

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

## **The Caribbean and Iberoamerica and its impact for the Congress of Vienna and viceversa.**

**Christian Cwik** (University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago)

The outbreak of the coalition wars (1792-1815) impacted the European colonies on a global level. In Iberoamerica and the Caribbean there was a spread of revolutions and the cry for the abolition of slavery. For many in Europe there was the view that “*The revolution in the Americas is the revolution in Europe*”. This was a serious fear among the victorious conservative elites during the Congress of Vienna. Revolutions in the Americas had not one but many faces: the call for independence, republicanism, democracy, liberalism, social utopianism and the abolition of slavery as well as the fight for universal franchise, property and many other fundamental changes. In the aftermath of the success of the thirteen British North American colonies in their fight for independence from London, other revolutionary changes had taken place on the North American main. American revolutionaries such as Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, Arthur Lee, and Thomas Jefferson, and French revolutionaries such as Louis Philippe, Comte de Ségur and the Marquis de Lafayette who had fought for the American cause spread the “virus of revolution” to France. Among the supporters also were revolutionaries from South America such as José Maria España and Francisco de Miranda, who spread the “virus” to Iberoamerica and the Caribbean. The repercussions were feared by many European statesmen, who devoted considerable attention to the issue and initiated a separate domain of exploration of the “South American Matter” during the Congress.

The six coalition wars that raged from 1792 to 1815 around the globe in perpetual succession had changed the territorial order sustainable.<sup>1</sup> The Congress of Vienna of 1814-15 symbolizes like no other event, the end of 23 years of state of war. The postulated aim of the Congress in the imperial capital of Vienna was to return to the territorial order as it had existed before the outbreak of the First Coalition War on April 20, 1792 (in effect, restoration). All territorial agreements signed to the disadvantage of the coalition and based on revolutionary laws in France and its allies were to be undone. It is obvious that this would not be easy after 23 years of war and a variety of approved treaties. Each case concealed the risk of a new conflict, and that is why these thorny territorial subjects had to be treated with great caution. Great Britain tried to isolate the colonial subjects from the Congress of Vienna, and the three British delegates Viscount Castlereagh, Robert Stewart and Arthur Wellesley the Duke of Wellington, by and large succeeded. So we find only some overseas issues discussed at the Congress of Vienna and scant attention to colonial questions in the Final Act of the Congress. Some of these questions were previously decided either in the Peace of Paris or in the London discussions a few months earlier but were revised by the Congress of Vienna, respectively withdrawn or postponed until the follow-up congresses and peace treaties thereafter. In this sense, the issue of the American dimension of the Vienna Congress can only be fruitfully discussed in the context of the various peace treaties, agreements and conventions of the "Age of the Congress of Vienna" (1814-1822).

---

<sup>1</sup> David Armitage/Sanjay Subrahmanyam (eds.): *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context*, c. 1760–1840, Houndsmill 2010.

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

The fact that the colonial matter was actually quite relevant to the work of the Congress of Vienna is contrary to general historical opinions, that ‘the powers’ discussed only the reorganization and new order of Europe at Vienna.<sup>2</sup> While the European war, with the victory of the so-called “Sixth Coalition” army over the French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte at Waterloo, came to an end on the June 18, 1815, the wars of independence of Spanish America continued and brought the American people another ten years of brutal war with as many as one million dead and as just many wounded.<sup>3</sup> Added to this the British-American War, which began in 1812 and finally ended in April 1815, but continued bitterly as a war against First Nations, which had been the allies of Great Britain and Spain. Also in Brazil, the situation seemed to escalate militarily in 1815. After the establishment of the Kingdom of Brazil in 1815 - another indirect consequence of the Congress of Vienna - troops of the Portuguese King João VI raided the provinces of Banda Oriental (now Uruguay) and Mesopotamia (now Argentina and Brazil) and had founded the province of Cisplatina. João VI had fled from the Napoleon's troops in 1807/08 with British help from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro.<sup>4</sup> Thousands of European mercenaries fought in all these military conflicts in the Americas, most of the soldiers were veterans of the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>5</sup>

Against this background it is difficult to talk of the beginning of a time of peace as a direct consequence of the Vienna Congress. But even if we took a closer look at Europe and other continents, this upsets the traditional doctrine of a unique period of peace,<sup>6</sup> that predominated until the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853. This period is sometimes known as the “Vienna System”.<sup>7</sup> But in this lecture I would like to describe, first of all, the consequences of the Coalition Wars for the Caribbean and Iberoamerica, including the territorial changes due to the Napoleonic Wars. Without this knowledge, it is difficult to understand the political and territorial reality for the delegates at the Congress of Vienna before they started negotiations on September 18, 1814. The main focus of my lecture is the reciprocal impact of Atlantic revolutions and restorations (counter-revolutions) as well as the declarations of independence and related wars of

---

<sup>2</sup> Hans-Dieter Dyroff (Hg.): *Der Wiener Kongress 1814/15. Die Neuordnung Europas*, Nördlingen 1996; Heinz Durchhardt: *Der Wiener Kongress. Die Neugestaltung Europas 1814/15*, München 2013, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Juan Gonzales: *Harvest of Empire. A History of Latinos in America*, New York 2000; Michael Clodfelter: *Warfare and Armed Conflict. A Statistical Reference to Casualty and Other Figures, 1618–1991*, London 1992.

