3 Centre of gravity of international congresses, 1840–1960. Evolution of the annual centre of gravity (dots), and its average, by decade (linked dots). *Source:* UIA database / Martin Grandjean.

are not inconsistent with this trend, but they might be coincidental variations. Indeed, during the earliest the very small number of congresses means these averages were very easily influenced by one or more events in Copenhagen or Stockholm, for example. It should also be noted that seven annual averages are not displayed on the European map but appear on the Atlantic coast of the American continent: these are the years 1893 (Chicago World's Fair) and 1940 to 1945, during which almost no congresses took place in Europe. These exceptional years also explain why the centres of gravity in the 1890s and 1940s break the relatively linear evolution of the other averages by decade.

If the centre of gravity changed little between 1870 and the Second World War, the period since 1950 saw a shift towards the South. This was the result of new destinations in the Americas as well as in Asia, Africa and Oceania. In conjunction with this development, the slight shift from East to West is explained by the number of international congresses increasing more rapidly in the Americas than in Asia (Figure 11.1). However, during the 1950s, Europe still hosted 78 per cent of all international congresses (61 per cent for Western and Northern Europe only).

Two Centuries of Data on International Non-Governmental Organizations

The UIA's *Yearbook* defines an INGO as an organized body, having a permanent headquarters and governing body, being non-governmental and international in orientation, that has its aims and projects in, and funding and members from, at least three countries. In practice, it also excludes multinational criminal and multinational commercial organizations.¹⁹ Grassroots movements without an organized body and permanent headquarters are excluded by definition, even if such a movement covers large parts of the globe.²⁰ Depending on the interests of the researcher, this might be an advantage or a disadvantage, but one can see why they are excluded: such movements are more fluid and therefore less likely to answer the questionnaire the UIA sends them.²¹ The definition of what constitutes an INGO thus has its limits, especially with regard to permanency and formality, and it was not entirely static over time.

What can historians learn from analysing the data on organizations? Figure 11.4 shows the number of new INGOs by decade and continent of their headquarters (1800–1979), excluding those organizations for which the continent is unknown.

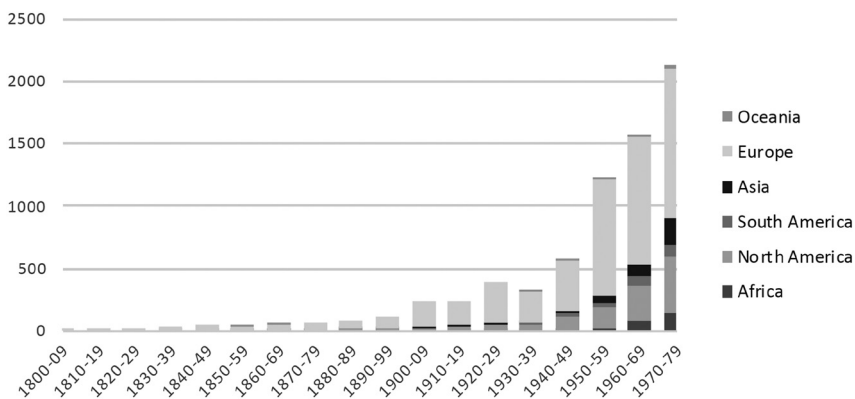


Figure 11.4 Number of new INGOs, by the decade of foundation and known continent of headquarters, 1800–1979. *Source:* UIA database, November 2016 / Marco H. D. van Leeuwen.

There are indeed many organizations for which relevant information is missing, presumably because for many of the older short-lived organizations it has not been possible to gather such information retrospectively.²² The figure shows an overall growth in numbers in all periods except for those prior to the First World War and the Second World War. By far the most organizations had their headquarters in Europe, followed by North America. The aims of many INGOs lay at least partly outside Europe. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society – currently named Anti-Slavery International – founded in London in 1839 is sometimes even regarded as the first INGO. And many organizations developed a global reach: the YMCA (founded in 1855), the International Vegetarian Union (1907), the International Chamber of Commerce (1919), the Comintern (1919), the World Council of Churches (1948), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (1948), Amnesty International (1961) and the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (1981).

