Paradoxes of Peace in Nineteenth Century Europe

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
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Peace as a Polemic Concept
Writing the History of Peace in Nineteenth Century Europe

*Thomas Hippler and Miloš Vec*

I. The Inversion of Meaning: War can be Peace, and Peace War

Cynics have argued that if Tolstoy were to publish his novel *War and Peace* today he would probably have chosen *Peace-Restoring and Peace-Keeping Missions* as a title. The notion of ‘war’ is increasingly banned from the official political vocabulary and we are more and more employing expressions such as ‘restoring peace’ when talking about the use of armed force in conflict. To put it even more clearly: we are using the word ‘peace’ when meaning ‘war’. The starting point for the idea of this volume stems from there, and from the perceived necessity to investigate what this paradoxical use of vocabulary tells us about our current situation. War can be peace, and peace war.

It would be an error, however, to presume that this inversion of meaning is just a matter of intellectual dishonesty. On the contrary, it displays the puzzling but undisputable fact that peace has become one of the fundamental values in politics today. In his foreword to the 2010 published *Oxford International Encyclopaedia of Peace*, the Dalai Lama states: ‘Peace, not war, is the basis of progress, the basis of happiness, the basis of improvement.’¹ Until the nineteenth century, it was possible to openly argue for an intrinsic value of war, for instance Kant in his essay ‘Conjectural Beginning of Human History’ in which he argued that war was a necessity for the progress of humanity, culture, liberty, and social coherence.² As a matter of fact a holder of this kind of view would be denied any legitimacy today: no one would declare themselves openly in favour of war and against peace. The most war can be is a regrettable necessity in order to defend higher goods.

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However, if everybody agrees in condemning war and in aspiring for peace, does this mean that conflict has effectively disappeared? Obviously not. But to the extent that contentions are not enounced anymore in the language of war, they have to be enounced in the language of peace. And this is the precise reason why ‘peace’ has become such a disputed concept. As a core part of our political language peace is always contested and claimed by specific groups with specific interests. Yet this also implies that the usages of this concept are extremely different and even irreconcilable. Quite paradoxically peace is a polemical concept. Its specific usages bring forward and defend particular visions of politics and legitimacy which are of necessity opposed to other visions. One man’s peace is another man’s oppression and one man’s fight for justice is another man’s breach of a peaceful order. This is why the oxymoron of ‘peace as a polemic concept’ is plainly justified and this is why peace gives of necessity rise to paradoxes: peace is intrinsically polemical and contentious, while at the same time unavoidably repressing its contentious character.

When turning to historical scholarship in order to better understand this paradox, we realize that historical peace studies contributed to a considerable extent to the creation of this paradox and our conviction that the conceptual history of war and peace urgently needs to be readdressed stems from this insight. Historical peace studies developed in Western Europe and in North America during the Cold War era, partly taking up directions that had emerged in the inter-war period in Europe. Their research agenda was to replace the older fields of history of international relations and of military history with a focus on peace, rather than on international relations and on war. Already in 1959 the Peace Research Institute was founded in Oslo. In the United States a Peace History Society was founded in 1964 and thus in the aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis, in the context of the Vietnam War. Another institutional focus was established in Western Germany with the foundation of the Arbeitskreis Historische Friedensforschung in 1984 and thus in the context of NATO’s double-track decision of 1979. In all these cases the institutional settings and the research agendas were closely linked to the concerns of peace movements between the 1960s and the 1980s.

On the ideological level peace movements in the Western world were heavily inspired by left-wing politics. In the particular political context of the Cold War this led to an ambiguous position. On the one hand, the scope of historical peace research in Western Europe and in the United States was quite clearly to construct a historical legacy on which to consolidate a political commitment against the Vietnam War or in the context of the nuclear confrontation which became more worrisome during the early 1980s. Peace studies during these years—which were to become an academic discipline embracing sociology, philosophy, history, law, and political sciences—were thus deliberately seeking to construct an intellectual alternative to hegemonic NATO concepts. On the other hand, this intellectual and political movement was also partly opposed to Soviet ideology. The intellectual solution for this tricky situation was to construct ‘peace’ as an alternative

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value with its distinct characteristics and a history of its own. This intellectual construction permitted the criticism of armed containment policies and NATO nuclear strategy, without, however, endorsing the Soviet position.

This construction and the particular historical and political context in which it took place gave rise to some epistemic orientations in peace history which were rarely reflected upon. Schematically, we can distinguish three areas, in which these epistemic orientations seem problematic in our eyes: the definition of peace as an entity endowed with an immutable essence and a distinct social locus (II), its construction as an independent political value (III), and finally the historiographic orientations which stemmed from these characteristics (IV).

II. The Trouble with Defining Peace as an Entity endowed with an immutable Essence OR The Trouble with De-Historicizing Peace

Between the 1960s and the 1980s, peace studies, as developed in the context of the peace movements in Europe and North America, were keen to construct a line of tradition. The intellectual actors’ own political commitment for the sake of peace would gain supplementary historical signification to the extent that historical peace studies would inscribe their own concrete causes into a longer tradition. Constructing this tradition obviously also meant constructing a homogenous object of their political and intellectual commitment: peace. Peace as a historical object is presented as an immutable and thus trans-historical entity. Peace history, in other words, tends to de-historicize its object; peace history is the history of the various struggles, in different historical contexts, in favour of the un-historical cause of peace. The contexts were changing but peace was not and peace history was the history of these contexts and not of peace ‘as such’. Placing the history of peace centre stage, means approaching the topic from the usages of the concept. In this respect our approach is clearly indebted to the methods of conceptual history and we depart indeed from the assumption that language, concepts, and the values conveyed by them are a precondition of human agency and thus of human history. At the same time, however, language, concepts and values are never fixed entities; they are always disputed and used for various purposes. On the one hand, there has to be some form of a common language without which there would be no possibility of a common action of any kind; on the other hand this language is always disputed, without which there would be no politics.

This volume tries to consequently historicize its object and it thus departs from the assumption that there is no stable entity called ‘peace’. Rather than being contraries, war and peace constitute themselves mutually in an unstable and contentious relationship. The starting point of this project was precisely to put the

interconnections of war and peace to the forefront, and to address these entanglements through the category of ‘paradoxes of peace’.

The essentialized and un-historical object of peace history was also assigned a precise social locus. In the historical and ideological context in which peace history developed, war basically meant war between states and, more precisely, between nation states. According to Charles Tilly’s famous dictum ‘war made the state, and the state made war’. Peace studies, as it were, departed symmetrically from the assumption that ‘peace makes civil society, and civil society makes peace’. The story of peace as a trans-historical and thus un-historical object was basically a story opposing states and governments as the agents of war to civil society, both national and transnational, as the promoters of peace.

Yet this way of structuring the story overlooks some important features. At least from the times of the Roman Empire onwards, the European concept of peace could imply a hardly dissimulated justification for political domination. In his political will, the Res Gestae, Emperor Augustus, thus uses the verb pacificar (to pacify) when describing his military conquests: ‘I extended the boundaries of all the provinces which were bordered by races not yet subject to our empire. The provinces of the Gauls, the Spains, and Germany, bounded by the ocean from Gades to the mouth of the Elbe, I reduced to a state of peace (pacavi).’ Apart from being a human aspiration, ‘peace’ is also a powerful ideological device for the moral, political, and juridical legitimation of conquest, hegemony, and of power inequalities. To put it bluntly: the stronger party in an asymmetrical power relation has a vested interest in the promotion of peace to the extent that open conflict would mean to put into question the legitimacy of the unequal power relation. Peace in other words, may signify imperial domination and the language of peace is in no way the exclusive property of powerless groups in society or networks in civil society, but can be, and actually was, used to justify imperial purposes.

Moreover, peace may also signify domestic domination. This is certainly why concepts such as ‘class war’ were invented during the nineteenth century. A contrario this expression stressed the fact that ‘peace’ may imply a social order based on inequality, injustice, and exploitation which has to be rejected as such. Peace languages, in other words, serve in certain cases to silence social protest—national as well as international/transnational, foreign as well as domestic. The war/peace nexus may also take even more intricate forms, for instance when international workers associations argue for the ‘class war’ and revolution on the domestic level and for international solidarity in order to promote peace.

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It is the ambition of this volume to put these entanglements centre stage. As a polemic and contentious notion, peace has no meaning as such and the various contributions in this volume are illustrations of different and context-specific usages of peace as a polemical concept. In the language of conceptual history we would say that peace is a ‘fundamental concept’, that is a concept which all kind of actors have to use and have to cope with. We try to point out for whom and thus against whom one was speaking and acting when promoting peace, and which hopes and which fears were attached from various sides to it. In doing so, we do not intend to attack the use of the term as such, but our aim is to investigate what the specific interests were and what specific actors meant when talking about peace.