<sup>4</sup> David Carneiro: *História da Guerra Cisplatina*, São Paulo 1946.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew Brown: *Adventuring through Spanish Colonies. Simón Bolívar, Foreign Mercenaries and the Birth of New Nations*, Liverpool 2006; Alfred Hasbrouck: *Foreign Legionnaires in the Liberation of Spanish South America*, New York 1969

<sup>6</sup> Henry A. Kissinger: *A World restored. Metternich, Castlereagh, and the Problems of Peace 1812–1822*, London 1957 (deutsch 1962); Wolfram Pyta (Hg.): *Das europäische Mächtekoncert. Friedens- und Sicherheitspolitik vom Wiener Kongress 1815 bis zum Krimkrieg 1853* (=Stuttgarter Historische Forschungen 9), Köln-Weimar-Wien 2009

<sup>7</sup> Paul W. Schroeder: *The Vienna System and its Stability. The problem of Stabilizing a State System in Transformation*. In: Peter Krüger (Hg.): *Das europäische Staatensystem im Wandel* (=Schriften des Historischen Kollegs, Kolloquien 35), München 1996, S. 107–122

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

independence in the Americas at the Congress of Vienna and *vice versa*.<sup>8</sup> This contribution is linked to the research of the German historian Manfred Kossok (1930-1993), who was the first to distill the so-called "South America-Question" from of the Congress proceedings.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Impact of the First Coalition War on the Americas**

Spaniards had extended their colonial empire under King Charles III (r. 1759-1788) to its maximum extent. Although the Spanish crown had to cede Florida to the United Kingdom in the Treaty of Paris on February 10, 1763<sup>10</sup> (whereby the British withdrew from Havana and Manila), Madrid had won French Louisiana. The British were undoubtedly the victorious power of the Peace of Paris in 1763. London not only secured the free river navigation on the Mississippi, and thus was able to connect their Canadian provinces with the Gulf of Mexico and Florida, but incorporated further the French Antilles Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Vincent and Tobago. Already in 1779, the two Bourbon powers had a renewed military alliance in the Treaty of Aranjuez (the fourth Bourbon House family agreement after 1733, 1743 and 1761). France allied with the Continental Army in the American Revolutionary War against Great Britain in 1778. Spain hoped to weaken Britain's position in the Caribbean as well as Central and South America, especially by the recapture of Florida. In 1780 also the Dutch also joined the alliance against Great Britain, which led to a fragmentation of the British forces and their allies. Added to this, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sweden and Denmark decided to join an "armed neutrality" as form a protective alliance against the aggressive policy of blockade pursued by the British Navy, which largely isolated London and finally sandbagged the British government into the prize law. That the Caribbean had developed into a major theater of war between the Spanish and French on one side and the British fleet on the other hand during the American Revolutionary War received very little attention in the European historiography. Special mention should be given to the successful Spanish recapture of Florida in the Battle of Pensacola in 1781. The Peace of Paris in September 1783 assigned East and West Florida to Madrid, but left the northwest border as an unsolved problem, known to historians as the "West Florida Controversy".<sup>11</sup> Spain accepted British rights in Central America - more precisely cut tropical hardwood in northwestern Honduras (now Belize) - but uprooted the British from the Mosquito Coast and its offshore islands, Little and Big Corn, Old Providence, and from the port city of Campeche in Yucatan. In

---

<sup>8</sup> Manfred Kossok: Im Schatten der Heiligen Allianz. Deutschland und Lateinamerika 1815–1830. Zur Politik der deutschen Staaten gegenüber der Unabhängigkeitsbewegung Mittel- und Südamerikas, Berlin 1964.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> The British divided Florida into East and West Florida Cody Scallions: The Rise and Fall of the Original Lone Star State. *Infant American Imperialism Ascendant in West Florida*. In: *Florida Historical Quarterly* 90, 2 (2011), S. 193–220.

<sup>11</sup> The Pinckney's Treaty (Treaty of San Lorenzo or even Treaty of Madrid), which was a friendship treaty between Spain and the United States, settled the border issue and the freedom of navigation on the Mississippi and was signed on October 27, 1795.

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

return, Spain returned the Bahama Islands, Montserrat and Grenada, which they have occupied during the war, back to the British Crown.

Due to the ratification of the new federal US Constitution in 1788 and the later Bill of Rights, which guaranteed the separation of church and state, freedom of expression, press freedom and freedom of religion and freedom of assembly and the right to petition, the independence movements in Spanish America awakened. From newly independent North America, revolutionary ideas penetrated via American-Spanish trade networks in the colonial South.