Even in the nineteenth century, however, some organizations were *founded* outside Europe, and by its last decade INGOs had become a truly global phenomenon. Some organizations actively sought to combat European influences, as was the case with the Indian National Congress (1885) or the Muslim Brotherhood (1928). During the twentieth century, the globalization of INGO work led John Boli and George Thomas to speak of a ‘world culture’. Obviously, most of the organizations founded during the two world wars were set up outside Europe, notably in Latin America. One example was the South American Football Federation CONMEBOL (1916).²³ Although Figure 11.4 ends with 1970–79, this process of globalization has increased since then, with a growing proportion of organizations based in Asia, South America or Africa.²⁴

The UIA data covers INGOs of various types. In the following sections, we zoom in on a subset that is often seen as constituting the core – the ‘genuinely international non-governmental organizations’.²⁵ The UIA data covers only a fraction of the organizations in the *Yearbook* – the genuinely international NGOs existing in 1988 or having existed before that year but now being defunct. Table 11.1 makes clear which types of organization are in the dataset (active organizations types B, C and D, and similar organizations that have ceased to exist and are part of type H). It includes a clear minority (though arguably the most international) of all organizations covered by the UIA. The table uses data from 1988 to facilitate comparison with other records that we will use, as explained below.

We have at our disposal two datasets – both of which were kindly provided by its creators: one from the UIA and one used by Boli and Thomas in their seminal publications on the history of INGOs. The UIA file and the Boli/Thomas (BT) file relate to the same set of organizations, but they differ in some other respects. The BT file contains a small number of numerical variables keyed in from the 1988 *Yearbook* for most organizations, and the 1984 *Yearbook* for defunct organizations. The UIA file has more variables, including text strings. The UIA file, for example, gives us the name of an organization, their predecessor/successor and the countries in which it was active, whereas the BT file gives us the ID but not the name, and the number of countries but not their names.

Table 11.1 Organizations covered by the UIA, by section, in 1988

	IGO	NGO	Total
Conventional international bodies			
A Federations of international organizations	1	41	42
B Universal membership organizations	33	422	455
C Intercontinental membership organizations	45	796	841
D Regionally oriented membership organizations	230	3259	3489
<i>Total conventional</i>	309	4518	4827
Other international bodies			
E Organizations emanating from places, persons, bodies	751	1996	2747
F Organizations of special form	590	1538	2128
G Internationally oriented national organizations	52	8273	8325
<i>Total other</i>	1393	11807	13200
Special sections			
H Dissolved or apparently inactive organizations	240	2109	2349
R Religious orders and secular institutes	0	690	690
S Autonomous conference series	63	406	469
T Multinational treaties and intergovernmental agreements	1634	0	1634
<i>Total special</i>	1937	3205	5142
Total of all of the above	3639	19530	23169
Unconfirmed bodies			
J Recently reported bodies, not yet confirmed	137	1341	1478
U Untraceable (or currently inactive nonconventional) bodies	262	4033	4295
<i>Total unconfirmed</i>	399	5374	5773
Grand total all sections	4038	24904	28942
%	14.0	86.0	100

Source: UIA, *Yearbook of International Organizations 1988–1989*, vol. 2 (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1988), Appendix 7.

