

# Workers of the world? A digital approach towards the international scope of Belgian socialist newspapers, 1885-1940

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Socialism and internationalism are almost by definition intrinsically related concepts. It has been argued that attitudes towards internationalism and cosmopolitanism have been changed over time due to changing geo-political situations and organisational landscapes. Moreover, internal rifts within socialist internationalism resulted in multiple social democrat, anarchist, communist and even non-western socio-cultural constructs of internationalism (Doglinani, 2016).

In this paper we use digital tools to search for expressions of internationalism and cosmopolitanism in Belgian socialist discourse from 1885 until 1940 by text mining two socialist newspapers: the French-speaking journal *Le Peuple* and the Dutch-speaking *Vooruit*. Our paper consists of two parts. In the first part we extract the geographical entities in 9 samples distributed equally in time that have been crucial in the socio-political history of Belgium and Europe as a whole: 1886-1887, 1892-1893, 1901-1902, 1905-1906, 1912-1913, 1917-1918, 1924-1925, 1931-1932, 1937-1938. This will allow us to compare the balance between local, national and international news items, making use of Natural Language Processing (extracting geographical entities). In the second part of our paper we will assess the internationalist and cosmopolitan rhetoric in the newspapers' discourse. In line with Van de Bos and Giffard (2016), who have been studying emerging nationalism in public discourse, we will assess the different methodologies ranging from topic models, word collocation and n-grams.

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