These were soon augmented by the ideas of the French Revolution, which seeped through the French colonies to the Spanish colonies and inspired the “Creole Elites” there. Plans, such as those of the London-based Venezuelan Francisco de Miranda (1750-1816), “*Plan para la formación, organización y establecimiento de un gobierno libre en América meridional*”,<sup>12</sup> called for independence from Spain as early as 1790.<sup>13</sup> The revolutionary burst into flame in 1791 and ignited the protests of groups of free-people-of-color in the richest sugar cane colony of the world in these times, Saint Domingue. Supported by the Société des Amis des Noirs<sup>14</sup> (founded in 1788), they wanted to enforce the law adopted by the National Assembly for equality of free-people-of-color against the resistance of the white planter elite in May 1791. Afro-Caribbean, mostly mulattos, revolutionaries like Vincent Ogé (from the circle around the Afro-Caribbean abolitionists Julien Raimond) returned to Saint-Domingue and organized armed resistance against the white planters. The planters did not want to share their elite status with non-whites. Although Ogé’s military failed quickly, his brutal execution provoked the radicalization of the free-people-of-color movement in Saint-Domingue, which progressed into a full-scale military rebellion, led by Dutty Boukman, by August 1791. The outcome was a bloody civil war, which exterminated much of the white planter aristocracy. Simultaneously to this, France declared war against Austria on April 20, 1792. This event marked the beginning of the first coalition war and considerably weakened France in overseas.

By the end of 1792 from 30 to 40 percent of the colony, especially the north of Saint-Domingue, was lost. The white French planter class of Saint Domingue received military support from British and Spanish troops, and together they were fighting against the free coloreds who liberated tens of thousands slaves to obtain additional military support. So the new revolutionary laws of April 4, 1792 which guaranteed the equality of free-people-of-color came simply too late to calm the conflict. The Girondist government, which sympathized with the free-coloreds sent Léger-Félicité Sonthonax, and expected, that he could calm the situation and recover territorial control for France.

---

<sup>12</sup> „Plan to the formation, organization and establishment of a free government in South America“. Ricaurte Soler: Idea y cuestión nacional latinoamericanas de la independencia a la emergencia del imperialismo, México 1987, S. 44

<sup>13</sup> Miranda left Caracas in 1771 and launched a military training in Madrid. After six years of war in Morocco from 1774-1780 Miranda fought in the American Revolutionary War from 1780-1782, including the Battle of Pensacola and the Bahamas.

<sup>14</sup> Robin Blackburn: The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery 1776–1848, London 1988; Marcel Dorigny/Bernard Gainot: La Société des amis des noirs, 1788–1799. Contribution à l'histoire de l'abolition de l'esclavage, Collection Mémoire des peuples, Paris 1998

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

When Great Britain, Spain and the Netherlands officially declared war on France in 1793, the revolutionary government was now forced to fight against an alliance of white planters with British and Spanish troops. Spain and France confronted one another not only in the Pyrenees but also in Hispaniola. Much more complex, but no less conflictual, was the situation in the Caribbean Sea. Since the Spanish and British were on one side and the French were on the other side, the conflict spread to many of the smaller islands. Both sides also tried to join alliances with "outlaws" (such as the indigenous "Maroons", bandits, etc.). Regions in Central America (Belize, Mosquito Coast, Darién), the west area of the Río Zenú (now Columbia) and the Guajira Peninsula (now Colombia and Venezuela) as well as Guyana, were thus roped into the military conflict.

Considering of the high production of sugar cane, cotton, tobacco and coffee, as well as the deforestation of tropical timber in the Caribbean colonies, it is clear that the colonies played a crucial role in economic prosperity of European countries. The economic background of the Napoleonic Wars therefore cannot be ignored here. The war for Saint-Domingue, the richest colony in the Americas, was a fight for resources between France, Spain and Great Britain. The latter promised themselves, from their support of insurgents (whether royalists or revolutionaries) direct access to the riches of the French colony. Spanish troops crossed the border in the north (Dajabón), British forces embarked from Jamaica, and they conquered Port-au-Prince. Commissioner Félicité-Sonthoux came under pressure and fled into the mountainous hinterland of Saint-Domingue, where he ordered the liberation of slaves on August 29, 1793.<sup>15</sup> Together with the (now former) slaves, a powerful French army could be built. The main goal of Félicité-Sonthoux was to drive the Spanish and British intervention armies from Saint-Domingue. His emancipation decree changed radically the military situation for France. Military leaders like the Haitian national hero Toussaint Louverture joined the French forces. Louverture had fought initially for the Spaniards, went over to the French side, and eventually defeated – while fighting under the command of General Étienne Maynaud de Bizefranc de Lavaux - the Royalist, Spanish and British troops (the latter having reconquered Port-au-Prince on June 4, 1794). The defeat of the coalition in Saint-Domingue led to a mass exodus of white planters elites in the neighbouring Spanish and British colonies. But the French were unable to repeat their success on Saint-Domingue on any of the other West Indies as they had hoped. Although they recaptured with great difficulty the islands of Saint Lucia and Guadeloupe, they lost the two islands again in 1794. Martinique remained under British rule until the Peace of Amiens in 1802. The island of Tobago also became British after the French defeat there in 1793, but was again occupied by France in 1795 and finally incorporated in the department of la Sainte-Lucia until its final conquest by the British in 1800.