Given that the UIA file contains more detailed information than the BT file, it would seem the better dataset to work with, certainly if one is willing to make the effort to transform texts into the numerical values that make the BT file so neat to work with. However, the BT file does have extra information of two types: a categorization designed by Boli and Thomas of the work fields of an organization, and a variable indicating whether an organization was still active in 1988 or defunct by then, and, if so, whether this was due to its dissolution or a merger, for example. To preserve this extra information, we merged the UIA file with the BT file, although we lose cases in the process.²⁶ This merger does, however, make it possible to compare the categorization of work fields by the UIA with that of Boli and Thomas.²⁷ We start in 1800 and end in 1973. In our data, there are only four organizations predating 1800.²⁸ Although the UIA-BT file includes INGOs founded up to and including 1988, we stop in 1973 as that is the first year for which coverage by the UIA is thought to have become as complete as it was ever to become. It took some time before all new INGOs were included in the UIA files. As the UIA website says: 'In preparing and updating the organization profiles, the UIA gives priority to information received from the organizations themselves, then checks this information against other sources (periodicals, official documents,

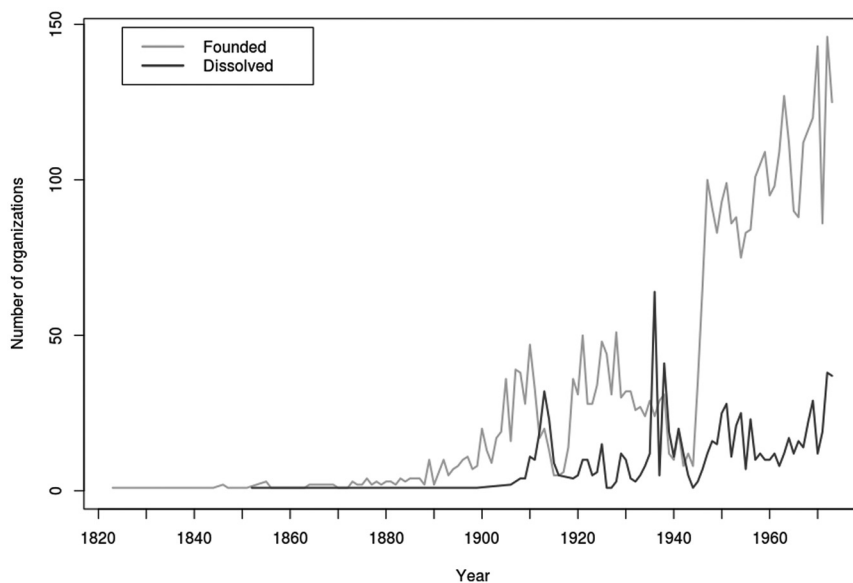


Figure 11.5 INGOs, by year of foundation and year of dissolution, 1800–1973. *Source:* Boli-Thomas and UIA datasets / Marco H. D. van Leeuwen.

media, etc.) to present a reliable picture of a dynamic situation.’ This timeframe is about fifteen years, meaning that by 1988, one can assume that the UIA had a comprehensive picture of all INGOs that existed in 1973.²⁹

What does the UIA-BT file tell us about the history of ‘genuine’ INGOs? Figure 11.5 shows the year of foundation for the INGOs in the UIA-BT file in the period 1800–1973. Figure 11.4 did something similar, but by decade for all organizations for which the UIA gathered data, whereas Figure 11.5 shows the year of foundation for our subset of genuine INGOs in our merged UIA-BT file. The graph also depicts the number of INGOs terminated per year. Though not entirely surprising, it is still useful to document the fact that more organizations disbanded and fewer were established during and before the two world wars.³⁰ In both periods, there were even more dissolutions than foundations.³¹

Boli and Thomas created a categorization of the work fields of the organizations in the dataset. They labelled these fields ‘primary aims’ and also created another variable for those organizations that covered further areas, which they labelled ‘secondary aims’. Here we look at the primary aims only, of which there are forty.³² The UIA currently also has its own categorization of work fields for organizations, termed ‘subject headings’ in the dataset. We present these aims and categories as word clouds in Figure 11.6. The word cloud based on the BT file shows clearly that, in order of prominence, the main work fields for INGOs were medicine, commerce, agriculture, sports, natural sciences, religion, education, social sciences, labour and services. As the UIA’s dataset has many more categories than the BT categorization, the word cloud



Figure 11.6 Word clouds for INGO work fields, according to the Boli-Thomas classification and the UIA-classification, 1800–1973. *Source:* Boli-Thomas and UIA datasets / Marco. H. D. van Leeuwen.