There might have been a ‘strategic’ interest in presenting peace as an essentialized and thus un-historical entity during the Cold War era but the situation has arguably changed during the last decades and we feel that it is time to question this ‘strategic essentialism’ and to historicize and thus to de-essentialize the notion of peace. This is why we are addressing the question of what peace concretely means in different historical contexts, placing the paradoxes which peace generated at the forefront of attention. In other words, Nietzsche’s question of the ‘value of values’ is central to our endeavour.

III. The Trouble with Conceptualizing Peace as a fundamental and Independent Value

In a situation of a perceived threat to the existence of humankind by nuclear destruction, peace was constructed not only as an entity with an immutable essence but was, moreover, conceptualized as a fundamental and independent value. In the context of the late Cold War, peace studies contributed to building up peace as an alternative value against Western values such as ‘freedom’—which had to be defended, by nuclear weapons if necessary—as well as against Soviet values such as class struggle. To be sure, both Western and Soviet ideologies were not opposed to peace as such, but in both cases the value of peace was dependent on other values, such as freedom, workers’ emancipation, justice, and so forth. Constructing peace as an independent and, what is more important, unconditional political, ethical, and legal value signified a deliberate ignoring of the conceptual under-determination of the term peace and a high intellectual price had to be paid for this intellectual operation.

If peace has acquired this exceptional political value during the Cold War era, this specific concept of peace is of very limited use in our very different historical situation today. The critical charge of peace as value stemmed precisely from the fact that it was situated between the two major blocks in global politics, which entailed a critical distance to both Western and Eastern concepts. Yet the post-1989 situation is distinctly different in this respect and an unconditional reference to peace has
arguably lost much of the critical impetus that it had at its inception and is at risk of degenerating into a pure apologetic history of the existing global order of things.

To be sure, seeing peace as a value is no invention of the Cold War era. On the contrary, as a human aspiration peace has always been considered as a value. Yet the intellectual construction of this value has taken very different forms throughout history. Schematically peace can either be seen as dependent on other values or as an independent value. One of the most influential examples for the former position is Saint Augustine who distinguished ‘true peace’ from ‘false peace’ and defined the former as a ‘just order’. ‘Justice’ and ‘order’ are thus the concepts from which the value of peace is derived. One can obviously ask the question of what ‘justice’ actually means and different conceptions of justice can affront each other. The important point is that the values from which peace draws its value can be made explicit and eventually be debated on. This is quite different in the second approach which tends to consider peace as an independent value. Drawing on Enlightenment concepts of peace the last third of the twentieth century witnessed the rise of peace to a political a priori, that is, a concept that all actors have to endorse and a value that no one can put into question. However, in ascribing such an unconditional value to peace we not only run the risk of forgetting the contentious nature of peace but of deflating the concept of war and inflating the concept of peace. The long-term outcome was a hypocritical use of language in which we are not talking about war anymore, but about ‘humanitarian interventions’, ‘air strikes’, ‘stabilizing’, and ‘peace-keeping missions’, and so forth, often carried out not by identifiable political actors but by an ‘international community’ as an abstractly universal agent of peace. In contrast, this volume departs from the assumption that peace has never been, nor can it be, an independent value and it tries to map out the different, and even antagonistic values that were attached to peace by different actors in concrete historical situations.

Peace being not an independent but a ‘qualified value’ always meant a certain form of peace, implying a certain domestic and international order, the two being intimately linked. In nineteenth-century Europe, we thus see a large variety of political, ethical, and juridical norms on which peace was to be built; its doctrine based on the international level to a large extent on the liberal assumptions of eighteenth century political thinking which estimated autonomy and individual freedom and remained structurally quiet when it

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should handle tensions or conflicting obligations between Empires or states. The early attempts of the French Revolution to ‘export’ republicanism and eventually democracy were clearly linked to a European peace project, the idea being not so far removed from Kant’s assumption that peace can only be established between republican states. While being neither republican nor democratic, Napoleon’s Empire tried to impose upon Europe its vision of peace, based on the assumptions of popular sovereignty, civic rights, and the rule of law. After Napoleon’s fall, different peace concepts coexisted in Europe: peace as the renewal of the eighteenth-century idea of a political balance of power; peace as a system of regular interstate congresses; peace as the legacy of Enlightenment ideas of a European civil society, including an insistence on free-trade and colonialism; peace based on the recognition of the ‘principle of nationality’ and of national self-determination; peace based on religiously founded principles of monarchical legitimacy; peace having to be achieved through transnational revolutionary solidarity between the exploited working-classes; peace as being based on the universalization of democratic participation rights; peace as technical and positivistic project promoted by the particular professional group of international lawyers and of peace movements. To put it in other words, each party had its own peace and the

political principles of which type of peace was to be built were not only very different, but even irreconcilable. On the level of conceptual history, we thus witness struggles for the imposition of peace concepts against rival and even clearly opposed concepts of peace.

IV. Dimensions Silenced: The Contentious Character of Claims for Peace

It is amazing to see how these facts are almost systematically eluded by most of the existing studies in peace history. Anyone comparing the bulk of the existing secondary literature on peace movements with source material will be struck by the gulf that separates the former from the latter. Standard accounts in historical peace studies present the struggles of men, women, and networks for the sake of peace, thus constructing a continuity of social and sometimes transnational networks that anticipate in many respects the political commitment of the bulk of peace historians themselves. When re-reading the sources, however, one cannot but be surprised by the fact that one dimension is almost completely silenced in the secondary literature. And this is precisely the contentious character of claims for peace. One standard argument brought forward by peace activists is for instance that—in order to bring about peace in Europe—the first thing to be done is to crush the enemies of peace. In other words, the call for peace is in many cases accompanied by a call to weapons: 

\[ Si \ vis \ pacem, para bellum. \]

It was one of the most astonishing findings in the work of this volume to become aware that the bulk of the existing literature was strangely low-key about these disturbing facts. As a consequence of this, we felt the necessity to place these paradoxes of peace at the centre of our attention. Telling the story of war and peace in black and white is not only disputable on a theoretical level, it is often quite simply wrong.

This volume is thus intended as a contribution to a critical re-writing of the contentions around the concepts of war and peace and of their connections to other nineteenth-century European key concepts like sovereignty, empire, security, humanity, civilization and barbarism, Christendom, and colonialism. These disputed fields are mapped out in the various contributions to this volume. If our focus lies on Europe, we believe that any contribution to European history has to inscribe Europe 1815–1914 into the context of global history. If Europe has to be ‘provincialized’

\[ Dipesh \ Chakrabarty, \textit{Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference} (new edn), with a new preface by the author, Princeton, Princeton University Press 2007. \]

power relations on a global scale needed to be addressed. This does not only imply taking account of class and gender positions in the field of international history, but also to re-addressing the impact of global inequalities on the issue of nationalism and of nationalities. The older peace history has argued that the cause of peace was lost against the hegemony of nationalisms since the end of the nineteenth century. Here too, this way to tell the story is in its affinity to attempt to write a history of Europe as a history of European integration, culminating obviously with the European Union, as the institutional realization of a universal principle of peace. This history of progress also affects the view on the historiography of peace which suffers in post-1945 a-historical overestimations like the statement that ‘Views of peace have evolved within the field of peace studies, particularly since World War II’.

Given the fact that nineteenth-century Europe witnessed such a vast variety of antagonistic ‘peaces’ this spatial and chronological setting seemed particularly fruitful as a starting point. It was arguably in nineteenth-century Europe that concepts which were to become hegemonic on the global scene first came to blossom. Saying this, however, we must be aware of the limits of this endeavour which also indicates a direction for future research. A global comparison of the different ‘indigenous’ conceptual histories of war and peace might thus be a fascinating perspective. There is probably no social formation that has not been compelled to conceptualize conflict and its settlement, both internally and externally. The conceptual, social, and political grounds on which this has been done are, however, distinctly different.

To give just a few examples: in contrast to the Western tradition the Chinese vocabulary distinguished between two words for peace: heping on the one hand, and wu on the other, the former being invested with encompassing metaphysical, social, and psychological contents, and the latter denoting more narrowly a peace treaty or a ceasefire. Moreover, the whole idea of peace is traditionally embedded in an imperial political theology, in which the Emperor represents the unity of harmony and stability within the political order of the state. He therefore is the upholder of peace. Under his ‘Mandate of Heaven, war is never supposed to occur, so if it does, it is considered an aberration to the natural state of peace’. In theory, non-violent solutions are preferred to direct confrontations and defensive warfare is preferred over wars of aggression, military force, and violence. It is clear, however, that this spiritual framework only holds true within the framework of imperial centralism.