In the Spanish theatre of the war, the French revolutionary troops forced the Spanish army back on all lines until they were decisively defeated at the Battle of San Lorenzo de la Muga in August

<sup>15</sup> Emancipation decree in: [http://thelouvertureproject.org/index.php?title=Decree\\_abolishing\\_slavery\\_in\\_the\\_North\\_of\\_Saint-Domingue\\_%281793%29](http://thelouvertureproject.org/index.php?title=Decree_abolishing_slavery_in_the_North_of_Saint-Domingue_%281793%29) (29.12.2014). Slavery was all French colonies abolished on 4 February 1794 (Décret n° 2262 de la Convention nationale, du 16 pluviôse, an II de la République française, une et indivisible qui abolit l'esclavage des Nègres dans les colonies); <http://mjp.univ-perp.fr/france/1794esclavage.htm> (29.12.2014).

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

of the same year. After several defeats, the Kingdom of Spain resigned from the coalition against France in July 1795 and took refuge in a peace agreement with the Revolutionary Directorate (The Second Peace of Basel, July 22, 1795). Although the Spaniards achieved the complete withdrawal of French troops from their kingdom, and were able to keep on to the North American colony of Louisiana in the Basel negotiations, they lost their colony of Santo Domingo (their first overseas colony since 1494), whereby the entire island of Hispaniola officially came under French rule until 1809 (Governor Joaquín García Moreno remained 1801 in office). The French Revolution thus seemed to be ferociously spreading to Spanish colonial territories.

The Treaty of San Ildefonso,<sup>16</sup> signed by Spain and France on August 18, 1796, justified a new military alliance between the French Directorate and the Spanish monarchy. Spain re-entered the coalition war, but this time *against* the conservative coalition (known as “British-Spanish War, 1796- 1808”). The Franco-Spanish mutual assistance pact was viewed primarily as a common defense against British attacks at sea. After the withdrawal of Spain from the conservative coalition, the British began to attack the Spanish fleet in American waters.

But Spain came under pressure not only from the British after the Peace of Basel, but also saw themselves faced with the “virus” of the French Revolution in their own colonies. Particularly in Venezuela, the situation was unfolding dangerously. In May 1795, a military revolt of slaves erupted under the leadership of José Leonardo Chirino. This revolt destabilized the region of Coro (and the Paraguaná Peninsula) in the northwest of Venezuela and became a source of danger by its proximity to the Batavian Dutch colonies of Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire. Also among the “criollos” - the Creole elites of Venezuela”, many saw this as a convenient time to separate in the spirit of American independence of 1776 (1783), from the mother country.

Among the leaders of the resistance against Spain, many had learned their political craft in Europe and or in independent North America. Some, such as Francisco Miranda, were military men; others were merchants (smugglers), or seamen, who had studied at a European university. The conspiracy of 1797-99, led by José María España and Manuel Gual, corresponded exactly to this image. José María España Rodríguez del Villar y Saenz was born in the Venezuelan port of La Guaira in 1761, but grew up in French Bayonne, where he was a witness to the political developments in France. After his return to La Guaira, he was a fervent follower of republicanism and free trade in Venezuela. Together with several Spanish and Venezuelan Freemasons, who had been exiled from Venezuela after their republican coup attempt in Madrid (Conspiración de San Blas) had failed in 1796, he founded in La Guaira - a secret anti-colonial resistance movement - in 1797.<sup>17</sup> After their conspiracy was betrayed on July 12, 1797, the two leaders fled to the island of Trinidad, which had just been captured by the British. The British took the Alliance of San Ildefonso as an opportunity to extend their military attacks against the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean, to prevent the region of the spread of revolutions in the region. Eight West India regiments were formed for this purpose in 1795. Lieutenant-General Sir Ralph Abercromby, who succeeded Sir Charles Grey as commander-in-chief of the British forces

---

<sup>16</sup> Tratado de San Ildefonso entre España y Francia – 1796: [http://es.wikisource.org/wiki/Tratado\\_de\\_San\\_Ildefonso\\_entre\\_Espa%C3%B1a\\_y\\_Francia\\_-\\_1796](http://es.wikisource.org/wiki/Tratado_de_San_Ildefonso_entre_Espa%C3%B1a_y_Francia_-_1796) (30.04.2014)