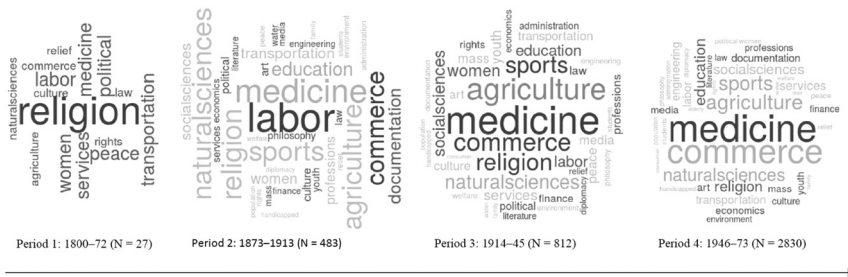


Figure 11.7 Word clouds for INGO work fields, by sub-period, 1800–1973 (Boli-Thomas categories). *Source:* Boli-Thomas dataset / Marco H. D. van Leeuwen.

based on its material is not strictly comparable, but the figure shows many similarities in terms of the prominence of particular work fields. There appears to be no easy way to make a crossover between the current UIA and BT categorizations of work fields.³³

Figures 11.7 and 11.8 show the same word clouds for INGO work fields as before, albeit in miniature form, by sub-period. It is interesting to see how, according to both the UIA and BT categorizations, the organizations founded in the first period were focused mostly on Christianity/religion, in the second period on workers/labour issues, and in the fourth on industry/commerce. The word clouds for the third period appear not to be especially similar, but this might in large measure be due to differences in coding – for example, educational work fields are coded into separate disciplines by Boli and Thomas, but as one category by the UIA. Overall, the comparison between the two independently made classifications suggests that both do a good job in capturing the work fields of INGOs, despite the difficulty in narrowing this down to one or two categories. Both categorizations

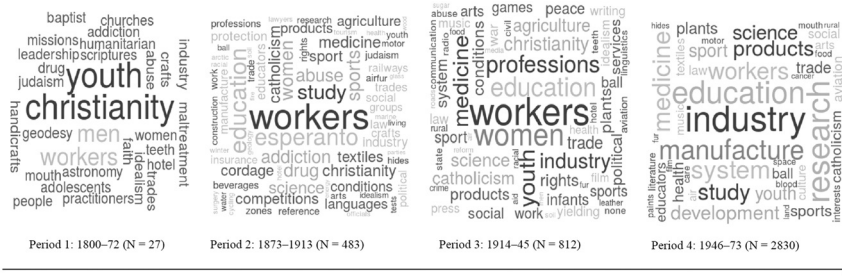


Figure 11.8 Word clouds for INGO work fields, by sub-period, 1800–1973 (UIA categories).
Source: UIA dataset / Marco H. D. van Leeuwen.

are static in nature, though, and subtle changes in work field over time therefore remain invisible.

Conclusion

Datasets this rich in temporal, geographical and thematic coverage are a feast for historians. While we have no reason to assume major flaws in terms of these records, it is inevitable that some organizations will have been missed, especially as the datasets essentially rely on self-reporting. At present, there is no yardstick to measure the degree of completeness. This problem is likely to be greater, the further one goes back in time and the more ephemeral, marginal or informal the organization in question was. Related to that is the fact that, for some older, more short-lived, marginal and informal organizations, there are many gaps in the data. It would be strange if this were not the case, but it is fair to acknowledge this and also to note that it would probably require much collaborative work by historians to fill in these gaps.

The *UIA Yearbook* is primarily meant to serve the world of international NGOs. This implies that, although the UIA has been gathering data for a long time and does consider the history of the organizations, these records do not provide everything that a historian of INGOs might wish for, as a historical review is not the UIA's stated aim. It seeks to document the world of INGOs in a certain year, rather than tracing it over time. The UIA stores the information on name changes or mergers in the 'history field', but in our data for 1988, there is only one organization and not the precursors. As the *Yearbook* documents only the situation with regard to, for example, aims and regional coverage in that particular year, the historian faces the problem not only of counting, but also, to some extent, of characterizing the aims and coverage as they evolved over time.

