

The Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815: Diplomacy, Political Culture and Sociability

Der Wiener Kongress. Die Neugestaltung Europas 1814/15. By Heinz Duchhardt. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2013. Pp. 128. ISBN. 978 3 406 653 81 0. £7.

Der Wiener Kongress – eine kirchenpolitische Zäsur? Eds. Heinz Duchhardt and Johannes Wischmeyer. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2013. Pp. 313. ISBN. 978 3 525 10123 0. £46.

Der Wiener Kongress 1814/15. By Wolf D. Gruner. Stuttgart: Reclam, 2014. Pp. 261. ISBN 978 3 15 019252 8. £6.

The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy. War and Great Power Diplomacy after Napoleon. By Mark Jarrett. London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014. Pp. 522. ISBN. 9781 78453 0563. £15.99.

Le congrès de Vienne. Une refondation de l'Europe 1814-1815. By Thierry Lentz. Paris: Perrin, 2013. Pp. 385. ISBN. 978 2 262 03305 7. £19.

Le congrès de Vienna (1814-1815). Carnet mondain et éphémérides. By Robert Ouvard. Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2014. Pp. 570. ISBN. 978 2 36942 070 5. £20.

Der Wiener Kongress. By Reinhard Stauber. Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2014. Pp. 285. ISBN. 978 3 8252 4095 0. £15.

Mächtepolitik und Friedenssicherung. Zur politischen Kultur Europas im Zeichen des Wiener Kongresses. Eds. Reinhard Stauber, Florian Kerschbaumer and Marion Koschier. Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2014. Pp. 208. ISBN. 978 3 643 50502 6. £23.

The Congress of Vienna. Power and Politics after Napoleon. By Brian Vick. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 2014. Pp. 436. ISBN 978 0 674 72971 1. £29.95.

Rites of Peace. The Fall of Napoleon and the Congress of Vienna. By Adam Zamojski. London: Harper Perennial, 2008. Pp. 634. ISBN. 978 0 00 720306 2. £12.99.

Phantom Terror. The Threat of Revolution and the Repression of Liberty 1789-1848. By Adam Zamojski. London: William Collins, 2014. Pp. 569. ISBN. 978 0 00 728276 0. £30.

I

On 29 November 1814, the Austrian Emperor Francis, the Russian Tsar Alexander and the Prussian King Frederick Wilhelm, along with 6,000 others, attended a concert in Vienna's Redouten Hall. Beethoven personally conducted three of his works: the

Seventh symphony, the bombastic Wellington's Victory and a newly written Cantata entitled 'The Glorious Moment'. In this Cantata, the figure of 'Vienna' sings the following words:

Oh heaven, what delight!

What spectacle greets my gaze!

All that the earth holds in high honour

Has assembled within my walls!

My heart throbs! My tongue stammers!

I am Europe – no longer one city.

For eight months it seemed Europe – and even the wider world, to some extent – was centred on Vienna. Monarchs, ministers, diplomats, representatives, dignitaries, cultural luminaries, society figures (along with many others) attended opulent celebrations and public spectacles. Amidst this whirlwind, numerous committee meetings and informal negotiations about the future shape of Europe were being conducted. At the end, under pressure from Napoleon's unexpected escape from Elba, the consolidated final act (encompassing a number of separate treaties) was signed on 9 June 1815. Nine days later, the Duke of Wellington, who had left Vienna to lead the Allied forces in present-day Belgium, defeated Napoleon at Waterloo.

In general there have been two historiographical strands on the Congress of Vienna. First, there has been diplomatic history detailing the territorial settlements and other related topics following the defeat of Napoleon. The key figures of Metternich, Castlereagh, Talleyrand, Hardenberg, Humboldt, Nesselrode and Tsar Alexander normally form the basis of such an account. One of the most influential works on this period has been Paul W. Schroeder's 'The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848', which postulated a 'fundamental change ... in governing rules,

norms, and practices of international politics ... [moving towards] nineteenth-century concert and political equilibrium'.¹ Schroeder identifies the time leading up to and around the time of the Congress as the crucial turning point when, as allies, the main decision-makers were developing and learning a new grammar for diplomacy based on mutual restraints, negotiation and co-operation. The second historiographical strand takes a different focus and is more populist. Here the festivities and celebrations surrounding the Congress – the salons, personalities, love affairs, entanglements, extravagant celebrations and the like – take centre stage. Works in this strand often mention the diplomatic intricacies in passing or as background to the vivid social life of the Congress.

In recent years, there have been increasing attempts to bridge the two worlds and re-conceptualize our understanding of the Congress and how it functioned. The role of the public, ideas, the press, women, salons, society events and personal networks were both a background to and an important influence on political decision-making. Yet the relationship is often obscure and difficult to trace, certainly in comparison to more obvious power political considerations such as the number of 'souls', specific borders and the geo-political balance. For example, was it important that the Monarchs went to a Beethoven concert together? What symbolism was there at the concert and how did it effect people, if it all? Then, after the concert in the fashionable salons, beyond the conversation, love affairs and amateur theatrics, did the salons also function as a forum and meeting place for politics? If so, how and with what consequences? To a large extent investigations into this nexus between civil society and politics can only ever be tentative, suggestive and provisional since direct links are difficult to document. Nevertheless, outlining potential connections and

¹ Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848* (Oxford, 1996), p. v.

demonstrating how they worked, or could have worked, illuminates an aspect of politics that has often been neglected or ignored, especially in diplomatic history.

This review article is structured into three parts. The first section sets out a spectrum of approaches to the Congress from traditional diplomatic history (Jarrett) at one end, to the chronicling of social life at the other (Ouvrard). Some contrasting examples mixing the two (Zamoyski, Vick) will also be discussed. The second section provides an overview of general works on the Congress intended both for students and general readership (Lentz, Stauber, Duchhardt, Gruner). The final section covers the two edited collections: one on religion (Duchhardt/Wischmeyer) and the other on political culture in a very broad sense (Stauber/Kerschbaumer/Koschier).

‘What is the Congress of Vienna?’, wrote the Prussian thinker, civil servant and diplomat Wilhelm von Humboldt in a memorandum drafted on the eve of the Congress. He answered his own question: ‘It can only be explained historically. The French Revolution and Napoleon had changed nearly the entire landscape of politics in Europe’.² Not only was the map of Europe redrawn, but powerful movements such as constitutionalism, nascent democracy, growing industrialization, increased literacy, expanded public sphere, renewed social networks, centralized bureaucracy, romanticism, mass immigration, imperialism (amongst others) were fundamentally changing politics and society.³ Hopefully, the recent bicentenary with its conferences

² Quoted in Charles Webster, *The Congress of Vienna* (London, 1963, orig. 1919), p. 176.