<sup>17</sup> Carmen L. Michelena: Luces revolucionarias. De la rebelión de Madrid (1795) a la rebelión de La Guaira (1797), Caracas 2010.

in the West Indies in 1795, captured the island of Trinidad (part of the Captaincy General of Venezuela) on 17 February 1797. Three days before, the British fleet achieved an important victory over the Spanish fleet in the Battle of Cape St. Vincent (off the Portuguese coast). Already in the previous year, Abercromby had conquered the French island of Saint Lucia (brigand wars).<sup>18</sup> The French attack on the island of Dominica was blocked by the British in 1795/96 (3rd Carib War) as well as by France, supported Maroon and Carib Wars on the islands of Jamaica, Grenada and St. Vincent in the same years. The British West India regiments occupied the Dutch colonies of Demerara, Berbice and Essequibo on the South American mainland, whereby the war took on a new Dutch dimension. On April 17, 1797 Ralph Abercromby attacked the Spanish West Indies island of Puerto Rico, to the east of Hispaniola, but his effort failed because of stiff resistance from Spanish defence forces. In order to drive the British from the Caribbean coastline of Central America, the Spaniards had to attack the well-established settler colonies in Belize (North Honduras). A Spanish fleet under the command of the Governor of Yucatán, Don Arturo O'Neill Tyrone, reached the main settlement of the British Baymen (as the English settlers were called) at St. George's Caye on September 3, 1798.<sup>19</sup> After ten weeks of unsuccessful siege, the Baymen succeeded with support from Jamaica. The Spaniards escaped from the battlefield. The defeat of the Spaniards off the coast of Belize also weakened Spain on the Mosquito Coast of Central America, where the Miskito Amerindians (with the help of British support) expelled the Spaniards from Black River in 1800.

The aforementioned Dutch dimension of the Napoleonic Wars can be explained by the expansion of the war against France in Europe. The French Revolution had found their political allies. In British Ireland, in the Independent Republics of the United Netherlands, in the Austrian Netherlands, in the Principality of Liège, and in some of the cantons of Switzerland, pro-French revolutionary militias challenged the conservative coalition. In most of the theatres of war, the allied coalition remained initially successful, but it failed in the Austrian Netherlands (Battle of Jemappes) in November 1792. The area was recaptured with large losses by October 1793, but in 1794 the French revolutionary army under General Jean-Charles Pichegru succeeded not only in the reconquest of the Austrian Netherlands, but also the conquest of the United Dutch republics. On January 18, 1795, Dutch revolutionaries proclaimed the Batavian Republic and welcomed French revolutionary troops, who occupied Amsterdam on the following day and ended British dominance there. The "friendly occupation" led to a peace treaty between France and of the Batavian Republic being signed in The Hague on May 16, 1795.

A view of maps in the Caribbean in 1795 shows us what the Batavian Revolution in the Netherlands had important consequences for the situation in the Caribbean. The Batavian revolution added new military problems for them and elsewhere, especially for British, because they had to struggle to oppose to another enemy in the "American Mediterranean". Although Dutch Governor General, William V, who fled to London, called on all his governors in the so called "Kew letters" to turn the Dutch colonies over to the British without fight, most governors opposed this command (the memory of the fourth English-Dutch War of 1780-1784 was

---

<sup>18</sup> Jolien Harmsen/HuyEllis/RobertDevaux: A History of St. Lucia, Vieux Fort SL 2012, S. 64f.

<sup>19</sup> Mavis C. Campbell: Becoming Belize. A History of an outpost of Empire searching for identity, 1528–1823, Kingston 2012, S. 267.

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

probably too fresh). The British therefore had to conquer these colonies. Between May 1795 and April 1796, the British occupied the Batavian colonies of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice, located on the South American continent. The British used the island of Barbados as a hub for the conquest of the three Guyanese Colonies, followed by the British occupation of the Batavian colony of Suriname in 1799, which became subsequently a British protectorate. Governor Johann Rudolf Lauffer, established by the Batavian Republic, continued with the appeasement policy of his predecessor, John de Veer, on the island of Curaçao. But no later than 1799, French "revolutionaries", coming mainly from Guadeloupe and Saint-Domingue, had already infiltrated in Curacao.<sup>20</sup>

In July 1800, French ships suddenly appeared in the harbor of Willemstad. The operational head of the French troops was Maurice Henri Bresseau. He explained to Governor Lauffer that the French had to assist their Batavian allies against an impending British invasion. Until September 1800 a total of 1,200 mainly Afro-Caribbean-French forces occupied the most important military bases on the island. They were supported by representatives of the local elite people of color such as Louis Brion. Under this pressure, Governor Lauffer asked the British for military assistance, which the British contributed sequence. In September 1800, the French troops could sell off the island. Under the terms of the Peace of Amiens in 1802, all former Dutch colonies in the Caribbean-American region had to be returned to the Batavian Republic.