In other words, any given *Yearbook* will only give us a snapshot in any given year. This might not be a concern for the UIA as a service provider, or to those who use its information to study the world of INGOs in 2017. But for historians, or social scientists with an interest in historical processes, it might. Potentially,

this problem can be contained in several ways, notably by incorporating from the 'history' field of the UIA data; by going back to older yearbooks and incorporating information from previous decades;³⁴ or by undertaking detailed studies of one or more organizations.³⁵

Notwithstanding these limitations, we have been able to sketch some possibilities of using UIA data to trace the historical development of international non-governmental organizations. We have seen that the material can be used to provide an overview of the geographical distribution of international congresses since the second half of the nineteenth century. Our investigation has shown that this phenomenon was essentially centralized in a handful of cities, quickly identified as capitals of internationalism, and that it was only after the Second World War that diversification gathered momentum. By using UIA data, we have been able to visualize the number of INGO foundations and dissolutions over time as well as the shift from Europe and the West to a more global distribution. Moreover, we have traced patterns and processes of relations among INGOs and their work fields over time. The word clouds in the final section show that regardless of whether one uses the UIA's own classifications or those by Boli and Thomas, one will gain a similar picture of the changing work fields.

In a review of the UIA material, Elizabeth Bloodgood has drawn attention to the fact that despite the inherent attraction of the topic to historians, and despite the quality of the UIA data, there is not much quantitative transnational research on NGOs. She believes this paradox to be the result of several factors, including heuristic requirements requiring collaborative scholarship and the dominant social science research paradigms focusing on exceptionality rather than 'commonalities across cases, places and time'.³⁶ While we have stressed the potential pitfalls of using UIA information historical purposes, its use for research on non-governmental organizations is evident. Alongside other recent endeavours, the chapters in the present volume suggest that the era of what one might term the 'social-science history of international non-governmental organizations' has truly started.³⁷