The classical Arabic tradition addressed the ethical and psychological implications of the conceptual couple in yet another perspective. The Arabic language has actually two different words for war: harb and jihad. The first derives from the verb hariba or harraba, which means becoming angry; the adjective harib being

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someone’s enemy and the noun harab despoliation or dispossession. The semantic field covered by harb thus denotes, first, the psychological condition of being angry, secondly the relation between enemies, and thirdly the goal of warfare, which is not the annihilation of an enemy but their despoliation. The second word for war, jihad, deriving from the verb gahada, signifies both war and the ethical struggle against disturbing passions of the soul.²⁹ It thus comprises a part of what other traditions would understand as being part of the semantics of peace, rather than of war. In the Christian tradition, for instance, the harmony of the soul is not only addressed as being part of an overwhelming notion of peace, but ‘earthly peace’ is even dependent on the development of peace in the individuals’ souls. This, in turn, is only possible through the Christian faith. In striking contrast to this Christian tradition, the Islamic tradition addresses this issue through the language of war. There are two different sorts of jihad, major and minor. The ‘major jihad’ precisely refers to this struggle within the souls, the struggle for faith and against the passions. By contrast, ‘minor jihad’ refers to war. In both senses, jihad means combat, which requires the strength of the soul.

The word for peace in the Arabic language is salm or salam. In contrast to jihad it conveys the idea of submission to political and religious authority, as well as of tranquillity, security, and religious salvation. The link between these meanings is that one is safe and sound by submission to and respect for religion. The word Islam is in itself derived from this same origin and Islam originally signifies submission (ie to the divine commandments) which will make the individuals safe and sound, and hence peaceful in their souls.

V. A critical History of the International Order and its Normative Systems: Peace as Object of Dispute, Power-Struggles—and Ultimately War

One objection, however, could be raised against this deconstructivist approach. Does this way of proceeding not deprive us of any means to measure concrete practices against normative standards? Or, to put it in other words, does this approach not hamper any possibility to write a critical history of the international order, to the extent that one might be inclined to think that the very possibility of criticism depends on a normative standard against which concrete practices can be measured? This objection relies on the assumption that universal standards for the codification of norms in the international realm can be formulated. Our project, on the contrary, seeks to demonstrate that all normative systems are always and of necessity situated. They developed, in particular, historical, intellectual, and geostrategical contexts and their genesis should be

reconstructed in relation to their specific situations. The critical impact of our approach is accordingly to be found in its attempt to historicize and thus to destabilize these very normative orders. To be sure, this approach involves the assumption that social relations are fundamentally agonistic in character. The novelty of our approach is to be found in the fact that we apply this insight to the very category of peace. Rather than being an essential entity that describes a state of affairs among humans, peace is the object of dispute, contention, power struggles—and ultimately war.

The methodological choice adopted in this volume is thus to challenge the theoretical dualism to which the bulk of the theory and history of international relations still relies. We have spontaneously a tendency to distinguish between norms for political behaviour on the international sphere on the one hand, and concrete historical actions on the other; the latter being determined by selfish interests rather than by universal norms. It is our aim to challenge this dualistic structure of reasoning. To put it bluntly, we depart from the assumption that the world is one, rather than being split into a noumenal and a phenomenal part. Drawing on the conceptual arsenal of conceptual history, of discourse analysis and of Nietzsche’s genealogy we intend to ask how systems of normativity emerge within complex historical situations in which strategic competition and different motivational settings interact. Rather than distinguishing between normative orders on the one hand, and concrete historical situations on the other, we address the various entanglements between these two. We tend to deliberately exclude any duality between normative ideals and the practical realization of these ideals. This implies a conscious break with the neo-idealistic paradigm that is still hegemonic in the field of the history and theory of international relations. Normative orders are no abstract ideals but precisely one form of historical practice. As such they are intimately linked to multi-layered power relations both on the international and on the domestic level. The blunt reason for this is that historical practice always and necessarily implies power relations.

At the same time, however, these power relations are never independent from normative systems without which it would be difficult to acquire any legitimacy. For instance, when the early modern territorial state imposed ‘security’ as one of its core-values, the operations implied both the formulation of normative framework, running from juridical measures to political philosophy (the most obvious example being Thomas Hobbes\textsuperscript{31}), and very concrete steps to gain control of the means for physical violence, through the setting-up of more or less centralized military and police apparatuses. And the same hold true for the semantics of war and peace, as well as the ulterior enlargement of the concept of security to the


international realm, which is clearly expressed in the syntagm of ‘collective security’ and its rise after the 1930s:

![Figure 1.1 The Sudden Appearance and Rise of ‘Collective Security’ After the 1930s](http://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=collective+security&year_start=1800&year_end=1990&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=> (online 10.04.2013).

However, it seems even more notable, that ‘security’ has clearly passed ‘peace’ in terms of popularity some decades ago. The idea of peace was/is externalized in political relations and attributed mainly to the outer relations of states; the domestic sphere now seeks for and speaks favourably of ‘security’:

![Figure 1.2 ‘Security’ Defeats ‘Peace’ In Terms of Popularity Around 1980](http://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=peace%2C+security&year_start=1800&year_end=1990&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=> (online 10.04.2013).

Without any ambition to completeness, this volume maps out some of the ‘paradoxes of peace’ in nineteenth-century Europe. After the Napoleonic Wars the hegemonic order of the Great Powers stabilized their particular concept of peace and bound them to a code acceptable to a broad majority of state actors, that found measures to make sure that administrative and political elites in leading states internalize international norms and rules, as Matthias Schulz points out in his contribution. However, the politics of the Holy Alliance only fitted partially into the conservative mindset that called for military
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interventions against uprisings and revolutions that threaten peace and stability. As Adrian Brisku points out, the ideological origins of the Holy Alliance were much more intricate than one is often tended to believe and there was a clear liberal heritage, especially in the Tsar’s early attempts to set up a durable peace in Europe.

But also peace movements in civil society were far from embracing an unequivocal pacifism. As Thomas Hippler shows, transnational networks of nationalists called for interventions in favour of national minorities in their struggle for independence. The emergence of transnational pacifistic networks of liberal democrats generated the similar paradox of a democratic war against the enemies of democracy. One important feature was the gendered dimension of peace activism. On the one hand peace as a political cause is traditionally reserved to men alone but, on the other hand, one nineteenth-century strand of discourse conceptualized women as inherently more ‘peaceful’ than men. As a consequence, peace activism seemed to perfectly fit to female nature. Susan Zimmermann demonstrates how the peace activism of the most important international women’s organization of the time silently re-affirmed hierarchies in the international and national domestic order, how the organization secured peace in its own house by suppressing the representation of interest challenging the status quo in the international order, and how it failed to relate its peace discourse in a meaningful way to any real war among ‘civilized’ nations.

International lawyers were to define ‘peace’ more than any other profession at the beginning of the nineteenth century; but only when it turned out that their formal understanding did not suit the needs of a growing public debate and interests for a more elaborated concept that was not limited to a technical understanding, the concept of peace became re-materialized and the lawyers themselves started to engage in manifold ways in the projects for a peaceful international order around 1900, as Miloš Vec argues. This included a particular perspective on conflicts and dispute settlement in a world in which international courts hardly existed for their dissolution; thus, the situation is remarkably different from the domestic/intrastate relations where a juridification/legalization of conflicts through permanent courts and procedural law had taken place for centuries. The international lawyers confirmed, on the one hand, code as the definitive way, together with arbitration, to build peace in the constituted new system of international relations; on the other hand, the codification idea suffered obviously on the international level from weaknesses that undermined the international lawyer’s efforts to build a normative order that was positive and universal at the same time, as Eliana Augusti points out in her chapter. But even if that norm-setting agenda would succeed, the question remains open as to how the aim of peace could be enforced in the international community without the threat of war—the consequences of this paradox are explored in the chapter of Kristina Lovrić-Pernak.

Economic liberals argue that free trade was the necessary precondition for peace among nations. However, Niels P Petersson argues that economic barriers had to be opposed by military force in some cases, free trade thus becoming a cause for armed conflict rather than a remedy against war. Against the paradoxes of ‘cosmopolitical’ liberal economy some economists argued that some forms
of protectionism were necessary in order to allow economic systems to develop unhindered by international competition. However, as Thomas Hopkins shows, this kind of economic nationalism was never remote from expansionist concerns and colonial ambitions. Lea Heimbeck points out how regulatory regimes dealing with the liquidation of state debts and state bankruptcies displayed that law and legal avoidance were mobilized simultaneously and they supported contradictory ideas of stabilizing peace and power intensification/force at the same time.