While on the European continent the last anti-French coalition disintegrated with the Treaty of Campo Formio on October 17, 1797, the British continued to fight against the French Republic and its allies. France demanded to return the conquered colonies of the Cape (South Africa) and of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) to the Dutch but peace negotiations with Great Britain failed.

### **Between the wars**

The British victory in the Battle of Aboukir (off the coast of Egypt) under the command of the Admiral Horatio Nelson against the French Mediterranean Fleet in August 1798 gave new hope to the losers of the First Coalition War to terminate the "Republican nightmare" in Europe and overseas. This led to the Second Coalition against France and its allies in 1798-99, which was formed by Russia, the Ottoman Empire, Austria and Great Britain as well as several smaller states. In the midst of this Second Coalition War, which after the initial successes of the coalition boomeranged into a series of defeats, the Corsican General Napoleon Bonaparte made himself dictator of France with his coup of 18 Brumaire.

Because of the defeats in Trinidad in 1797 in Menorca in 1798, the British attacks on the Spanish ports of El Ferrol and Cadiz in 1800, and finally the trade embargo established by Pitt's government, Spain sought the support of Napoleon. A secretly negotiated treaty forced Spain to return the colony of Louisiana to France within six months, but failed to specify the precise boundaries of the territory. Only three years later, the unsettled border issue became a point of contention between Spain and the United States after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

---

<sup>20</sup> Wim Klosters/Gert Oostindie (Hg.): Curaçao in the Age of Revolutions, 1795–1800, Leiden 2011, S. 12f.



The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

The Peace of Amiens on March 25 and 27, 1802, ended the Second Coalition War between Britain on the one hand and the French Consulate, Spain and the Batavian Republic on the other. Although Napoleon had defeated his enemies on all fronts in continental Europe, results of the war remained mixed. French defeats in Malta (1801) and Egypt (1801), were followed by a French victory over London's historic ally Portugal in the so-called "War of the Oranges" in May 1801. In the Treaty of Badajoz of June 6, 1801, and in the subsequent peace in Madrid on September 29, 1801, Portugal had to pay reparations, had to close its ports for British ships, make economic concessions, cede the city of Olivença to Spain<sup>21</sup> and turn over to France practically the entire Portuguese territory from the border of French Guiana to the mouth of the Amazon (Rio Carapanatuba in the so-called "Portuguese Guiana"). Indeed Article IV of the Treaty of Madrid specifically stated:

*„Los límites entre las dos Guyanas francesa y portuguesa se fijarán de aquí adelante por el río Carapanatub, que desagua en el de las Amazonas á un tercio, poco más ó menos, de grado del Ecuador, latitud septentrional, más arriba del fuerte de macapa.“*<sup>22</sup>

Notwithstanding the agreements of Badajoz and Madrid, the Portuguese used irregular troops and invaded the Spanish Misiones region (also known as the "Jesuit State" from 1609 to 1767) between the Uruguay River and the Río Paraná in August 1801. The territorial disputes in Misiones and in the neighboring Banda Oriental could neither be solved in Amiens in 1802, nor in Madrid in 1801, and the two regions remained hotly contested areas of conflict until the end of the Triple Alliance War of 1865-1870.

The economic problems caused by a domestic political crisis in London (the resignation of Prime Minister William Pitt) forced the British to conclude a peace with Napoleon and his allies. At Amiens, both parties compromised for the sake of peace. For the Americas, the Peace of Amiens meant several important decisions in light of the later Peace Treaty of Paris and the Congress of Vienna in 1814. Article III of the Treaty of Amiens stated:

*„His Britannic Majesty restores to the French Republic and its allies, viz. his Catholic Majesty and the Batavian Republic, all the possessions and colonies which respectively belonged to them, and which have been either occupied or conquered by the British forces, during the course of the present war, with the exception of the island of Trinidad, and of the Dutch possessions on the island of Ceylon.“*<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> The city Olivença was awarded to Portugal in Article 105 in Vienna, but not returned until today. [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Final\\_Act\\_of\\_the\\_Congress\\_of\\_Vienna/General\\_Treaty](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Final_Act_of_the_Congress_of_Vienna/General_Treaty) (2.1.2015)

<sup>22</sup> „The boundaries between French and Portuguese Guiana were established along the Carapanatuba which drains approximately at the level of the equator by about one-third in the Amazon North, a little above the fortress of Macapa.“ – Cuenta dada de su vida política por Don Manuel Godoy, príncipe de la Paz, III, Madrid 1856, S. 431

<sup>23</sup> Definitive Treaty of Peace between the French Republic, his Majesty the King of Spain and the Indies, and the Batavian Republic (on the one Part); and his Majesty, the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (on the other Part): [http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/diplomatic/c\\_amiens.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/diplomatic/c_amiens.html) (2.1.2015)