³ For example C.A. Bayly uses the title ‘the modern world in genesis’ for the period from the early to mid-nineteenth century. C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World 1780-1914. Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford, 2004). See also Paul Johnson, *The Birth of the Modern. World Society 1815-1830* (London, 1991). Jürgen Osterhammel utilizes Reinhart Koselleck’s concept of ‘Sattelzeit’ (saddle period) for the time of transition to modernity, roughly 1750-1850 (or sometimes 1770-1830). Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World. A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, 2014), pp. 58-63.

and slew of books will provide an impetus for a closer and deeper investigation of this fascinating period.⁴

II

Mark Jarrett's book on the Congress and subsequent diplomatic developments has been widely praised – and rightly so. It is clearly written and presents an admirable overview of international politics from the eclipse of Napoleon to the end of the Congress System in 1823. To a large extent Jarrett agrees with Schroeder's thesis and describes the Congress System, especially the regular summit conferences, as '... an audacious experiment. It was the first time in history that statesmen attempted to establish institutional mechanisms to superintend relations between sovereign states with the aim of maintaining world peace and stability'. (p. 353). By January 1823, however, Congress system was fraying to the extent that the new British Foreign Secretary George Canning (who had replaced his rival and one of the principal architects of the system, Lord Castlereagh) could proudly write: 'Every nation for itself, and God for us all'. (p. 344). Jarrett frames his work around an overarching question; namely, whether the Congress System, which was based on international law and maintenance of the status quo, could have accommodated the demands associated with gradual increased democratization. While he poses this question, Jarrett leaves it essentially unanswered.

⁴ Conferences included 'The Congress of Vienna and its Global Dimension' (Vienna, 18-22 September 2014), 'Vienna 1815: The Making of a European Security Culture' (Amsterdam, 5-7 November 2014), 'The Congress of Vienna 1814-15. Making Peace after Global War' (New York, 5-7 February 2015), 'Der Wiener Kongress 1814/15. Politische Kultur und internationale Politik' (Vienna, 17-20 June 2015) and 'The Congress of Vienna – Reconsidered' (London, 4 September 2015). There was a major exhibition at Vienna's Belvedere Palace entitled 'Europa in Wien. Der Wiener Kongress 1814/15' (February-June 2015). A recent review essay covering some of the same books as this one is Katherine Aaslestad, 'Serious Work for a New Europe: The Congress of Vienna after Two Hundred Years', *Central European History* 48 (2015) 2, pp. 225-37.

The Congress of Vienna forms a small, though significant, component of Jarrett's compelling narrative – it constitutes about a quarter of the book. This section provides a good example of Jarrett's logical, systematic approach. He begins with a short overview of its intentions, emphasizing the Congress as a legitimizing tool and as an appeal to international public law (p. 69). This is followed with considerable background information on the various main players and their common experiences – aristocratic roots, the French Revolution, liberal Enlightenment and survival in the Napoleonic years (pp. 74-84). He then deals with various topics in turn – diplomatic aims, procedural questions, social life (2 pages), the Polish question, German Confederation, Italy, Switzerland and others. Each is afforded a succinct, lucid section outlining the essential issues, viewpoints and events. Indeed, Jarrett's format evokes a detailed lawyer's brief (Jarrett has been a practicing lawyer) or a civil servant's summary – presenting the necessary information in a concise, logical manner, then providing a considered, balanced, not overly personal viewpoint. Jarrett's final assessment of the Vienna settlement is largely positive, in line with prevailing interpretations of Kissinger and Schroeder.⁵ According to Jarrett, most states generally achieved their aims, while as a whole stability was restored and the map of Europe greatly simplified (pp. 154-7).

To a large extent the remainder of the book is about the genesis, apogee and fall of the Congress System – from the Quadruple Alliance through the various Congresses at Aix-la-Chapelle (1818), Troppau (1820), Laibach (1821) and Verona (1822). Here Jarrett could have sharpened and commented on the division between the two periods. First, there was the settlement of the post-Napoleonic world

⁵ Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored. Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace 1812-1822* (London, 2000 orig. 1957), pp. 172-4, idem, 'The Congress of Vienna: A Reappraisal', *World Politics* 8 (1956) 2, pp. 264-80 (where he is more forceful in his arguments) and Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 575-82.

encompassing the First Treaty of Paris, the Congress of Vienna and the Second Treaty of Paris. Second, there were the subsequent developments, which built on the ideas of allied co-operation and conference diplomacy, forming an evolving, reactive response to various challenges to the 1814-1815 settlements. Here the issues were different and involved questions such as military intervention, censorship, surveillance, domestic reform and unilateral state action. Metternich and Tsar Alexander, in particular, no longer entertained grand designs and became increasingly preoccupied with maintaining the status quo. Some elaboration from Jarrett on his central question about the Congress system coping with mild democratic change would have been welcome here.⁶

Adam Zamoyski's new book, *Phantom Terror*, investigates the fear of Revolution, so evident in post-1815 Europe. He postulates that this fear, while often genuine, also provided a 'convenient paradigm for the government' (p. 75) in order to increase control, power and surveillance. Zamoyski takes a critical view both of the fear and its use by governments: 'Beginning in the early 1790s ... virtually every ... state in Europe consistently misled and repressed those they governed, invoking a threat which failed to substantiate' (p. 499). This led to a damaging legacy of permanent conflict and an 'unnecessary repression of moderate liberal tendencies ...' (p. 499). Rather than emphasizing the international, co-operative aspects of the

⁶ Stella Ghervas has addressed the issue of domestic disorder and the effect on international peace stating that 'establishing the conditions of peace through effective self-rule of the people and popular representation, economic prosperity, as well as the eradication of the most glaring social injustices, could be more effective than military interventions against insurgents ...' Stella Ghervas, 'The Long Shadow of the Congress of Vienna: From International Peace to Domestic Disorders', *Journal of Modern European History* 13 (2015) 4, pp. 462-3. See the suggestive comments in David Laven and Lucy Riall, 'Restoration Government and the Legacy of Napoleon' in idem, *Napoleon's Legacy. Problems of Government in Restoration Europe* (Oxford and New York, 2000), p. 19. Recent work on constitutions demonstrates one possible direction for addressing questions of democratic participation, legitimacy, authority, power, political struggle and state-building. Markus Prutsch, *Making Sense of Constitutional Monarchism in Post-Napoleonic France and Germany* (Basingstoke, 2013) and Kelly Grotke and Markus Prutsch (eds.), *Constitutionalism, Legitimacy and Power. Nineteenth Century Experiences* (Oxford, 2014).

Congress System (like Jarrett and Schroeder), Zamoyski focuses on the secret police, spies, informers, excessive bureaucracy and repressive military. The illusory spectre of the *Comité Directeur* – a supposed, vast conspiracy for universal Revolution based in Paris – became an *idée fixe* for many leaders, especially Metternich and Tsar Alexander, and was used to explain all manner of events. Zamoyski's vast knowledge of the period enables him to provide telling details and vignettes. Similar to his previous works, the book vividly describes personalities and events on a broad European canvas. There is, however, no theoretical framework, nor is there much overt interpretation. It is also rather one-sided, not mentioning the tremendous social, economic, administrative, constitutional and demographic changes, nor the continued influence of the press, civil society and increasingly widespread education.