Colonial fanatics hold that peace was an essential precondition for the spreading of European civilization around the world. These ideas entered the discourse on barbarism and the ideas of the peace of the civilized that was based on manifold assumptions of religious paternalism (Stefan Kroll) and cultural inequality (Oliver Eberl). The transformation of the Ottoman Empire gives evidence of the domestic militarization of society and war that was required to participate in the Europeanizing mission for securing international peace. Mustafa Aksakal describes how an Ottoman elite that felt increasingly frustrated by their exclusion from the European Great Power system consciously used militarization and Islamization as political remedies. The volume is concluded with an essay by Bo Stråth that sheds light on the fundamental tensions of the languages of peace and war, and their intertwined strings of development since the Kantian project.

If the reader’s perception is that the various contributions to this volume deal in a critical sense with the term peace, our intentions would be fully matched. The language and ideology of peace has to be criticized as any other language and ideology as well, and history should be part of this criticism. There are numerous examples of how peace was instrumentalized for very particular interests. These often hypocritical languages have to be unveiled and discussed. Orwell’s newspeak slogan from 1984 that ‘war is peace’ reminds us once again of the necessity of that critical task and its manifold dimensions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Accordingly our deconstructivist stance is by no means cynical, nor does it entail any kind of fatalism. If conceptual history reveals the pitfalls of language and the aporia of the possibilities of its instrumentalization and abuse the reason for this is that any human agency is dependent upon language. Consequently the historical subjects have necessarily to use concepts such as peace in order to speak and ultimately to act. In this respect our volume is not an attack on the use of the concept of peace, it is about the identification of certain sights and engagements, about the multiple entanglements and how people perceived peace. This intention does not imply the negation of the belief that peace is something right, but it wants to show the tragic sensibility of that position.
From Nationalist Peace to Democratic War
The Peace Congresses in Paris (1849) and Geneva (1867)

Thomas Hippler

I. Introduction

War and peace, at least if you take these words according to their common meaning, belong to an order of things that has almost ceased to exist. They belong to this system of international relations in which each nation has its own individual existence and is its own protector, the judge of its interests and of its right, the avenger of its prejudices... In this new order, wars will perhaps still exist, but they will change their character. They will not be anymore wars of conquests or of rivalries; they will be police wars.

In the twenty-first century, these words sound rather familiar to our ears. More surprising, however, is the date when these sentences were written: this is an extract from a book on European Unity published in 1840 by a French Banker of Bavarian descent, Gustave d’Eichthal.1 This fact seems clearly to show that some of the paradoxes international politics is confronted with nowadays are actually part of a quite long history that dates back at least to the nineteenth century. And this history remains largely to be written. One of the organizing principles of this history is certainly the evolution of the semantics of war and peace from an international order based on sovereignty—and which is traditionally associated with a ‘Westphalian order’—and the emergence of systems of collective security and an ‘international community’—which is often considered as one of the outcomes of the Second World War. In other words: after having lost the characteristic of a sovereign right as which it was conceptualized during the Early Modern period, war was gradually being transformed into a form of international police action. The first paradox is here: without

2 For a critique of this traditional view on the history of international relations see Benno Teschke, The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics, and the Making of Modern International Relations, London Verso 2003.
ceasing to exist, war ceases progressively to be called ‘war’. Conversely, ‘peace’
is invested with a series of positive attributes, like justice, liberty, and, finally,
democracy.

What is at stake is thus the theory of ‘democratic peace’, according to which
democracies are less inclined than other regimes to go to war. Drawing on
Kant, who had already argued in his influential text on *Perpetual Peace* that
peace was to be built between ‘republican’ states, John Rawls radicalized Kant’s
idea of ‘republican peace’ into perhaps the clearest expression of ‘democratic
peace’: ‘The idea of democratic peace implies that, when liberal peoples do go
to war, it is only with unsatisfied societies, or outlaw states . . . This they do
when such a state’s polities threaten their security and safety, since they must
defend the freedom and independence of their liberal culture and oppose states
that strive to subject and dominate them.’\(^3\) I will argue in this chapter that
this theory poses some important problems.\(^4\) Most prominently, it tends to
assimilate any kind of democratic warfare to police wars in d’Eichthal’s sense
thus leading to the paradox of wars, which are not to be called wars anymore.
Moreover, these police wars echo quite clearly the heritage of the idea of a
‘civilizing mission’ that consists in the defence of liberal cultures, as advo-
cated by John Rawls.\(^5\) What is at stake is to approach the apparent paradox of
democratic war. I will argue in this chapter that some important elements of
this paradox can be detected through a genealogy of pacifistic movements in
nineteenth-century Europe.

During a whole century—from the mid-nineteenth-century until the Second
World War—quite a few pacifist movements appeared and they held a series
of peace congresses in Europe. These are truly transnational movements which
emerged in reaction to the post-Napoleonic ‘Vienna System’. Five ‘International
Peace Congresses’ were held between 1843 and 1879, and after 1867 the ‘League
for Peace and Liberty’ organized regular congresses. Finally, ‘Universal Peace
Congresses’ took place annually from 1889 to 1939 (with the exception of the
years of the First World War).\(^6\)

Organized pacifism was born in the English-speaking world, with the for-
formation of different peace societies in Britain and the United States in the
aftermath of the Napoleonic wars.\(^7\) The first peace congress was held in 1843
in London, but the audience was almost exclusively Anglo-American. It was
only in the following years, with the congresses in Brussels in 1848 and, most
noticeable in Paris in 1849, that the international society of the ‘friends of

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\(^4\) Among the many studies examining the democratic peace theory see Sebastian Rosato, ‘The

\(^5\) See Oliver Eberl’s contribution in this volume.

\(^6\) The most extensive account remains WH van der Linden’s massive book *The International

\(^7\) See Martin Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention: the British Peace Movement and Interna-
tional Relations, 1730-1854*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1996 and *Semi-detached Idealists: the British
peace’ succeeded in establishing transnational structures for organized pacifism and in bringing together delegates from different countries. This chapter will focus on the example of two paradigmatic congresses: Paris in 1849 and Geneva in 1867, thus trying to highlight some transformations of pacifistic discourse.

It is certainly not a historical coincidence that the international peace movement took off in the aftermaths of the European Revolutions of 1848–1849. The transnational revolutions seem to be an important break in the international order of the nineteenth century. Moreover, it is striking that the peace congresses were indeed characterized by a dialectical relationship to earlier attempts to establishing a political order of peace in Europe. The obvious reference is the ‘Holy Alliance’ formed by the Emperors of Austria and of Russia and the King of Prussia in September 1815. More than just concluding a treatise, these monarchs defined themselves as ‘members of one and the same Christian nation’ (emphasis mine) and the wording actually denotes a true European confederation grounded upon some commonly shared principles. The Holy Alliance held a series of conferences aiming at reacting against uprisings and revolutions in Europe, in particular in Spain, Portugal, and the Kingdom of Naples. The ‘Troppau Protocol’ of 1820 establishes the rules of conduct of the Alliance in these cases in the following way:

States, which have undergone a change of government due to revolution, the result of which threaten other states, ipso facto cease to be members of the European Alliance, and remain excluded from it until their situation gives guarantees for legal order and stability. If, owing to such alterations, immediate danger threatens other states the powers bind themselves, by peaceful means, or if need be, by arms, to bring back the guilty state into the bosom of the Great Alliance.9

The peace congresses from the mid-nineteenth century onwards imitated some of the features of the Holy Alliance, most prominently the scenic performance of an international encounter of representatives from different countries.10 At the same time, however, the peace movement of the mid-century opposed radically the founding principles of political order on which the Vienna system and the Holy Alliance were grounded. First, the pacifistic discourse opposed the principle of dynastic legitimacy promoting the

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9 The original French version of the Protocol, however, reads slightly different: ‘Lorsque les États où de pareils changements se seront ainsi effectués feront craindre à d’autres pays un danger imminent par leur proximité, et lorsque les puissances alliées pourront exercer à leur égard une action efficace et bienfaisante, elles employeront, pour les ramener au sein de l’Alliance, premièrement des démarches amicales, en second lieu une force coercitive, si l’emploi de cette force devenait indispensable.’
10 On the performative aspect in international relations see Johannes Paulmann’s very interesting study on encounters between monarchs in nineteenth century Europe, Pomp und Politik, Monarchenbegegnungen in Europa zwischen Ancien Régime und Erstem Weltkrieg, Paderborn, Schöningh 2000.
rival principle of national self-determination. Secondly, peace movements were based in civil society rather than in states. Accordingly, peace congresses were gatherings of representatives of civil society, in contrast to the summits where heads of governments and of states came together. Thirdly and finally, peace movements differed from the congress system of the Holy Alliance in their conceptualization of political homogeneity as the founding principle of peace, and the problem of intervention which stemmed from this claim to homogeneity.