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

This meant that in 1802 all French and Dutch colonies (except Ceylon and Trinidad), that had been conquered by Great Britain in the First Coalition War had to be returned. In the case of Trinidad, Article IV of the Treaty of Amiens stated: "His Catholic Majesty cedes and Guarantees, in full property and sovereignty, the Iceland of Trinidad to his Britannic Majesty." The renunciation of Trinidad is still a mystery (this is a question I am currently do research). Also in Amiens they arrive at a formula with regard to the "Guiana" question between France and Portugal. Article VII of the Treaty of Amiens provides to the following:

*"The territories and possessions of his Most Faithful Majesty are maintained in their integrity, such as they were antecedent to the war. However the boundaries of French and Portuguese Guiana are fixed by the river Arrowary (port.: Araguari), which empties itself into the ocean above Cape North, near the islands Nuovo and Penetentia, about a degree and a third of north latitude. ... In consequence, the northern bank of the river Arrowary, from its said mouth to its source, and the territories that lie to the north of the line of boundaries laid down as above, shall belong in full sovereignty to the French Republic. The southern bank of the said river, from the same mouth, and all the territories to the south of the said line, shall belong to his Most Faithful Majesty. The navigation of the river Arrowary, along the whole of its course, shall be common to both nations."*<sup>24</sup>

The provisions of the Treaty of Amiens were not fully met, nor did the peace treaty last long. On May 18, 1803 armed conflict between Britain and France resurged, which many historians often consider as the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). Meanwhile, the situation on the island of Hispaniola deteriorated. Toussaint Louverture, who had governed the north of Saint-Domingue as a brigadier general didn't quit trade relations with the United States despite the "quasi war" between France and the United States (1798-1800). A friendship treaty between Louverture's negotiator Joseph Bunel and the Congress in Philadelphia and known as "Toussaint's Clause" was signed in February 1799. This agreement ended the US-embargo against Saint-Domingue and strengthened Louverture's position against his internal adversary, the "Mulatto General" Benoit Joseph André Rigaud, who was favored by Napoleon.<sup>25</sup> Even with the British, Louverture signed an unauthorized ceasefire. The agreement with the British General Thomas Maitland, dated on April 30, 1798, included the complete withdrawal of British troops from Port-au-Prince by May 16, 1798 and from Môle-Saint-Nicolas by August 31, 1798. On the same day, August 31, Louverture and Maitland signed also a secret agreement ending the British

---

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. "The territories and possessions of His Majesty have to keep in their integrity as they existed before the war. The borders of French and Portuguese Guiana are set by the river Arrowary (port. Araguari), which flows into the ocean above Cape North, near the islands Nuovo and Penetentia, about one degree and one-third of the northern latitude. ... As a result, the northern bank of the river Arrowary, from said mouth to its source, and the areas lying north of the boundary line lay down in advance, including full sovereignty of the French Republic. The southern bank of the said river of the same mouth and all areas that lie south of said line are belonging to His Majesty. The boat traffic on the river Arrowary, along its entire course, shall be shared commonly".

<sup>25</sup> The "Toussaint's Clause" „U.S. Proclamation Regarding Commerce with St. Domingo (1799)“ was ratified by US-President John Adams on June 26, 1799.

[http://thelouvertureproject.org/index.php?title=Proclamation\\_Regarding\\_Commerce\\_with\\_St.\\_Domingo](http://thelouvertureproject.org/index.php?title=Proclamation_Regarding_Commerce_with_St._Domingo) (3.1.2015)

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

naval blockade; in return, the revolutionary general promised not to “export” the revolution to the British colonies. However, Toussaint Louverture did not follow the appeal of the British and Americans to declare Saint Domingue independent. Nevertheless, agreements with the British and Americans increasingly alienated Louverture from the French government. In consequence a bitter civil war between Toussaint Louverture (north and east) and Benoit Joseph André Rigaud broke out (The “War of the knife”) in July 1799. The French colonial government could not bring this conflict under control. On the basis of the Treaty of Friendship, the United States of North America committed to provide support with two frigates - USS *Greenville* Louverture and USS *Boston* - in the waters off Saint-Domingue for Louverture.

The naval blockade of Jacmel cut Rigaud off from supplies, helping Louverture to win the war. After defeating Rigaud in summer 1800, and disappointed by Napoleon's new colonial laws, Toussaint Louverture finally seized control in the colony itself. Against the will of Napoleon Louverture also took over the former Spanish part of the island, which he invaded in January 1801. Now at the height of his power, Louverture worked out a revolutionary constitution, which he proclaimed on July 7, 1801. Nevertheless, Louverture never proclaimed independence from France (Article 1). He also accepted the Roman Catholic Church as the only Church in the colony (Article 6). In Article 3, he banished slavery for ever from the island: *„Il ne peut exister d'esclaves sur ce territoire, la servitude y est à jamais abolie. Tous les hommes y naissent, vivent et meurent libres et Français.“*<sup>26</sup>