Zamoyski's earlier book, *Rites of Peace*, is more relevant to this review article and provides an engrossing narrative account of the period around the Congress of Vienna encompassing war, diplomacy, social life, the major protagonists and their various love affairs. Zamoyski writes that: 'Perhaps the most striking aspect of the great charade known as the Congress of Vienna is the continuous interplay between the serious and the frivolous, an almost parasitical co-existence of activities which might appear to be mutually exclusive' (p. 385). Yet, like his more recent book, there is no real conceptualizing of the political with the social. Zamoyski provides a fast paced, rather old-fashioned, narrative interspersing diplomatic maneuvering with the myriad of social events and inter-linked personal relationships.⁷ In the final chapter, Zamoyski challenges the positive assessments of Kissinger and Schroeder, arguing

⁷ This traditional mixing of the political and social into an overarching narrative is also used in other recent books, mostly with a general audience in mind. David King, *Vienna 1814. How the Conquerors of Napoleon Made Love, War, and Peace at the Congress of Vienna* (New York, 2008), Anna Ehrlich and Christa Bauer, *Der Wiener Kongress. Diplomaten, Intrigen und Skandale* (Vienna, 2014) and Eberhard Strauss, *Der Wiener Kongress. Das grosse Fest und die Neuordnung Europas* (Stuttgart, 2014).

that the Vienna settlement had never really been consummated, had not provided any real legitimacy and had not led to peace. While Zamoyski concedes some stability, order, progress and recognition of rights, there were also ‘a particularly stultified form of monarchical government’ (p. 569), denial of political nationalism, rigid hierarchies and the non-enforcement of rights. So where Jarrett emphasizes the attempt at international co-operation and the generally positive aspects of the Congress System, Zamoyski highlights the ‘inability to take a fresh view of things’ (p. 565), especially rising nationalism. In both his books, Zamoyski portrays the Congress System and its leaders as essentially backward-looking and fearful, whereas Jarrett allows for some flexibility and contingency – a sense of the leaders in a specific context dealing with multiple, complex challenges while trying to maintain the stability and order of the 1814-15 settlements.

Brian Vick’s book is resolutely academic, theoretically informed and advances a sophisticated thesis. In the introduction he sets out his subject matter:

Elite women, transconfessional currents of religious revival, the press and public opinion, and liberal and national ideas all played greater roles than usually depicted in the literature on diplomacy or political culture. (p. 2)

For Vick, it is the ‘interplay and interlocking of various dimensions’ (p. 20), which is most fascinating. Vick especially focuses on the importance of ‘influence politics’ (p. 7) – namely, ideas, languages, networks, the public, material culture, display, salons and the like – on diplomacy and decision making. Instead of Zamoyski’s traditional approach, which intersperses the social and political in a grand narrative, Vick’s book is thematic in structure, systematically and rigorously investigating a number of wider contexts surrounding the Congress. For example, in his discussion on salons, Vick

treats the female (and also male) hosts as political actors and enablers, rather than simply as objects of desire and devotion.⁸ Thus Vick goes:

beyond the usual canon ... not just exploring the writings of second-tier thinkers and pamphleteers to uncover the broader political languages, but also opening up the analysis to the second rank of political actors more generally: diplomats and statesmen, plus the wider society of politically engaged individuals with potential influence on political discourse or political decisions, be they middle-class or noble, women or men. (p. 7)

So, the great figures such as Metternich, Castlereagh, Talleyrand, Tsar Alexander, Nesselrode, Hardenberg, Wilhelm von Humboldt and the others are placed firmly within their general milieu, while forgotten figures such as Franz Jan, who arranged a grand celebration including a performance of Handel's *Samson* with massive forces, or Therese Barton, who organized a successful and popular Panorama of Paris, are discussed and analyzed in depth. Similarly, while Beethoven's celebrated concerts are covered, so are the works and activities of lesser-known composers such as Adolf Bäuerle, Friedrich August Kanne, Ignaz Moscheles, Joseph Huglmann and Anton Diabelli (more famous for commissioning Beethoven's final great work for the piano, the Diabelli Variations). Vick is interested in the development of the market and the presence of the public. Instead of profiling isolated prominent cultural titans, Vick

⁸ Often the roles of women and of salons are discussed together. For example Steven Kale, 'Women's Intellectual Agency in the History of Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century French Salons' in Lisa Curtis-Wendlandt, Paul Gibbard and Karen Green (eds.), *Political Ideas of Enlightenment Women: Virtue and Citizenship* (Farnham, 2013), pp. 123-38; Glenda Sluga, 'Madame de Stael and the Transformation of European Politics, 1812-17', *International History Review* 37 (2015) 1, pp. 142-66 and idem, 'Women, Diplomacy and International Politics, before and after the Congress of Vienna' in idem and Carolyn James (eds.), *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500* (London, 2015), pp. 120-36. Other perspectives for a slightly earlier period can be found in Karen Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon. History, Culture and Memory* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 75-171; idem, '“Be Proud and Firm, Citizens of Austria!” Patriotism and Masculinity in Texts of the “Political Romantics” written during Austria's Anti-Napoleonic Wars', *German Studies Review* 29 (2006) 1, pp. 41-62 and idem, '“Heroic Virgins” and “Bellicose Amazons”: Armed Women, the Gender Order and the German Public during and after the Anti-Napoleonic Wars', *European History Quarterly* 37 (2007) 4, pp. 507-27.

presents ‘poets and composers, painters and publishers ... all jostling to claim a share of the celebratory market’. (p. 96)

The links between context and power politics are explained by Vick in the following words:

these wider cultural influences provided not just the backdrop or the context but also the very matrix and stimuli by which rulers, statesmen, and the politically aware more generally were molded, and from which they drew ideas and motivation.⁹ (p. 330)

Tellingly, it is only near the end of the book that Vick deals with the most important diplomatic issue – Russia’s plans for Poland and Prussia’s claim to Saxony. Here Vick does not follow the traditional route of reconstructing the machinations of the main players through the various memoranda, meetings and shifting alliances, rather he traces the various layers of political culture surrounding the issue (p. 278). For example, he focuses on the language and ideas of national rights, protections and autonomy, evoking more regionally based, federalist, multinational notions, which were very different from the later sense of sovereign independence. Another layer he discusses is the role of public opinion, particularly in the salons and the European press. Vick argues that the ideas of provincial, federative nationalism and the need to appease public opinion were important considerations in the eventual new partitions of Poland and Saxony, alongside the more conventional factors of power politics, geo-political balance and state interests.

Vick’s book, therefore, is not a traditional account of the Congress. While the main events and personalities are covered, its strength lies in its stimulating and

⁹ Vick is more forthright in a recent article asserting that civil society *did* affect the Congress’s political outcomes. Brian Vick, ‘The Vienna Congress as an Event in Austrian History: Civil Society and Politics in the Habsburg Empire at the End of the Wars against Napoleon’, *Austrian History Yearbook* 46 (2015), pp. 132.

provocative analyses of ideas, material culture, celebrations, music, press, literature, religion, networks, images and constitutionalism, and other 'secondary' topics. It is instructive that Vick is particularly detailed and enlightening on relatively minor diplomatic matters such as the abolitions of slavery, joint action against the Barbary Corsair pirates, the Ionian Isles and the struggle for Jewish rights. Vick's argues passionately that the 'second-tier' actors, issues and forums best illustrate the general context for decision-making. Throughout his book there is a sense of the public as a vague but important presence creating a framework for thought, pushing the agenda in certain directions and actively participating in the burgeoning, more open political sphere.