According to peace historian Sandi Cooper, ‘in theory, the congress system was formed to keep peace; in reality, it established an interstate system to intervene against revolution’. The description is certainly not false, but I want to question the structure of the argument, and in particular the distinction between ‘theory’ and ‘reality’: the objective of the Holy Alliance was precisely to build peace in Europe on the basis of homogeneity of political principles. We can obviously disagree about these political principles—and in particular most people will probably nowadays disagree with the principle of dynastic legitimacy—but this should not lead us to oversee the important point. The implicit argument is that a peaceful order can only be built on the basis of commonly shared principles. And this homogeneity ipso facto becomes something to be defended if threatened. The necessity of military intervention stems from there—and so does the constitutive paradox of peace. In contrast to Cooper’s interpretation I will thus claim that there is no contradiction between the two aspects of peace-keeping and of preventing revolution. There is, on the contrary, a mutual implication: there cannot be a peaceful order on the basis of fundamental antagonisms. If you want to establish peace upon the ground of monarchical legitimacy you have to be prepared to intervene against revolution, militarily if necessary. As we will see, the ulterior peace movements encountered similar paradoxes.

The Holy Alliance thus has to be considered as an instance of legitimization of a certain political order—the text explicitly speaks of a legitimate order (the original French text reads as ‘ordre légitime’ and not a ‘legal order’ as in the widely cited English translation). It is also an instance of de-legitimization of any attempts to reverse this order. The text points out that these are dangers for stability which have to be opposed by beneficial but effective action (‘une action efficace et bienfaisante’). In order to defend this order, the Alliance delivered a certain number of ‘mandates’—the wording is interesting because of its posteriority—to crush rebellions anywhere in Europe. The Holy Alliance

and its Troppau Protocol have the merit to clearly express a principle which can be found—sometimes in disguised form—in virtually all ulterior peace movements: the idea that peace has to rely on a homogenous political order at least concerning the fundamental principles of politics. For the Holy Alliance, these principles are dynastic legitimacy and Christianity. The ulterior history of pacifism can be understood as the history of the evolution of these principles of order. The following pages will investigate into one of these evolutions, in which the principle of nationality was gradually replaced by a democratic principle.

II. The Paris Peace Congress of 1849

These general circumstances have to be borne in mind when analysing the peace meeting that took place in Paris in August 1849. For the decades to come, the Paris Congress was considered as the most important event in the history of the European peace movement. There were several reasons for this: first, the important number of participants from different countries. In contrast to the previous congresses that had taken place in London in 1843 and in Brussels in 1848, not only British and Americans, but also French, Germans, Belgians, Italians, Dutch, Swiss, and Spanish delegates made their way to Paris. Secondly, the Paris congress had very important media coverage in different countries and the meeting thus became a transnational media event. Thirdly, emblematic figures participated and Victor Hugo’s opening was to become one of the most widely cited documents of European pacifism in the nineteenth century. Moreover, French President Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte received the committee of the congress, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexis de Tocqueville organized a ball in honour of the peace activists. Official recognition for the cause of peace had never been greater. This is even more remarkable since most of the delegates belonged to liberal movements, and many indeed to the opposition within their respective countries.

The Illustrated London News devoted its headlines of the 1 September 1849 issue to the Paris peace congress and the title story was accompanied by the drawing in Figure 10.1:

![Figure 10.1](image)

The official summary of the congress described the opening scene as follows:

On 22 August, at midday, the Congress was opened in the beautiful hall of Sainte-Cécile, which has been artistically decorated for the circumstances. Behind the president’s desk and around the barrier reserved to the Friends of Peace, there were the flags of France, of England, of the United States, of Belgium, of Holland, etc. in fraternal bundles. The meeting, which consisted in majority of the delegates of the Societies of the Friends of Peace of England, the United States and other foreign nations, was the most picturesque.\(^{17}\)

The quote and the picture are not just meant to transmit the ‘scent’ of the scene, but also because the theatre-like staging of the congress is actually one of its most important features. The discursive analysis of the congress has to be combined with an analysis of its performative character, which situates the speech-acts within a web of culturally created meaning. The speeches, the more or less ritualized

\(^{16}\) London Illustrated News No. 388, vol. XV 1 September 1849, p 152, photograph Thomas Hippler.

behaviours, the spatial distribution of the participants, the decoration of the room, form a ‘system of meaning’ which is clearly inspired by other political stagings, in particular by the diplomatic ritual and the juridical procedure. At the same time, however, it also very clearly tries to distance itself from this model by its attempts to create an alternative system of reference. Without pretending to give a ‘thick description’ of the Congress, I will limit myself to some discursive and visual traces that seem particularly interesting. The above-cited text primarily insists on the decoration of the room, in particular on the national flags of which some are explicitly cited and others just denoted by an ‘etc’. In picture n°1 (Figure 10.1) only the flags of France, Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States can be clearly distinguished behind the speaker’s desk. These flags clearly have a twofold function here. On the one hand, they recall the individuality of each nation, represented by the different delegates. On the other hand, and more fundamentally, the recognition of the different national belongings is clearly constructed as the ground on which peace and international order can be established.

It is important to insist on this point against a very important tendency within the historiography on pacifism, ie the idea that pacifism ultimately failed in front of the force of nationalisms. On the contrary, mid-nineteenth-century pacifism can be correctly interpreted as a ‘nationalistic pacifism’ to the extent in which it very clearly intended to build a peace order in Europe on the idea of nationality.\(^8\) The problem, therefore, is no longer to understand why pacifism failed in front of the strength of nationalism, but rather which were the transformations of the concept of the ‘nation’ which led, during the second half of the century, to a growing tension between pacifism and nationalism. Tension, however, does not mean rupture, since the idea of a peace order based on national belongings and self-determination actually remained influential at least until the Versailles peace settlement after the First World War. In 1851, and thus two years after the Paris Congress, the Italian lawyer and politician Mancini has defined the principle of nationality as the ‘fundament of international law’.\(^9\) A peace order necessarily presupposes the recognition of national independence and self-determination.

By posing the principle of nationality at the heart of its programme, the Peace Congress, obviously situated itself at the antipodes of the Holy Alliance and its insistence of dynastical legitimacy. The principle of nationality thus defines a new norm of legitimacy, or, to use the traditional vocabulary, of the ‘just order’ which is traditionally a necessary attribute to peace.\(^{10}\) Legitimate are nations constituted

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\(^9\) Pasquale Stanislao Mancini, Della nazionalità come fondamento del diritto delle genti, prelazione al corso di diritti internazionale e marittimo, Turin, Botta 1851.

\(^{10}\) On the traditional link between peace, justice and order, see Augustinus, Civitas Dei, XIX, 12–13: ‘Iaque pacem iniquorum in pacis comparatione iustorum ille videt nec pacem esse dicendum, qui novit praeponere recta pravis et ordinata perversis . . . pax hominum ordinata Concordia . . . pax omnium rerum tranquillitas ordinis’. See also Aquinas, Summa theologiae, 2,2, qu 29; art 2: ‘Si enim concordet cum alio non spontanea volutate, sed quasi coactus timore alicuius mali imminentis, talis concordia non est vere pax.’
as sovereign states and the description thus explicitly cites the flags of France, England, the United States, Holland, and the newly created Belgium.\textsuperscript{21} The text does not mention any visual representations of nations that are not constituted as states, like Italy, Germany, or Poland, and even less multinational states like the Austrian or the Russian Empires. When turning to the media reactions that surrounded the Congress, it becomes obvious that especially the liberal and republican press in France explicitly linked the issue of peace to the settlement of ‘national questions’, sometimes even arguing for armed interventions in support of struggles of national self-determination.\textsuperscript{22} However, an interesting fissure can be observed within the pacifist discourse with regard to military interventions. The heritage of the period of the Holy Alliance, during which the right to intervene was clearly the right of the Christian monarchies to crush rebellions abroad, led pacifist supporters of the principle of nationality to condemning military interventions into other nations’ affairs and thus claiming for a ‘principle of non-intervention’.\textsuperscript{23} However, international legitimacy being based on nationality, no less than four speakers during the Paris Congress called up for solidarity with struggles of national independence, sometimes claiming for a military intervention in order to support these fights for national freedom and independence. Interestingly, the paradox of a peace congress arguing for a military intervention was not perceived as such.