Notes

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- 1 See, for example, John Boli and George M. Thomas, eds, *Constructing World Culture: International Non-Governmental Organizations since 1875* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Thomas Davies, *NGOs: A New History of Transnational Civil Society* (London: Hurst, 2013); Davide Rodogno, Bernhard Struck and Jakob Vogel, eds, *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s* (New York: Berghahn, 2015); Christian Topalov, ed., *Laboratoires du nouveau siècle: les nébuleuses réformatrices et ses réseaux en France, 1880–1914* (Paris: EHESS, 1999); Pamala Wiepking and Femida Handy, eds, *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Philanthropy* (New York: Palgrave, 2015).
- 2 ‘Editorial Problems and Policies’ (Appendix 10.3), in UIA, *Yearbook of International Organizations, 2015–16*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 15–21.
- 3 Eric Brian, ‘Y a-t-il un objet Congrès? Le cas du Congrès international de statistique (1853–1876)’, *Mil Neuf Cent. Revue d’histoire Intellectuelle* 7, no. 1 (1989): 9–22; Christophe Prochasson, ‘Les Congrès: lieux de l’échange intellectuel. Introduction’, *Mil Neuf Cent. Revue d’histoire Intellectuelle* 7, no. 1 (1989): 5–8.
- 4 See Anne Rasmussen, ‘Jalons pour une histoire des congrès internationaux au XIXe siècle: régulation scientifique et propagande intellectuelle’, *Relations Internationales* 62 (1990): 115–33.; Claudia Tapia and Jacques Taieb, ‘Conférences et congrès internationaux de 1815 à 1913’, *Relations Internationales* 5 (1976): 11–35; Nico Randerdaad, ‘Triggers of Mobility: International Congresses (1840–1914) and their Visitors’, in *Mobility and Biography [European History Yearbook, vol. 16]*, ed. Sarah Panter (Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 63–82.
- 5 Simeon E. Baldwin, ‘The International Congresses and Conferences of the Last Century as Forces Working Toward the Solidarity of the World’, *The American Journal of International Law* 1, no. 3 (1907): 565–78.
- 6 John Culbert Faries, *The Rise of Internationalism* (New York: W.D. Gray, 1915), 6.
- 7 Faries, *The Rise of Internationalism*, 73.
- 8 Faries himself established this classification. *Ibid.*, 47 et seq.
- 9 *Les Congrès Internationaux de 1681 à 1899, Liste Complète* (Brussels: UIA, 1960) and *Les Congrès Internationaux de 1900 à 1919, Liste Complète* (Brussels: UIA, 1964).
- 10 Data for the years after 1919 are taken from the UIA database: ‘The International Congress Calendar’. Available online: <https://uia.org/calendar> (accessed 9 October 2017). On this subject, see Elizabeth Bloodgood, ‘The Yearbook of International Organizations and Quantitative Non-State Actor Research’, in Reinalda, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Non-State Actors*, 19–34.
- 11 Evelyn L. Bush, ‘Measuring Religion in Global Civil Society’, *Social Forces* 85, no. 4 (2007): 1645–65.
- 12 *Les Congrès Internationaux de 1900 à 1919*, 3.
- 13 This classification is based on the United Nations geoscheme of the UN Statistics Division, M.49 standard.
- 14 On Paris congresses and universal expositions, see Anne Rasmussen, ‘Les Congrès internationaux liés aux Expositions universelles de Paris (1867–1900)’, *Mil Neuf Cent. Revue d’histoire Intellectuelle* 7, no. 1 (1989): 23–44.
- 15 Tapia and Taieb, ‘Conférences et congrès internationaux de 1815 à 1913’. See, for example, p. 15.
- 16 The famous ‘blue banana’ introduced by Brunet. See Roger Brunet, *Les Villes ‘européennes’* (Paris: DATAR / La Documentation française, 1989).
- 17 Paris (1,074), Brussels (532), London (512), Rome (260), Vienna (236), Berlin (187), Copenhagen (182), Amsterdam (170), Stockholm (163), The Hague (161), Geneva

- (149), Zurich (133), Berne (106) and Washington DC (100). Followed by Liège (99), Milan (97), Madrid (97), Chicago (90), Munich (89), Antwerp (88), Budapest (86), New York (73), Oslo (70), Ghent (62) and Hamburg (55).
- 18 Danny Quah, 'The Global Economy's Shifting Centre of Gravity', *Global Policy* 2, no. 1 (2011): 3–9.
 - 19 See 1.3 'Types of Organization' (Appendix 10.3: 'Editorial Problems and Policies'). Available online: https://uia.org/system/files/pdf/v5/2017/10_3.pdf (accessed 26 January 2018).
 - 20 Nitza Berkovitch, 'The Emergence and Transformation of the International Women's Movement', in Boli and Thomas, *Constructing World Culture*, 100–27, identified 195 such organizations in the UIA Yearbooks from 1950 to 1993. She cites evidence of a larger number of organizations, especially of the network type not included in the Yearbook.
 - 21 The UIA can also be seen as a service provider for INGOs that pay a membership fee, and many grassroots movements cannot do that.
 - 22 For around half the organizations in the period between 1800 and 1979, the location of their headquarters is unknown.
 - 23 John Boli and George Thomas, 'INGOs and the Organization of World Culture', in *Constructing World Culture*, ed. idem, 32–3.
 - 24 Membership outside Europe has also grown. See Anheier, Glasius and Kaldor, 'Introducing Global Civil Society', 5. This was especially so in low- and middle-income countries.
 - 25 John Boli and George M. Thomas, 'World Culture in the World Polity: A Century of International Non-Governmental Organization', *American Sociological Review* 62, no. 2 (1997): 171–90, and Boli and Thomas, *Constructing World Culture*; Bloodgood, 'The Yearbook of International Organizations and Quantitative Non-State Actor Research', 19–33. See the *Yearbook's* 'Types of Organization' section (as cited in note 19).
 - 26 We merged the UIA file with the BT file using an ID that was identical after deleting the second letter in the BT file (which used the ID style with double first letters in use by the UIA in 1988). In some cases, we could not find a match as the ID number had changed after 1988. We continued to work only with the organizations we could match, as this enabled us to use the additional variables in the BT file and make comparisons between the BT classification and that of the UIA. Although we lost a considerable number of cases as a result, the new file had 4,152 INGOs founded between 1800 and 1973.
 - 27 Boli and Thomas, drew up their own classification. See idem, 'INGOs and the Organization of World Culture', 49.
 - 28 The 2016 Yearbook lists 202 organizations founded before 1800 because it covers many other types of organization than are in our dataset. See Table 1.
 - 29 As noted in Boli and Thomas, 'INGOs and the Organization of World Culture', 21 and Jackie Smith and Dawn Wiest, 'The Uneven Geography of Global Civil Society: National and Global Influences on Transnational Association', *Social Forces* 84, no. 2 (2005): 621–52.
 - 30 See for example, by Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Davies, *NGOs*; Boli and Thomas, 'INGOs and the Organization of World Culture', 23. See also two seminal studies: Kjell Skjelsbaek, 'The Growth of International Nongovernmental Organization in the Twentieth Century', *International Organization* 25, no. 3 (1971): 420–42; Michael Wallace and J. David Singer, 'Intergovernmental Organization in the Global System, 1815–1964: A Quantitative Description', *International Organization* 24, no. 2 (1970): 239–87.