Robert Ouvrard's book places the reader in the very centre of this public and, in particular, its celebrations. His book is a social chronicle of the Congress, taking the form of a collective diary seen through the eyes of many witnesses. It is a book mostly of quotes, often many pages long, generally following a strict chronological sequence with almost daily updates. There are some explanatory and excursive sections interspersed within the chronicle. This is not a conventional historical book; there is no real narrative, nor any thesis. There is little on the diplomatic negotiations and much that seems irrelevant or trivial. For example, there are descriptions of entourages (p. 51-2, 137-46), an inventory of the gifts given by the Duke of Württemberg when he left Vienna (p. 260-61) as well as the seating arrangements for the famous sleigh ride of the Monarchs (pp. 364-5). An interesting case is the entry for 12 September 1814, which simply reads 'Arrival of Count Ernst Münster'. Who was Count Münster? (p. 112) In the lengthy biographical index we find that he was the representative for Hannover, while from the index there are five minor references

in the text, but there is no real explanation of his role, background, duties or social position.

This accumulation of information does, however, slowly build to convey a sense of the Congress as *an event*.¹⁰ More than the other books reviewed, Ouvrard's approach details Vienna as the setting; its physical environment, geography, weather, cultural life, everyday concerns. The perspective is mainly from the minor officials and participants who have left accounts. The sheer number of social events – major celebrations and soirées almost daily – was overwhelming. For instance, on 18 October 1814 the largest public festival at the Congress was held during the day (for the anniversary of the Battle of Leipzig), then in the evening a magnificent ball at the Metternich palace was staged including various sovereigns and members of the higher nobility (pp. 184-96). From Ouvrard's book, the Congress emerges as an explosion of pomp, pageantry, dancing, gossiping and exhausting, continual partying. Ouvrard's unconventional method also points to major conjunctions of events such as 1 January 1815, when, on a cold and snowy day, the end of hostilities between England and the USA was announced, Beethoven performed one of his last concerts as pianist and a ball was held at the Imperial Palace where Talleyrand and Tsar Alexander were seen to be in earnest discussion. This was the height of the Poland-Saxon crisis. Two days later Talleyrand together with Metternich and Castlereagh signed the secret Triple Alliance, which, though defensive in nature, was clearly aimed against Prussia and Russia. The Congress was truly a whirlwind of political and social events.

From Jarrett's work to Ouvrard's, there is a spectrum of approaches from the purely diplomatic to the purely social. To some extent, Jarrett's book is a summation of diplomatic histories concerning the Congress of Vienna and its aftermath. Less

¹⁰ For a more systematic treatment in relation to Vienna and the Habsburg Monarchy see Vick, 'The Vienna Congress as an Event in Austrian History', pp. 109-133.

personal and opinionated than Schroeder's standard work, Jarrett utilizes the considerable published primary sources and historiography to present a balanced, judicious overview. Zamoyski's book on the Congress takes the form of a traditional, grand narrative mixing the political and the social. Vick, by contrast, theorizes on the possible effects the social (and other general environmental conditions) had on the political, then pursues his thesis in largely thematic chapters. Finally, Ouvrard deals solely with the social dimension, but in an unusual, thought-provoking manner. In general, the direction of the historiography is to meld the political and social along the lines Vick has sketched. I will return to this point in the final section of this review article.

III

Some of these new approaches, as well as other perspectives, are evident in the series of books released as general introductions to the Congress. Intended for students and the general public, these books published in French (Lentz) and German (Stauber, Duchhardt and Gruner) have much in common. All emphasize diplomatic and political matters, though discuss (or at least mention) the social side as well. All generally have a positive assessment of the Congress. Yet they also have different approaches, foci, styles and structures.

Thierry Lentz has published many works on Napoleon and is the director of the *Fondation Napoléon*, with responsibility for editing the monumental collection of Napoleon's correspondence. Lentz's book on the Congress demonstrates his deep, intimate knowledge of the period and provides an excellent introduction to the field. Overall, he takes a roughly chronological approach with thematic digressions on

various matters within the overarching narrative. This allows the reader to see the connections between issues and greatly aids in understanding the complex and evolving geo-political situation. The maps are also extremely helpful in this respect. While the focus is largely on the political and diplomatic decision-making, there is a lengthy section on the social life. Lentz does not theorize on the links, though he acknowledges the importance of informal conversations at numerous soirées. At the outset, Lentz states his aim to write a 'European history of the Congress' (p. 8). In general, he strikes a good balance between various issues, individuals and state affairs, though Talleyrand attracts considerable attention. In his conclusion, he departs from one line of French historiography, which for patriotic reasons, has been heavily critical of the 1815 settlement. Instead, Lentz portrays the settlement as providing a new political geography that restored equilibrium to Europe (p. 256). He argues that only one superpower emerged in this post-Napoleon world: the United Kingdom (Pax Britannica).¹¹ The one false note is struck at the end, when Lentz outlines the end of the concert of Europe. Lentz sketches its development through until the outbreak of WWI, even stating that the concert continued to function through the Balkan crises of 1912 and 1913. (p. 260) Yet the European state system just prior to WWI was surely very different from the one emerging out of 1815. Historians have generally dated the end of Vienna system to 1823 (French intervention in Spain plus Castlereagh's death)

¹¹ Perhaps that was the case in the wider world but there has been considerable debate about hegemony in the European system. Paul Schroeder has described the immediate post-1815 world as consisting of two hegemonies flanking Europe: Britain and Russia. Paul Schroeder, 'Did the Vienna Settlement Rest on a Balance of Power', *American Historical Review* 97 (1992) 3, pp. 683-706. This has led to much discussion, some arguing for the traditional view of a 'balance of power'. Alan Sked, *Metternich and Austria. An Evaluation* (Basingstoke, 2008), pp. 54-63; idem, 'Introduction' in idem (ed.), *Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848* (London, 1979), pp. 1-13 and for British policy, T.G. Otte, 'A Janus-like Power: Great Britain and the European Concert, 1814-1815' in Wolfram Pyta (ed.), *Das europäische Mächtekoncert. Friedens- und Sicherheitspolitik vom Wiener Kongress 1815 bis zum Krimkrieg 1853* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 2009), pp. 125-53. Others portray the European political landscape as nuanced, multi-level and multilateral. Wolf Gruner, 'Was there a Reformed Balance of Power System or Cooperative Great Power Hegemony?', *American Historical Review* 97 (1992) 3, pp. 725-32. There are many other nuanced viewpoints, see the discussion at Matthias Schulze, *Normen und Praxis. Das europäische Konzert der Grossmächte als Sicherheitsrat, 1815-1860* (Munich, 2009), pp. 21-24 and 48-53. Lentz does not mention these competing viewpoints.

or 1856 (the Crimean War). Moreover, the subsequent unifications of Italy and Germany radically changed the map of Europe and the geo-political balance.¹² The situation in the early twentieth century, with two blocs formed by competing alliances bore little resemblance to the Quadruple Alliance and the series of European conferences in the aftermath of 1815. Elements of the Vienna system may have persisted – such as European conferences (though not regular) to solve diplomatic problems – but the sense of co-operation and mutual restraint had been replaced by increased militarism, an arms race, colonial struggle and bellicose diplomacy.