Suringer, the Dutch vice-president of the Congress, was rather explicit on this point: according to him, each nation has the right to seize arms for its independence. International arbitration, one of the key claims of pacifism, was only possible among ‘civilized nations that are in a position of equality the ones in front of the others’.\textsuperscript{24} In all other cases, fight for independence had to take the route of armed conflict, for the simple reason that it was impossible to establish a peaceful relations between an oppressed nation and its oppressor. To put it in other words, international arbitration can be applied to \textit{civilized} nations—which means that a nation which oppresses another is ipso facto excluded from the group of civilized nations. It is in exactly this sense that Richard Cobden, the British advocate of free-trade took issue in his speech at the congress with General Haynau, the commander of the Austrian troops that were crushing the Hungarian rebellion during the very days of the Paris Congress. According to Cobden, Haynau was a ‘new Attila’.\textsuperscript{25} Cobden’s rhetoric prefigured the topos of the ‘hun’ as the incarnation of barbarity, and thus illegitimacy within Europe. The London \textit{Times} of 27 August 1849 commented on the incident that ‘at that
moment there was scarcely a man, woman, or child in the vast assemblage who would not have snatched up arms to sweep the monster and his host from the face of the earth, whose policy was described by the hon. gentleman, not as the policy of man, but rather of the Devil’.26

The dividing line between civilization and barbarity—or, even more profoundly, between humanity and its contrary—quite clearly runs along national boundaries, since especially multi-national Empires were relegated at the periphery of European normality—with Russia as its clearest example and the Austrian general Haynau as its personification. French peace activist Francisque Bouvet thus spoke of the coming ‘supreme fight between the barbarity of the North and the civilisation of the West’27 where the North clearly meant Russia.28 The principle of nationality engendering a redefinition of legitimate and illegitimate political actors, thus led to the distinction of three different classes of political entities: first, national states of Western Europe as the incarnation of normality and civilization; secondly, nations of Central and Southern Europe which are not yet states but will probably become states soon (Germany, Poland, Hungary, Italy, etc); and thirdly the multinational Empires of Austria and of Russia, the very paradigm of barbarity.

Besides this geographical location and definition of political normality, the space of possible peace is also delimited in social terms. Visual representations of the Congress indicate that this is a clearly bourgeois assembly consisting of writers and journalists, lawyers and politicians, as well as representatives of the different religions whereas insurgents, revolutionaries, and proletarians remain invisible. And in the particular circumstances of Paris in 1849 this absence is obviously not void of signification. Victor Hugo, the chairman of the Congress praises the advantages, economic advantages in the first place, that peace will bring along compared with revolutionary disorders: ‘And do you know what will vanish together with misery? Revolutions . . . Rather than fighting against each other, we will spread along the universe! . . . Rather than making revolutions, we will make colonies! Rather than bringing barbarity to civilisation, we will bring civilisation to barbarity . . . Asia will be given to civilisation, Africa will be given to humanity.’29

This continuity between pacifism and a colonial project would deserve a deconstruction in itself, but I will limit myself to highlighting the link between the domestic barbarity (ie revolution) and international barbarity (ie Asia including

26 The same wording can be found in the Examiner of Saturday, 1 September 1849.
29 Congrès des amis de la paix universelle . . . , p 4.
Russia, and Africa). Victor Hugo concludes: ‘the era of revolutions has come to an end; the era of amelioration is about to begin.’ Hugo expresses quite clearly the ambiguous relation between pacifism and revolution. On the one hand, the European revolutions of 1848–1849 clearly provided the very basis of the resurgence of organized pacifism in Europe, to the extent that it was revolution that had swept away the ‘Vienna system’. On the other hand, revolution is explicitly said to be of another age, since the era of reforms has begun. In other words, Hugo argued that the relation to historical time was about to change: the bygone era of revolutions was an era of struggle and war, whereas the coming era of reform will be an era of peace, colonialism, free-trade, and reform. At the same time, however, the revolutions of 1848–1849, while being relegated into a bygone past, are clearly recognizable as the historical precondition for the advent of the era of reform.

There is some evidence that this ambiguity ought to be understood with relation to the changing character of the concept of the ‘nation’. During the eighteenth century and until the French Revolution—which was the obvious historical reference in 1849—the ‘nation’ designed primarily a political, social, and cultural difference within one country. The notion can be translated into our contemporary language as ‘civil society’ or simply as ‘class’. According to this second meaning, the ‘nation’ (as well as related concepts such as patriotism or fatherland) had a direct revolutionary connotation. By the mid-nineteenth-century, a change was coming about and the ‘nation’ progressively acquired its current meaning. Take the telling example of the 1848 circular to the French Embassies in Europe by Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Second French Republic Alphonse de Lamartine. Lamartine invited his ambassadors to insist vis-à-vis foreign governments on the fact that, in contrast to what had happened in 1792, republics and monarchies could peacefully coexist in 1848. The minister thus wanted to reassure France’s neighbours about the peaceful intentions of the Second Republic. Lamartine’s argument, however, is very interesting. At the time of the French Revolution, he says, the country had not yet been a unified nation in the modern sense: internal tensions, and thus the lack of national unity within France had led to the outbreak of what contemporary observers had termed a ‘global civil war’. By 1848, however, this predicament had disappeared. One could summarize Lamartine’s argument in the following way: if ‘the nation’ had been the cause for war in 1792, it had become the basis for peace by 1848. And it has become the basis for peace, precisely because it has changed its meaning. The nation was not anymore what could be described in today’s parlance as a synonym for class-struggle which it had been at the time of the French Revolution but it has become a world for domestic

30 Congrès des amis de la paix universelle . . ., p 5.
cohesion which was a precondition for international peace. In contrast to other European languages, English has kept this meaning to a certain degree, as can be seen in the appellation of the ‘One-Nation-Tories’-movement during the 1980s, drawing on the title of Benjamin Disraeli’s novel *Sybil or the Two Nations*.

However, the nation as political core concept conveys also another meaning which is close to what would nowadays be called ‘civil society’. If Adam Smith talked about *The Wealth of Nations*, ‘nation’ in this context is primarily to be understood as ‘society’ or ‘civil society’. The discussions about the link between peace and free trade at the Paris Congress provide an example for this link to the extent that the notion of society was conceptualized as encompassing foremost the economic sphere. I will take a different stance here and address the issue through the paradoxical presence of females at the Congress, rather than through the debates on free trade. The regular participants were all males and the visual representations also depict a male assembly. However, the summary of the Congress mentions ‘some women’ in the galleries. Women are also clearly distinguishable in the galleries on picture n°1 (Figure 10.1). But all in all the sources produced by the organizers of the Congress are rather low-key about the gender issue. Articles in the press provide more information on the matter. The 24 August issue of the *Journal des villes et des campagnes*, thus stated that ‘the visitors’ banks and the galleries are encumbered. Like yesterday, ladies were in the majority’. Though excluded from the deliberations, women were nevertheless massively present at the Congress, thus intervening symbolically into the political sphere. This absence/presence of women at the Congress had a precise political function, which perfectly illustrates the general orientation of the Congress. Its objective was to moralize politics: in contrast to state politics, international moral politics would be located in the civil society, i.e in the non-governmental sphere. The participants were attending the Congress as ‘private citizens’ and they were not addressing themselves to governments or states, but to public opinion and civil society. Pacifism thus surmounts in tendency a classic distinction between a political sphere, which is reserved to men alone, and a private sphere in which women have a role to play. As private citizens and legitimate members of civil society women were allowed to intervene into politics without transgressing the boundaries of gender roles.

This foundation of pacifism in civil society is clearly suggested by the visual representations like the one that can be found in the official summary of the Congress (see Figure 10.2).

34 See for instance Sieyès’ famous definition of the third estate (and thus the productive elements of society) as the nation: ‘Qui oserait dire que le tiers état n’a pas en lui tout ce qu’il faut pour former une nation complète?’ Emmanuel Sieyès, *Qu’est-ce que le Tiers État?* (1789), Paris, PUF 1982, p 30.


36 See Thomas Hopkin’s and Niels P Petersson’s contributions in this volume.

37 Van der Linden mentions ‘some 379 visitors, among whom were 50 ladies’, *The International Peace Movement*, p 336.

The Congress here was clearly inspired by the model of a ‘court of law’ in the Kantian sense, that is, a tribunal of universal reason and of political morality. ‘True’ power, this picture tells us, is not located in the institutions, but in the public sphere that the Congress intends to represent; that is, to universal reason shared in theory by humankind as a whole, but concretely embodied by the representatives of a cosmopolitan-minded bourgeoisie. Accordingly, the summary of the Congress was glad to announce that ‘the Congress of Paris has had a notorious influence on public opinion, and has thus achieved the most important and the most practical result that could be achieved’. The Paris Peace Congress thus represented itself as a force capable to act not primarily upon governments but upon international public opinion. However, where can this international public opinion possibly be found, if not precisely within the transnational networks like the Congress itself? In this sense, the Paris Congress was a ‘speech act’ in itself, inasmuch as it constituted itself the transnational public opinion to which it pretended speaking. In any event, the important point is that this transnational society is based upon the principle of nationality as its main principle of order. Peace, according to the 1849 Congress, consisted in a assemblage of well-constituted nations. In this sense, it could be argued that pacifism returned somewhat to an older conception of the nation—that is a conception that tends to identify

40 Anonymous, Congrès général de la paix, Paris, Chassaignon, without date [1849], without pagination; photograph Thomas Hippler.
the nation to (civil) society as opposed to the state. Therefore, the nation is located in the transnational sphere of universally shared reason and humanity.

