

**CfP: The Vienna Congress 1814–15. Political culture and international politics.
Vienna, 17 to 20 June 2015**

The Congress of Vienna is seen as one of the most important historical events in the transition from the Ancien Régime to the modern world of European states. The political and territorial reorganization of Europe that was agreed upon in Vienna within the period of a few months formed, on one hand, the basis of a new international order of peace that was to last half a century. On the other hand, the statesmen who met in Vienna developed a trendsetting form of political culture. After having experienced a “world war” for over two decades and the collapse of the old European legal order, the urgent need of the hour seemed to be designing and implementing legally binding international standards and agreements to ensure peace at home and abroad. To avoid wars in the future, international conflicts were now to be resolved through negotiation.

The Congress was also a political and social communications event of the first order: It involved the organization of negotiations between more than 200 representatives of European states and principalities, and the ordering of everyday and social events for the more than 10,000 guests in the city.

In the anniversary year 2015 the project network “Wiener Kongress” (see: www.wienerkongress.at) is convening an international scholarly conference. It is planned to examine the most important research questions that still remain unanswered with regard to the event of the 19th century, the “Congress of Vienna.”

The conference languages will be German and English. Interested participants are invited to submit proposals (max. 600 words) for presentations within the seven panels described below. Please send your proposal and a short CV by 30 April 2013 to Karin Schneider (karin.schneider@uibk.ac.at) or Eva Werner (eva.werner@uibk.ac.at).

1. Networks and actors

Until now the socio-political background of the Vienna talks, the political and social networks that influenced the actions of the actors, has received little scholarly attention. Social events, regular meetings in private environments, or the physical proximity of lodging supported and directed the communication between the actors. This proposed panel will thus focus on the following factors:

- Communication circles of the diplomatic missions
- Negotiation strategies of the diplomatic actors
- Communication strategies of the stakeholders
- Locations and rooms where political communication took place
- Social events and political communication

2. The tension between public and secret diplomacy

The decisions at the Congress of Vienna were seemingly made privately within a small circle of the powerful to the exclusion of the public. Nonetheless the public played an important role in many questions. The main concern of this panel will be to examine this aspect. How were the numerous guests and the population of Vienna included in the events that were happening in Vienna? What role did the media take in the decision-making and how did it mediate these decisions to the various states taking part? Here one might also make a comparison between how the negotiations were held and how they were conveyed at other conferences.

3. International law and international agreements

The epoch-making significance of the Congress of Vienna regarding developments in international law is reflected in the long-term survival of the decisions that were taken.

Certain agreements have remained valid until today, such as the declaration on the abolition of the slave trade, regulations on shipping freedom, or the ranking between diplomatic representatives. But the general concept of a comprehensive peace order for all of Europe was also innovative and exemplary. The forming of the German Confederation, in which larger powers and small states were united, is also of considerable interest for the structuring of international and supranational organizations in the 21st century. The contributions to this panel will examine these and other questions of international law that present themselves on the occasion of the bicentennial anniversary.

4. The European state system and its body of rules

In recent decades, the European peace and security system established in the course of the Congress of Vienna has repeatedly been at the center of debates that have contributed valuable insights into the mechanisms of European power policy. To gain a better understanding of the historical structural processes, it is necessary to go beyond the limits of classical political history and examine new facets. In practice, this means not only looking at the genesis and effect of the so-called Vienna Rules in Europe, but also to focus on the pluralistic policy order beyond the European continent. Starting from this premise, the following aspects, among others, are of particular interest:

- The development and operation of “concerted” policy: rules and conflict management (alliances, multilateral treaties, consultation mechanisms, etc.)
- Concrete politico-military instruments (territorial “barriers,” military routes, fortresses, etc.)
- Formation of a European civil society and an “international society”
- Intervention debates and their political ramifications
- Europe and the theaters of conflict overseas
- The Vienna peace order as a precondition for the dynamics of European expansion and the dominance of the British in the 19th century (e.g., the Mediterranean as an area dominated by the British)

5. State finances and politics

The threat of bankruptcy in France contributed significantly to the outbreak of the 1789 Revolution and consequently, to the long armed conflicts between the various regimes in Paris and a majority of the European states of the time. After nearly a quarter century of war, many European countries were faced with serious if not existential financial problems. Accordingly, in 1814/15 the state agents had an intrinsic interest in getting their problems of debt under control. These financial difficulties are an aspect that has received almost no scholarly attention, despite their parallel to current events.

Possible questions to be addressed in this panel include the role of reparation payments and financial compensation, the rules for repaying the many war loans that had been taken out from international capital markets, the presence of representatives of the international banking and capital world at the meetings of government representatives, and also constitutional issues regarding the problem of financial control and legal security. And not least, the impact in the years after the Congress of Vienna of financial exhaustion on international politics should be examined.

6. Art, music and culture

The Congress of Vienna served as a platform for cultural output of all kinds. This included traditional visual media such as medals and paintings, but also graphic reproductions, which served as a flexible medium for portraying the events taking place. And still today the Congress is seen as having been an unending party, an image that was formed by the fiction, poetry and operetta produced at the end of the 19th century connected above all with creating an artificial picture of “Old Vienna.” The proposed panel will discuss the following questions:

- What role did the arts play in the service of politics and prestige?
- What kind of cultural exchange can be determined as having taken place during the Congress due to the presence of so many international artists?

7. The Congress of Vienna in the culture of remembrance

After years of being negatively assessed, the Congress of Vienna is now usually seen in a positive light: as a meeting that despite serious conflicts of interest was able to create a peaceful order which lasted a relatively long time. To the mind of the general public, however, the Congress of Vienna is primarily thought of as an extravagant celebration. This was not only due to the many diaries and memoirs that were published, but due also for example to the operetta *Wiener Blut* (1899) and several motion pictures. Closely associated with the image of the Congress of Vienna is also the general memory of the figure of Prince Metternich, whose one-sided image as a reactionary oppressor of freedom and national unity is widespread. Only recently has research increasingly placed this in question.

This panel will begin with these images and interpretations of the Congress. It will not examine the Congress of Vienna itself, but rather the collective memory of this big event, something that until now has never been systematically investigated. Various media of remembrance can be analyzed for this purpose, such as historiography, memorial literature, visual media, newspapers, textbooks, exhibitions and films. Here the different national backgrounds should be taken into account.