Reinhard Stauber's book has a similar focus on political decision-making but is more strictly structured into various themes and sections. Stauber covers all the key topics, along with many minor issues, in an exceptionally clear fashion. For example, he examines the various committees and conferences set up to conduct the Congress's affairs (pp. 61-77) treating each in a concise yet detailed manner. Similarly the numerous territorial questions covering the whole of Europe along with settlements in Switzerland, Italy, Scandinavia and Germany are discussed with admirable brevity and clarity. In the section entitled the 'Festive Culture of the Congress' Stauber provides an extensive overview of the social life but also sketches an interpretation based on the rise of the private sphere (pp. 229-30). In a later section entitled 'Human Rights and the Global Aspect', Stauber points to new perspectives on events and decisions by coupling together the free navigation of rivers, the regulation of diplomatic status and the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade. Throughout the book,

¹² See the discussion in Schulze, *Normen und Praxis*, pp. 25-29 and 642-46. Schulze dates the end of the concert to the rise in power of nation-states, especially the unifications of Italy and Germany, in the 1860s and early 1870s. The historical outlines can be traced in Norman Rich, *Great Power Diplomacy 1814-1914* (Boston, 1992) and F. R. Bridge and Roger Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System 1814-1914* (Harlow, 2005). See also Richard Elrod, 'The Concert of Europe' A Fresh Look at an International System', *World Politics* 28 (1976) 2, pp. 159-74, Robert Jervis, 'From Balance to Concert: A Study of International Security Cooperation', *World Politics* 38 (1985) 1, pp. 58-79 and Paul Schroeder, 'The 19th-Century International System: Changes in Structure', *World Politics* 39 (1986) 1, pp. 1-26.

Stauber emphasizes the fragmentary, contingent results of the Congress. Early in the book he quotes Castlereagh words: 'I found Prince Metternich without fixed plans'. (p. 59) Paradoxically, it was perhaps this pragmatic, tactical, empirical, cautious approach and its lack of overt ideological underpinning – characterized, in particular, by Castlereagh and Metternich – which enabled the new norms of consultation and multilateralism to emerge. In his conclusion, Stauber agrees with Schroeder's argument about the development of a new world political order based on different rules and norms (p. 246-7). For individual topics and for a general overview, Stauber's book is a good place to start.

Heinz Duchhardt's slender volume is densely written, analytical and occasionally discursive. It has the tone of a senior scholar commenting on various issues and personalities associated with the Congress. Duchhardt's previous work has been on the balance of power, the concert of Europe and Baron vom Stein, the Prussian reformer who at the time of the Congress had become an advisor to Tsar Alexander. Near the beginning of the book, he advances the idea of a collective security system taking shape around the Congress:

The Congress of Vienna and its subsequent documents as the starting point for a European security system ... as a 'new Europe'? ... But it was, in any case, a European security system which 1815 had formed (p. 31).

Here is another new perspective that points to future research.¹³ Interestingly,

Duchhardt later views the Polish/Saxon question as one of power politics, rather than

¹³ See, for example, comments in Eckhart Conze, 'Konziertierte Sicherheit: Wahrnehmung und Wirkung des Wiener Kongresses im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', *Journal of Modern European History* 13 (2015) 4, pp. 443-6 and Beatrice de Graaf, 'Bringing Sense and Sensibility to the Continent: Vienna 1815 Revisited', *Journal of Modern European History* 13 (2015) 4, pp. 447-57. There is a research project directed by Beatrice de Graaf (Utrecht) with the title 'Securing Europe, Fighting its Enemies. The Making of a Security Culture in Europe and Beyond, 1815-1914'. A conference entitled 'Vienna 1815: The Making of a European Security Culture' was held in Amsterdam, 5-7 November 2014 and a subsequent publication is forthcoming.

evidence of Schroeder's new norms. (p. 90) As for the social scene, Duchhardt recognizes it as 'an integral and eminently important part of the Congress' (p. 62), though he does not postulate on the nature of any links with ongoing political decision-making. In his conclusion, Duchhardt presents both the positive and negative assessments of the Congress's achievements, then implies that critics were perhaps expecting too much (p. 120). Rather than an informative textbook, Duchhardt's work is vigorous, stimulating, individual read for those already familiar with the period.

Wolf Gruner has written a surprisingly rich book for the Reclam Sachbuch series, known in the German-language world for their compact size. Gruner organizes his book around two main themes: first, explicitly, he wishes to place the Congress in the larger transformation process from 1750 to 1830 (roughly Reinhart Koselleck's '*Sattelzeit*' or 'saddle period' – though Koselleck is not specifically mentioned) and second, implicitly, he focuses on developments in *Mitteleuropa* (Central Europe) to demonstrate the flexibility and effectiveness both of the German Confederation and of the overall Vienna system. Thus Gruner structures his book starting from wider perspectives towards an increased concentration on *Mitteleuropa* and a tighter focus on the negotiations for the German Confederation. The first section on the 'European Transformation Process, 1750-1830' is rather generalized and mentions in passing trade, colonies, the *Bürgertum* (middle classes), financial resources, agrarian and industrial changes, democracy, cultural movements, political ideas, domestic and foreign policy, and the professionalization of politicians and bureaucrats. Rather than providing such a broad background canvas, it would have been instructive for Gruner to outline exactly where he places the Congress of Vienna within this enormous

process of transformation.¹⁴ In the next section Gruner discusses the revolutionary epoch, 'Europe between 1789 and 1814', and quotes Friedrich Gentz, the secretary of the Congress, who wrote in 1806 that 'Europe has fallen through Germany, it must pick itself up through Germany'. (p. 39-40) Tellingly, he reproduces the quote at the beginning of the section on the 'Congress of Vienna and the New Order of European States' (p. 71). This forms the heart of Gruner's book and there is considerable detail on the Polish-Saxon question and the founding of the German Confederation. Some maps here would have helped in following the discussion, which often goes back and forth between memoranda, drafts and suggestions. Gruner's assessment on the German Confederation, a subject upon which he has published a number of works, is very positive:

[the federal structure] opened possibilities for a gradual process of adjustment along evolutionary paths, without straining the international environment surrounding the Confederation. (p. 192)

In other words, the loose structure of the Confederation protected the unity of Germany, ensured the security of law, facilitated individuality while also allowing for a gradual convergence of the separate states. (p. 192) Gruner's conclusion returns to the larger view and argues that the Congress performed the function of a catalyst (*Katalysatorfunktion*) for the process of transformation in Europe, yet the precise means and effects are not outlined. There is a short and useful final section, almost as an appendix to the main text, tracing the historiography on the Congress.

¹⁴ A tighter focus could have been to follow Koselleck's comments on the *Sattelzeit* and to investigate the political-social language and concepts around 1814-1815. Reinhart Koselleck, 'Einleitung' in Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland. Vol. 1: A-D* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972), pp. xv-xviii.

These four books, in their differing ways, all highlight the sheer multitude of tasks facing the participants at the Congress. Near the end of Lentz's book, he writes that:

Little by little, sometimes with great difficulty, the Congress of Vienna attempted to reorganize Europe, its dynasties, its frontiers, the distribution of its peoples, the zones of influences of some, the orbits of others, the practices which facilitate international relations, the legitimacy of governments, the principles of commercial trade on rivers and seas, the abolition of slavery, [and] diplomatic status. (p. 191)

The famous *bon mot* of Prince Charles Joseph Ligne, that the 'Congress dances but does not work' (*Le Congrès danse beaucoup, mais il ne marche pas*), while witty, was incorrect.¹⁵ The Congress both danced *and* worked – constantly, intensely, interlinked and with great effect. Indeed, multitudinous strands, elements and individuals converged on Vienna for nine months, which in turn led to subsequent developments, sometimes in harmony, sometimes in parallel lines, sometimes in relative separation.