To put it in paradoxical terms: the concept of the nation that the congress enacted was transnational in itself and this is the reason why, in 1849, ‘the nation’ could function as a basis for a peaceful international order in Europe. This feature, however, immediately leads us to another concept that was to gain prominence for the peace movement during the decades to come. The principle of nationality was indeed progressively superseded by the democratic principle. In terms of conceptual history, this means that the concept of democracy encompassed some of the meanings that the concept of the nation had conveyed earlier but that is was increasingly becoming unable to cover during the second half of the nineteenth century.

III. The Geneva Peace Congress of 1867

The Geneva Congress of 1867 was another important turning point in the history of European pacifism in the nineteenth century and, like the Paris Congress, it benefited from extensive media coverage. But in contrast to the former, the Congress of 1867 has succeeded in establishing an enduring structure of transnational cooperation: the International League of Peace and Liberty and a bilingual weekly, entitled Les États-Unis d’Europe or Die Vereinigten Staaten von Europa with some attempts to also publishing English, Italian, and Spanish versions of the same paper.

However, the Congress was not a frank success: in contrast to the calm atmosphere in 1849 in Paris, the mood was rather stormy in Geneva and very different conceptions of peace and liberty affronted each other. Another difference lies in the massive participation of representatives of the worker’s movement who had been gathering a couple of days earlier in Lausanne for the Congress of the International Labour Association (the ‘First International’). In Paris, by contrast, the revolutionaries, workers or others, had been absent from the Peace Congress of 1849. Bakunin was among the most famous participants in Geneva, whereas Marx and Engels had declined any cooperation with the ‘petty-bourgeois’ pacifists.

The Geneva Congress has found in the person of Garibaldi a president who was as famous as Victor Hugo for the Paris Congress. Despite ferocious anti-Garibaldian propaganda in the Catholic parts of Switzerland and abroad, 50,000 to 60,000 people welcomed Garibaldi upon his arrival in Geneva as the contemporary drawing at Figure 10.3 shows.


44 I have been unable to find any visual representation of the Congress itself. One hypothesis for this lack of images could be that democratic peace, which was the central claim in 1867, is difficult...
Interestingly Garibaldi was celebrated foremost as a hero of liberty and democracy—rather than as a prominent figure of Italian unity—which highlights an important shift in the pacifists’ discourse with regard to the nationalist paradigm of the Paris Congress. The dominant feature of the Paris Peace Congress had been the basis of a European order upon the principle of nationality. Between 1849 and 1867, the nation has become increasingly dubious as a foundation of peace. To be sure, the hall in which the Congress took place, recalled the Paris Congress of 1849 and flags were also exhibited. But in the his opening speech, Jules Barni, one of the organizers of the 1867 Congress identified ‘caesarism’ and military monarchies as the main adversaries for pacifists, adding that the principles of nationalities, of natural frontiers, and of national unity had become camouflage of militaristic caesarism. In 1849, no speaker had considered nationalism as an enemy for peace, but the Congress’s overall understanding was that peace had to be built upon cooperation among well-ordered nation states. From the 1860s onwards, however, the relation between nationalism and pacifism became more contentious and another key-concept entered the scene: democracy. The reason to represent. There are lots of images of peace, both analogical and realistic, and, conversely, there are lots of images of the ‘people’. However, the ‘people’ is either represented as faithful followers of authority, or as seizing their collective power, which means that the people is either devoid of sovereignty or as not a peaceful entity.

46 Illustrierte Zeitung N° 1265.
for this shift is easy to identify, given the semantic evolutions of the concept of the nation which was more and more understood as *ethnos* rather than *demos*. This shift within the concept of the nation quite naturally leaves space for another concept to occupy this meaning and that is precisely what happened. To put it in other words, this semantic evolution of the ‘nation’ forced the actors to use another concept in order to cover a similar yet distinct meaning.

The manifesto of the Congress insisted both on the continuity with the earlier peace movement—namely taking up Victor Hugo’s 1849 catchphrase about the ‘United States of Europe’—adding, however, the former peace movement had limited itself to ‘preaching peace in the name of Christianity or an ill-defined philanthropy, forgetting about all the political conditions’. The organizers of the Geneva Congress insisted that ‘there cannot be solid and durable peace but between peoples who govern themselves freely’. This criticism of the Paris Congress was certainly an exaggeration, since the reference to the ‘nation’ played precisely the role that the organizers of the Geneva Congress called to their wishes. But in contrast to the 1849 Paris Congress and its nationalistic outlook, the 1867 congress defined itself as the ‘general assembly of European democracy’ (*les assises de la démocratie européenne*) and the discussions turned essentially around the link between peace and democracy, ie an element that had been largely absent from the debates of the Paris Congress. If the Paris Congress had subordinated somewhat peace to the national question, the Geneva Congress makes of peace a dependent variable of democracy and 1867 can thus be considered as the date of birth of democratic pacifism. The link between peace and democracy is once more mixing up the limits between domestic and international policy. One could

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49 The words ‘democracy’ and ‘democratic’ appear only three times in the official summary of the Paris Congress, and not always in a politically very meaningful sense. Frédéric Bastiat, economist and partisan of the free-trade movement, thus praised the universality of the French language, arguing that France’s *génie* would flourish in the world thanks to liberty and democracy. Interestingly, the reference to democracy appears here close to a modern, ie culture and language-based nationalism (on the evolution of the language of nationalism see Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1990). Francisque Bouvet, a member of the French National Assembly, was the only one to assimilate the cause of peace to that of democracy (Francisque Bouvet, *Discours de M. Francisque Bouvet, représentant du peuple au congrès de la paix tenu à Paris en 1849*, Paris, Imprimerie centrale de Napoléon Chaix et Cie 1849, p 4). Elihu Burritt, American philanthropist and anti-slavery activist amalgamated republicanism, constitutionalism, and democracy. Concerning the federal institutions of international politics which Burritt called to his wishes, he pointed out that ‘such a representation would be sufficiently popular, if appointed by the legislatures of the different constitutional governments. Even if a few absolute monarchies should send delegates to the Congress, their votes and voices would not modify the popular character and constitution of the assembly. For such a Congress would represent the principle of universal suffrage applied to nations, in the same manner as it is applied to individuals under a republican or constitutional form of government. The votes that Prussia might be entitled to give, would be subject to the rigid condition of the democratic principle.’ (Report of the Proceedings of the Second General Peace Congress, held in Paris on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th August, 1849. Compiled from Authentic Documents under the Superintendence of the Peace Congress Committee, London, Giplin 1849, p 58. Note that the French edition of the proceedings speaks of Russia instead of Prussia, *Congrès des amis de la paix universelle*, . . ., p 34).
think that democracy is primarily a domestic question and this is what critics actually claimed. But for nineteenth-century democratic pacifists, this was precisely not the case, and democracy was presented as an immediately and necessarily transnational issue. The point was not to achieve democracy within one nation in order to reach peace afterwards, for the simple reason the democracy in one country was always threatened by the non-democratic regimes outside. The point was to achieve democracy everywhere, and it is only in this way that Europe would come to peace. The final resolution of the Congress thus states that ‘the confederation of peoples is inseparable of their political emancipation’.

To be sure, most of the Congress’ political statements were harshly debated and few common grounds were reached. Rarely had peace been a more contentious claim than during the Geneva Congress. This holds true for the relation between peace and nationalism. Some speakers held clearly anti-nationalistic positions, most prominently Bakunin, who claimed that ‘the false principle of nationality which has been invented recently by the despots of France, Russia and Prussia in order to suffocating the supreme principle of liberty has definitely to be abandoned.’ Others were much more cautious and the words ‘nation’ and ‘nationality’ were still employed with a positive reference. It does not seem, however, that the nations were still conceived of as a possible foundation of peace. At the most it was a reality to be counted with. The reason for this tendency to substitute the nation by democracy is certainly to be found in the changing meaning of the concept ‘nation’ as pointed out above. At a time when the ‘nation’ progressively lost the social and political signification which it has had until the early nineteenth century, and when nationalisms came increasingly to be integrated into the ideology of non-democratic and non-republican states, the concept was of little use for the promotion of democratic and republican politics.