- 31 The foundation years are derived from the UIA file and have no missing values. The failure years are derived by combining categories of the variable Failure Type created by Boli and Thomas: 1 – inactive or dissolved; 2 – merged or absorbed; 3 – replaced; 4 – no longer international. In the case of 232 organizations, we do not know in what year they failed. The true level of failure is thus somewhat higher than the line in the graph suggests. If the 232 missing cases were disproportionately from around the First and Second World Wars, the failure line would surpass the foundation line even more than the graph suggests.
- 32 These fall under a smaller number of larger categories. This variable has sixty-seven missing cases. Boli and Thomas also created a variable to capture which organizations had another, secondary, aim; this occurred only in a minority of cases (there are 3,026 organizations without a secondary aim).
- 33 The UIA has 2,284 more detailed work fields, some of them repeated in various broader categories, and 134 broader ones, including the regional categories (for example 'Africa'). Boli and Thomas have forty more detailed work fields and thirteen more general ones. While the many detailed UIA subject headings could be matched to broader categories also created by the UIA, using a matrix file kindly provided by the UIA, the smaller subject headings (for example 'political') match with multiple broader categories (such as 'government' and 'metapolitics'). In addition, there are multiple subject headings per organization, corresponding to multiple broader categories, and choosing the first one could be misleading, since they are ordered alphabetically. Therefore, the first subject heading is not necessarily the one that best describes the organization. For these reasons, we postponed automatically mapping UIA work fields onto BT work fields.
- 34 As Smith and Wiest, 'The Uneven Geography of Global Civil Society', did for a group of organizations.
- 35 As has been done in several chapters in the seminal study commissioned by Boli and Thomas, *Constructing World Culture*.
- 36 Bloodgood, 'The Yearbook of International Organizations', 19.
- 37 Amanda Murdie and David R. Davis, 'Looking in the Mirror: Comparing INGO Networks Across Issue Areas', *Review of International Organizations* 7, no. 2 (2012): 177–202; Patricia Bromley, 'The Rationalization of Educational Development: Scientific Activity among International Nongovernmental Organizations', *Comparative Education Review* 54, no. 4 (2010): 577–601; Jackie Smith and Dawn Wiest, *Social Movements in the World-System: The Politics of Crisis and Transformation* (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 2012).