IV

One of these strands has not received a lot of attention, but is the subject of an edited collection of essays; namely, religion. Vick's book has an incisive chapter on religion, including a detailed discussion of Jewish rights in Germany, however most books on the Congress barely touch on the subject. The essays in the Duchhardt/Wischmeyer volume cover similar issues to Vick's chapter; namely, the reconstruction of the

¹⁵ A point made by Ouvrard, *Le congrès de Vienne*, p. 11, Lentz, *Le congrès de Vienne*, p. 7, Gruner, *Der Wiener Kongress*, p. 7 and Duchhardt, *Der Wiener Kongress*, p. 62.

Catholic Church in the German lands, Jewish rights in the German constitution, Cardinal Consalvi at the Congress (along with others). Within the volume there are significant overlaps and some unevenness, yet it demonstrates again how wide-ranging the Congress was and how its decisions (or omissions) had far-reaching consequences on subsequent developments.

The foreword is short and delineates some of the major themes, but could have set the scene better and also provided a framework for placing the various contributions. For example, the first essay – Karl Hausberger on Prince Primate Karl Theodor Dalberg and his attempts to bring about a Concordat – plunges straight into the Napoleonic period without any background context. Extensive knowledge of the changing fortunes of Napoleon is required if the reader is to make sense of Dalberg's energetic, if fruitless, efforts. Dalberg was a key figure as the leader of the Catholic Church in Germany with considerable experience under the old Holy Roman Empire and Napoleon's Confederation of the Rhine. He is also an important actor in Dominik Burkard's long, clearly written exposition of the German Catholic Church at the Congress of Vienna. Napoleon's many territorial and legal changes had torn apart the complicated web of historical relations within the Holy Roman Empire, including religious rights and property. Dalberg's emissary Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg described the situation leading into the Congress as 'the ruin and dissolution of church affairs [in the German states]' (p. 67). At the Congress, the issues of restitution and reorganization were uppermost for the German Catholic Church. There were a multitude of interested parties – Wessenberg (Dalberg's representative, who was also conveniently the brother of Metternich's second, Johann von Wessenberg), Consalvi (the Pope's emissary), representatives of the German bishops and, of course, all the German states from Austria and Prussia to the smallest members. Wessenberg was

generally for unity within the German Catholic Church under a Primate, while the Bishops' representatives and the smaller German states were protective of their own jurisdictions. Various plans were mooted – a Concordat or a Church constitution, among others – before apparent agreement was reached on a specific clause in the constitution of the German Confederation. At the last minute Bavaria and Württemberg objected to the clause and it was omitted. Thereafter church-state relations would be negotiated at the level of each individual German state, though Christian religious equality was guaranteed in the Confederation's constitution. Other articles in the book cover similar ground to Burkard, though with a tighter, more specific focus – such as Franz Xaver Bischof's article on Wessenberg, Johannes Wischmeyer on the constitution of the German Confederation and Michael Hundt on the smaller German states. Hundt places the religious question in the wider context – it never formed part of official discussions and was not a priority for the smaller states (p. 160). Duchhardt's small contribution on Baron vom Stein similarly notes that religious policy was barely mentioned in his memoranda or diaries.

Two articles survey important questions relating to religion and general moral principles (along with other spheres). Thomas Weller summarizes the extensive literature on the declaration against the Atlantic slave trade issued at the Congress. Despite its relative neglect in the historiography on the Congress, in the field of human rights it constituted an important milestone. For the first time in history, Weller notes, a humanitarian cause was justified on universal principles. According to Weller, the declaration should not be regarded as a marginal theme, relegated behind the traditional focus on the diplomatic negotiations and the formation of the modern state system (p. 186-7). The issue also illustrates 'the enormous influence of non-state actors and transnational organisations *avant la lettre*'. (p. 187) Thus Weller is in

agreement with Vick about the importance of the wider background.¹⁶ For instance, Weller outlines the influence of religious communities in England (especially the evangelical strain in Anglicanism and the Quakers) along with many abolitionist societies. Weller confidently asserts that the abolition movement was mainly motivated for humanitarian reasons, rather than for maintaining a trade advantage (p. 190). The Catholic Church sympathized with the movement, once it was appraised of its importance for the British public. Weller makes good use of the correspondence between Consalvi and Cardinal Pacca (his counterpart in Rome) to trace the position of the Catholic Church from meetings with Castlereagh in London through to a delicate balancing act in Vienna.

The second article on general moral principles provides an excellent overview of the Jewish communities in Germany and their fight for legal status at the Congress. Written by Renate Penssel, the article begins with the historical background to Jewish emancipation under French influence, followed by gradual, increased Jewish settlement in various towns. The negotiations at the Congress involved the many German states as well as representatives of various free cities (Hamburg, Lübeck, Bremen and Frankfurt) and their respective Jewish communities. At the Congress, Carl August Buchholz – a non-Jew lawyer and prominent emancipationist – represented the Jewish communities of the Hanseatic cities (Hamburg, Lübeck and Bremen) while the Frankfurt Jews sent their own delegates. Similar to the position of the Catholic Church in Germany, the negotiations revolved around inclusion of a clause in the constitution of the German Confederation (Article 16.2). Generally, Austria, Prussia, Hannover and the Jewish representatives were in favour of Jewish rights as a general principle, while Bavaria, Württemberg and the Hanseatic cities

¹⁶ Vick also covers the slave trade in admirable depth. Vick, *The Congress of Vienna*, pp. 195-212.

were protective of their sovereignty and autonomy (along with possessing some anti-Jewish sentiments). The eventual wording was a clumsy compromise asserting Jewish emancipation, while leaving the exact implementation to the Confederation's assembly and the separate federal states. As Penssel (and Vick in his book) makes clear the clause was not effective in protecting Jewish rights. Lübeck, Bremen and Frankfurt passed restrictive anti-Jewish regulations, while Mecklenburg reverted to older, less progressive laws. When taken to the Confederation's assembly, the relevant clause was interpreted as only relating to individual rights, rather than having any institutional or communal implications (a similar interpretation was given to Article 16.1 on religious equality, which Heinrich de Wall looks at in a short contribution). Nevertheless, Penssel argues that the recognition of religious freedom and the general civic status of Jews were forward looking, even if the practical effects were minimal. (p. 251)

As a whole the book lacks coherence. Two articles on the Papacy – Robert Regoli on Consalvi at the Congress and Paul Oberholzer on the restoration of the Jesuits in 1815 – provide some background, but no overt interpretation, nor much connection with other articles. Hausberger's article on Dalberg also seems rather detached from the main group of articles. An article (or two) on the Protestants in Germany would have provided more balance. Clearly, the initial conference attempted to provide some commonality between papers by posing the question: was the Congress of Vienna a caesura in European religious history? Burkard (for the German Catholic Church), Hundt (for the Catholic Church in the smaller German states) and Penssel (for the German Jewish communities) all regard the Congress as an interlude, rather than a caesura. Nevertheless, as both Penssel and Weller make clear, the Congress provided important declarations on humanitarian ideals and

general moral principles – even if in practice there was little immediate change. Above all, the volume highlights once again the interconnected, all-encompassing nature of the many issues discussed at the Congress, even for such a supposedly minor matter as religion.