Moreover, the nation was not the only contested concept. Religion was equally an important point of dissention, as well as the ‘social question’. The address by the Lausanne Congress of the International Labour Association to the Geneva Peace Congress gave rise to animated debates. The First International thus argued that ‘it is necessary to modify the social organization towards an ever greater justice in the repartition of production’ and to promote ‘the emancipation of the working class’, and a majority of the Geneva Congress found this an unacceptable position. Like in Paris, all the speakers in Geneva were male—with the exception of a speech by an absent female activist, Clémence Royer, which was read by someone else. Women’s right to speak had been the object of a harsh debate during the preparation of the Congress and it was concluded by the compromise that ‘female membership is possible, but the rules will not mention the right of women to

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52 *Annales du Congres de Genève.* . . , p 190.
talk—which means that if one presents herself, she will not be denied the right to talk. The three classical vectors of inequality—nation, class, and gender—were thus well present in the debates and actually structure not only many of the internal dissentions of the peace movement, but also the very conduct of transnational politics. All these vectors of inequality would in turn have an influence upon the definition of democracy as the core concept of the congress. The questions if women and dependent workers enjoyed democratic participation rights, or if production should be subject to democratic processes of decision-making and of the national boundaries of democracy were certainly vital. It is precisely this under-determination of what democracy precisely meant in the context of 1867, which makes it such an important conceptual device and indeed defines it as a ‘fundamental concept’ in the sense of Koselleck.

In 1867 the big battles for democracy were yet to be won and ‘democracy’ had definitely a meaning that differed profoundly from the sense it has in the twenty-first century: Napoleon III was governing as the Emperor of the French, Germany and Italy are about to achieve national unity under monarchical guidance, in Britain the modalities of voting are still excluding the majority from actual political rights. Switzerland thus seemed to be a haven of democracy, of toleration and of liberty. As a consequence Geneva had not been chosen by coincidence as the place to host the Congress. Besides this symbolic dimension, the pacifistic movement has also some solid support by influential Genevians like Jules Barni, a French philosophy professor in exile because of his refusal to swear an oath to Napoleon III and the translator of Kant, among others of the latter’s Perpetual Peace. Despite this influential support, the Congress created an important upheaval in the city: in his opening speech Garibaldi claimed the papal state to be a legitimate part of Italy and attacked ferociously papacy as ‘the most harmful of all sects’. The Catholics of Geneva were shocked and they tried to have the Congress forbidden by the authorities, with the argument that it is a threat for the security of the city and for political stability of Europe. And their fears were actually not without foundation. According to Charles Lemonnier, one of its organizers, the Geneva Congress ‘tried to found, outside of the governmental sphere, not only without their permission, but, it can be said, against their will, an enduring and permanent European democratic institution, which did not have other bases than private initiative and the free support of the greatest possible number of Europeans, which would create the European Fatherland, which would bring together towards a single goal the liberal democrats of any nation, which would become the general assembly of the United States of Europe.

54 Annales du Congrès de Genève . . ., p 16. After the Geneva Congress and besides the International League of Peace and Liberty, a Women’s League for Peace was created. Like the democratic movement, the women’s movement was also a transnational movement right from the onset.
55 Lemmonier, La vérité sur le congrès de Genève, pp 5–6.
58 Sarfatti, La nascita del moderno pacifismo democratico, pp 50–3.
and which would, in 1867, occupy an empty function, unnoticed by the governments: the European political function.\textsuperscript{59}

Comparing these words with the Paris Congress of 1849 one can easily see that the emphasis had significantly shifted. Like in 1849, pacifism was primarily a private initiative and it was deliberately situated outside of governmental politics, but in contrast to the Paris Congress, the Geneva Congress was explicitly suggesting to surmount this phase of free association in civil society, by founding a political ‘institution’. The programme was thus potentially revolutionary, since democratic pacifism explicitly claimed that an enduring order of peace has to be founded on ‘homogeneity of the particular constitutions of each nation’—that is a democratic government and the ‘sovereign rights of the human person’.\textsuperscript{60} Note the modern sense of the word ‘nation’ here, in contrast to the older meaning that was still operating in 1849. The principle of order this pacifism is based upon, is nothing other than a liberal democracy which is not only respectful to personal rights, but which, moreover, actually relies on the rights which the citizens have conferred to the state. The underlying political theory is clearly a contract-based popular sovereignty of Kantian, rather than Rousseauian stance. Accordingly, this pacifism potentially traces another line of demarcation between democratic republics which can federate on the one hand, and non-democratic states which have to be kept out of this pacified space of Europe on the other. On which criteria is this new partition based?

Comparing the concrete principles on which the Paris Congress and the Geneva Congress founded the peaceful order, there is a clear tendency: the principle of nationality is vanishing in favour of the democratic principle which is linked to a certain conception of the human ‘person’ as subject of reason, and of natural, political, and economic rights. Logically, the above-cited Charles Lemonnier resumed the programme of liberal pacifism as ‘peace by liberty; liberty by instruction’.\textsuperscript{61} Peace is thus in the last instance based on education and thus in the moral and intellectual capacities of the individual. The reason for this is precisely that democratic peace relies on a conception of the human person as reasonable being and, to the extent that reason has to be protected, education is needed. Educated people will be able to understand that it is in their interest to live peacefully together, if their understanding is not hampered by any kind of antisocial passions. These formulations immediately hint at the problem with

\textsuperscript{59} Lemonnier, \textit{La vérité sur le congrès de Genève}, p 32.

\textsuperscript{60} Charles Lemonnier, \textit{Les États-Unis d’Europe}, Paris, Bibliothèque démocratique 1872, p 134. The radical French press had already raised the same objection against the Paris Congress of 1849: ‘Mais pour arriver à la réalisation de cette idée, il est évident que la société européenne doit être parvenue à une homogénéité dont elle est encore fort éloignée. La paix est le but de la démocratie, parce que la démocratie est fondée sur le travail, sur la sécurité des personnes et des biens; les aristocraties, au contraire, et les royaumes s’efforcent d’isoler les peuples et de les rendre ennemis pour sauvegarder leur intérêts privés, qui ne sont pas ceux du travail. Tant qu’il existera en Europe de aristocraties et des rois, il ne faut point compter sur une paix permanente, ni, par conséquent, sur le libre échange.’ \textit{La réforme} 172, 25 août 1849.

\textsuperscript{61} Lemonnier, \textit{Les États-Unis d’Europe}, p 165.
this kind of reasoning. Does anyone actually think that conflict will be eliminated once all have developed their capacity to reason and to morality?

Moreover, besides being a reductive vision of things, this conception actually conveys the dangers of new and even deeper exclusions. Periods of war are actually a good criterion for measuring the actual functioning of pacifism. Compare the declarations of Geneva pacifism with the following leaflet of the Franco-Prussian war. French peace activist Edmond Potonié-Pierre narrates in his *History of the Pacifistic Movement* that members of his group tried to use a balloon in order to drop this leaflet on the German soldiers during the siege of Paris in 1871: ‘Do you want to vilify you by a comparison with Attila’s Huns? . . . Do you want to remain slaves? If so, then continue to make war on the French republic . . . If not, return across the Rhine, break your chains and chase out your kings. Then, history will pardon you for having dirtied yourselves since September 4 as William’s accomplices.’

This appeal actually brings to light the dank side of democratic pacifism. Richard Cobden had already used the reference to Attila and his Huns during the Paris Peace Congress. In 1849, Austrian General Haynau had been compared to Attila, and the *Times* had commented that he was seen by the pacifists as the incarnation of the devil and thus as an enemy of humanity. However, in 1871, it is not a general anymore who is compared to Attila, but Prussian conscripts who are compared to his Huns. In 1849, General Haynau was designed as the ultimate enemy, inasmuch as he bore state authority of an illegitimate multi-national state. In 1871 it was the individual citizen-soldier and not the government or the military command which was obviously in tune with the democratic principle according to which political authority relies in the last instance on the sovereign people. The Franco-German war is described as a war waged by a tyrant against the French Republic, and thus of the war of a tyranny against a free nation. Soldiers are individually held responsible for complicity with the tyrant who is oppressing them, which is the other side of the idea that peace is grounded in the moral and intellectual capacities of the individual. What they should do is to get back home and reverse the throne. If, however, they chose not to do so, they chose ipso facto being slaves and barbarians. As it is obvious, choosing to be a barbarian would not fit into the pacifistic frame of mind of a reasonably human person. Accordingly, democratic pacifism is defining yet another figure of its ‘other’, thus prefiguring the image of what will be democratic war.

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