The other edited collection is even more disparate in nature. To a large extent it presents a first attempt at combining and debating various funded research projects surrounding the Congress of Vienna.¹⁷ It thus, at least, shows some of the new directions in research. An element that has only been touched upon in the works so far is the economic and financial aspect. Andreas Fahrmeier in a sweeping article speculates on the Congress and its effect on trade. He points to three direct factors: changed borders, the anti-slavery declaration and the internationalization of rivers. (pp. 127-8) He also notes the general trends – a gradual liberalization of trade (Napoleon's Continental Blockade had clearly failed as a policy), the importance of state finances (especially in relation to the military) and the diverging economies within Europe. While economics may not have been the most important factor, it played a role both in decision-making and as a general background influence (p. 132). Marion Koschier's article on the Aachen Congress (1818) is more focused – in particular, on the interrelationship between diplomacy, reparations and the end to the military occupation of France. Koschier points to a number of factors facilitating the necessary reduction in reparations without any economic shocks; namely, significant preparatory discussions, Wellington's sympathetic attitude, Alexander Baring's expert financial advice and the willing involvement of London's banks. Koschier's article supports Fahrmeier's point that economic factors played a role in international

¹⁷ The three projects specifically related to the edited collection are *Der Wiener Kongress und die Presse – Zeitungen als Medien politischer Kommunikation* (Brigitte Mazohl – Innsbruck), *Der Wiener Kongress und sein europäisches Friedenssystem* (Reinhard Stauber – Klagenfurt) and *Die Privatbibliothek Kaiser Franz I von Österreich* (Hans Petschar – Austrian National Library).

relations, though traditional diplomatic accounts normally focus more on personalities and power politics. Perhaps some reference could have been made to the experiences and memory of economic collapse, so present in the generation that had lived through the bankruptcies (effective or declared) of France (1788, 1797), Austria (1811 and 1816) and Prussia (1807-15).

Two fruitful areas of research covered in Vick's book are also evident in this collection: 'influence politics' and globalization. Florian Kerschbaumer follows the campaign of the colourful British Admiral Sir Sidney Smith to combat the North African Barbary Corsairs and their taking of Christians into captivity. While in Vienna for the Congress, Smith organized social events, lobbied in the salons, wrote memoranda and created a network of like-minded allies (including the Papacy and some Hanseatic towns). Though it was never the subject of major official talks, the publicity around the time of the Congress helped create a general consensus behind some form of action. Shortly afterwards Great Britain sent Lord Exmouth on a diplomatic mission to North Africa, which led to a combination of agreements and unilateral military action, including the bombing of Algiers. In her contribution, Eva Maria Werner addresses another aspect of 'influence politics': Austria's press and censorship policies. In the years leading up to the Congress, Metternich and Gentz attempted to reduce the widespread popularity of foreign newspapers by pursuing a twin policy of loosened censorship and direct government intervention in press matters. It did not have any particular success, though Werner makes clear the importance placed on press matters and public opinion. Metternich even wrote in 1808 that 'public opinion was the most powerful of all means; like religion it penetrates the darkest recesses where administrative measures are ineffective; to

misunderstand public opinion is as dangerous as to misunderstand moral principles'.¹⁸ Christian Cwik's article on the Congress, Austria and the Americas is short overview based on the existing literature, tracing the ideological effect of the revolutionary, democratic model on the various colonies in the Americas.

Symbolic politics and celebrations are covered by Mikael Alm (on Bernadotte's royal ceremonies as Swedish King) and Karin Schneider (on the Troppau Congress, 1820).¹⁹ Alm points to the fusion of tradition and innovation in three state ceremonies during Bernadotte's long reign as Swedish King. While generally following the traditional rituals, Bernadotte also reinforced his legitimacy by emphasizing his military achievements as a former Marshal of France and his subsequent election as King. Schneider similarly reconstructs the celebrations surrounding the Congress of Troppau. In her analysis of the erected 'triumph gate' along with various poems and songs, Schneider argues that the celebrations stressed the meeting of the Monarchs and the long period of peace, rather than any assertions of power. Interestingly, it was primarily the local authorities of Troppau (in contact with Vienna) who took charge of the public displays.

Finally, there are some miscellaneous articles in the book such as Rainer Valenta on the private library of the Austrian Emperor Franz, Reinhard Stauber on the various committees at the Congress (covering similar ground to a section in his book) and Fritz Fellner's 1960 habilitation lecture on the general European-wide situation around 1815. Michael Broers's article on the period from 1814 to 1848 postulates that

¹⁸ Eva Maria Werner, 'Von Reform zu Reform – Österreichs Zensur und politische Presse in den Jahren vor dem Wiener Kongress' in Stauber et al, *Mächtepolitik und Friedenssicherung*, p. 75 uses a slightly edited version of the quote. Interestingly Henry Kissinger also prominently used this quote. Kissinger, *A World Restored*, pp. 16-17.

¹⁹ For an example of how this can contribute to our understanding of international politics, see the systematic investigation of meetings between Monarchs throughout the nineteenth century. Johannes Paulmann, *Pomp und Politik. Monarchenbegegnungen in Europa zwischen Ancien Régime und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Paderborn, 2000).

the search for the ‘just milieu’ brought about ‘a political culture based on open debate and parliamentary procedures, themselves, dependent on compromise and toleration.’

(p. 45). Using Adolfo Omodeo’s neglected work as inspiration, Broers writes that:

the years between 1814 and 1848 saw the emergence of a rich, complex and sophisticated political world on which deeper artistic culture could flourish.

That these decades could spawn so refined a civilization and contain the

violence it had inherited, should be a source of wonder. (p. 46)

V

So what is the present state of historiography on the Congress of Vienna? Diplomatic history seems to be moving away from Schroeder’s focus on ‘systemic analysis’; namely, ‘the structure, grammar, and rules of a common language ... the rules and understandings underlying the practice of international politics’.²⁰ Schroeder’s specific thesis about the transformation of politics around 1814-15 has been much investigated and discussed – no doubt his provocative analyses will continue to attract scholarly attention.²¹ For example, the individual and collective learning processes behind the new norms and rules could prove fruitful for further study.²²

²⁰ Schroeder also uses the term ‘the game of international politics’. Schroeder, *The Transformation of Politics*, p. x. See the suggestive comments about international politics as a ‘distinctive “codes”, rhetorics, and sets of rules ... plus social insertion’ in Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World*, pp. 393-4 and in Katherine Aaslestad and Karen Hagemann, ‘1806 and its Aftermath: Revisiting the Period of the Napoleonic Wars in German Central European Historiography’ *Central European History* 39 (2006) 4, p. 555.

²¹ Some examples of Schroeder’s work providing the basis of further discussion are the various articles in the forum at *American Historical Review* 97 (1992) 3, pp. 683-735 and *International History Review* 16 (1994) 4, pp. 663-754, Peter Krüger and Paul Schröder (eds.), *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848: Episode or Model in Modern History?* (Münster, 2002), Wolfram Pyta (ed.), *Das europäische Mächtekonzept. Friedens- und Sicherheitspolitik vom Wiener Kongress 1815 bis zum Krimkrieg 1853* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 2009) and, above all, Matthias Schulze, *Normen und Praxis. Das europäische Konzert der Grossmächte als Sicherheitsrat, 1815-1860* (Munich, 2009).

²² See the interesting general observations in Wolfram Pyta, ‘Kulturgeschichtliche Annäherungen an das europäische Mächtekonzept’ in idem (ed.), *Das europäische Mächtekonzept*, pp. 17-24 and for an overview of the process without in-depth discussion of individuals or the collective can be found in

Nevertheless, the general direction of the historiography is an opening towards cultural history outside the traditional focus on power politics.²³ Diplomatic history is increasingly incorporating the wider worlds of personal networks, public opinion, the press, everyday life, social events (their representation, their role in mediation and their subtle effect on opinions), gender perspectives, ‘emotion’ and general *mentalités*, for example the rise of a ‘culture of peace’ and a ‘security culture’.²⁴ Vick’s book provides an example of this wider approach. He specifically focuses on ‘influence politics’, second-tier actors and issues, celebrations and the ceremonial, material culture, globalization, prevailing political and social ideas, material culture, printed works, the press and religion. More work on the financial and economic

Schulze, *Normen und Praxis*, pp. 35-72. Recent biographies of some of the main protagonists have not directly engaged with this thesis of a ‘learning process’ from the end of the Napoleonic Wars through to the post-war settlements. There are suggestive comments in Wolfram Siemann, *Metternich. Strategie und Visionär. Eine Biographie* (Munich, 2016), pp. 435-7. Alan Sked in his recent study of Metternich vigorously opposes Schroeder’s interpretations. See Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, pp. 54-63. In relation to Metternich, James Sofka places the stress on Kant, the late Enlightenment and Metternich’s education for his conception of ‘political equilibrium’. James Sofka, ‘Metternich’s Theory of European Order: A Political Agenda for “Perpetual Peace”’, *The Review of Politics* 60 (1998) 1, pp. 115-49. This stress on formative development in the Ancien Régime is also highlighted in a more general sense in Sven Externbrink, ‘Kulturtransfer, Internationale Beziehungen und die “Generation Metternich” zwischen Französischer Revolution, Restauration und Revolution von 1848’ in Pyta, *Das europäische Mächtekonkordat*, pp. 59-78. Recent biographies of significant figures include John Bew, *Castlereagh. Enlightenment, War and Tyranny* (London, 2011) and Lothar Gall, *Wilhelm von Humboldt. Ein Preusse von Welt* (Berlin, 2011).

²³ See, amongst many examples, the essays in Patrick Finney (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in International History* (Basingstoke, 2005); Peter Jackson, ‘Pierre Bourdieu, the “cultural turn” and the practice of international history’, *Review of International Studies* 34 (2008) 1, pp. 55-81 and more specifically Pyta, ‘Kulturgeschichtliche Annäherungen an das europäische Mächtekonkordat’, pp. 1-24. Some specific recent books are Martin Heyer and Johannes Paulmann (eds.), *The Mechanics of Internationalism. Culture, Society, and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War* (Oxford, 2001), Markus Mösslang and Torsten Riotte (eds.), *The Diplomats’ World. A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815-1914* (Oxford, 2008) and Jennifer Mori, *The Culture of Diplomacy. Britain in Europe, c1750-1830* (Manchester, 2010).

²⁴ For a ‘culture of peace’ see Schulze, *Normen und Praxis*, pp. 4-20 and, most recently, idem, ‘The Construction of a Culture of Peace in Post-Napoleonic Europe: Peace through Equilibrium, Law and New Forms of Communicative Interaction’, *Journal of Modern European History* 13 (2015) 4, pp. 464-74. For ‘security culture’ and emotion see Beatrice de Graaf, ‘Bringing Sense and Sensibility to the Continent’, pp. 447-57. For the links between emotion, patriotism and nationalism see Glenda Sluga, ‘Passions, patriotism and nationalism, and Germaine de Stael’, *Nations and Nationalism* 15 (2009) 2, pp. 299-318. A historical framework for understanding the changes in emotion in France from the 18th century (the flowering of sentimentalism), through the French Revolution (emotion and politics reached an apex under the Terror) through to the post-Napoleon world (where emotion was set as an opposing private force to public reason and moderation) can be found in William Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001).

background factors of the period would also be worthwhile.²⁵ All of these new perspectives will no doubt provide a wider view of the world around the Congress. Indeed, an attempt at a ‘total history’ of the Congress – whether from an individual or a team of researchers – would be an imposing but rewarding task. Undoubtedly, the Congress of Vienna was a great ‘set-piece’ in European history. Yet it was also an important marker for many individual narratives in European history – international relations, human rights, gender, sociability and a multitude of other aspects. Thus many historians will view the Congress and its effects within specific historical arcs, such as the anti-slavery declaration in the development of human rights or the free navigation of rivers in the rise of European trade or the development of international law. The evolving historiography hopefully points to a rich and fertile phase for research on the Congress and its time.

As a final recapitulation, we return to Beethoven’s concert of 24 November 1814 where the text of his cantata ends with a stirring claim:

And I see the highest achievement taking place,

And my people will bear witness,

When a disrupted part of the world

Is reconciled again and closes in a ring

And embraces dispersed mankind

In a bond of friendly brothers!

Chorus: World, your moment of glory!

²⁵ The work on Napoleonic Europe gives some indications of the many possibilities. See, for example, the everyday experiences of economic changes in Katherine Aaslestad, ‘War without Battles: Civilian Experiences of Economic Warfare during the Napoleonic Era in Hamburg’ in Alan Forrest, Karen Hagemann and Jane Rendall (eds.), *Soldiers, Citizens and Civilians. Experiences and Perceptions of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1790-1820* (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 118-136 or state finances and tax policies in Alexander Grab, ‘The Politics of Finance in Napoleon’s Italy (1802-1814)’, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 3 (1998) 2, pp. 127-43.

At the time of Beethoven's concert the Congress had barely commenced and its outcome was still uncertain, indeed precarious considering the developing stalemate over Poland and Saxony. Nevertheless, when the final act was signed there indeed were considerable achievements – to a large extent, 'a world [was] restored' (to use Kissinger's phrase). There were also small steps taken towards a more humanitarian, interconnected, co-operative system. Of course there were regrettable missteps – the participation and assent of the Ottoman Empire would have helped stability – but considering the obstacles and circumstances, the Congress (plus the various alliances and Treaties of Paris) provided a new durable, flexible starting point for a war-torn, divided continent. As Castlereagh wrote to Tsar Alexander during the Congress:

[I]f the Allies Powers act liberally towards each other, and indulgently to other states, they may look forward to crown a glorious war by a solid and lasting peace; and posterity will revere their names, not only for having delivered by their arms, the world from a tyrant and conqueror, but for having restored, by their example, and by their influence, the reign of moderation and justice.²⁶

²⁶ Quoted in Jarret, 'No Sleepwalkers', p. 438.