Louverture’s policy led to important consequences. A French army led by Napoleon's son-in-law, Charles Emmanuel Leclerc Victoire, landed on the colony and took up the fight against Toussaint Louverture and his troops in January 1802. The 20,000-strong French army lost in the decisive Battle of Vertieres (18 November 1803) against the revolutionaries even though Toussaint Louverture had surrendered and was deported to France in July 1802, where he died in prison in April 1803 as a result. France had to withdraw its troops from the western part of the island. On January 1, 1804, the victorious commander of the revolutionary forces (and since November 30th self-appointed Governor of Saint-Domingue) Jean-Jacques Dessalines declared himself Emperor Jacques I and proclaimed the independence of Haiti. As many as 2,000 soldiers of the French expeditionary army saved their lives under the guidance of highly decorated French Revolutionary General Jean-Louis Ferrand in the eastern part of the island. As late as November 1803, Ferrand was appointed by Napoleon as the new Governor of Santo Domingo. Ferrand managed to hold the colony for France until 1809.

In order to prevent similar developments in Louisiana, Napoleon decided to withdraw some of his troops from the Netherlands and move them to defend this giant North American colony (2,144.476 km<sup>2</sup>) in early 1803. But his plan was thwarted by the British declaration of war on May 18, 1803. The British naval blockade of French ports made an Atlantic redeployment of the French troops impossible. In order to win the United States a coalition partner against Britain, Napoleon offered President Thomas Jefferson Louisiana for 80 million francs (equivalent to

---

<sup>26</sup> „There can be no slaves on this territory, servitude is abolished here forever. All people who are born here, live and die free and as French.“ – Constitution de 1801: [http://www.haiti-reference.com/histoire/constitutions/const\\_1801.php](http://www.haiti-reference.com/histoire/constitutions/const_1801.php) (5.1.2015)

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

about 236 million dollars).<sup>27</sup> The purchase agreement was signed on April 30, 1803. Much of the profit from the sale was invested in an upgrade of supplies for the French army. The American money financed an unstoppable triumphant march across Europe. Meanwhile the position of the United States as a political and military power was strengthened by the purchase of Louisiana. President Jefferson had already refused the higher tribute (a tariff to operate the slave trade) demanded by the Pasha of Tripoli in 1801, whereupon Tripoli, Morocco, Algiers, Tunis declared war on the United States in May 1801. As a result, the United States had to augment its military presence in the Mediterranean in the course of the year 1802 on the footsteps of Europe. However, the successful business with France in spring 1803 strengthened Jefferson's back, and he decided on a total blockade of the Barbary ports in Tripolitania and Morocco in Summer of 1803. The US war with the Barbary States lasted until 1805 (Battle of Derna) and ended in a mutually acceptable armistice on June 10<sup>th</sup>. The concentrated presence of US-American ships in the Mediterranean showed the vulnerability of Europe in their "swimming pool".

### **Outlook and Conclusion**

During the years 1808 to 1810, there emerged in all the Spanish colonies in the Americas political movements demanding revolutionary changes. Their demands were not uniform and ranged from more autonomy within the existing Spanish monarchy (as was the case with the Bonapartists and Fernandians) to independence as a monarchy or a republic. The radicalization of such movements, most of them receiving secretly support from the British, led to war. In the beginning, the Napoleonic Wars and the Ibero-American Wars virtually blended into each other as the case of Saint Domingue so clearly demonstrates. By 1812, Great Britain dominated almost all the Caribbean islands and many coastal areas of Iberoamerica. They expanded to the La Plata area, controlled and manipulated the Portuguese king in Brazil and even convinced him to conquer French Guiana in 1809. The anti-Bonapartist Court of Cadíz, also supported by London, lost its influence after the return of King Ferdinand VII to the throne in November 1814 (Treaty of Valençay). However the anti-Spanish movements in Iberoamerica and the Caribbean continued to gain ascendancy against their rivals. This made it difficult for Great Britain to support the "liberal" political powers in Spain who were among the victorious conservative powers in Paris and Vienna in 1814/15. London therefore did not stop its support for the anti-Spanish Independence-Movements, which fought a very long and bloody war against Ferdinand's Spain. Great Britain accordingly did not join the Holy Alliance and was able to control the Atlantic scenery by isolating American issues from the rest of Europe. Additionally British Coast Guards patrolled on the Atlantic coasts of Africa, America and Europe to supervise the abiding of European nations and other territories to the later abolition of slave trade laws first sanctioned in Vienna.

Meanwhile France and Spain failed in their attempt to persuade Great Britain to support them in their recovery of lost territories or with military troops to fight against the independence movements in the Americas. At the same time, Britain succeeded in ensuring that Trinidad,

---

<sup>27</sup> Consumer Price Index (estimate 1800: [http://www.minneapolisfed.org/community\\_education/teacher/calc/hist1800.cfm](http://www.minneapolisfed.org/community_education/teacher/calc/hist1800.cfm); (5.1.2015)

The Congress of Vienna 1814-15: Making Peace After Global War, February 5-7, 2015. European Institute at Columbia University, NYC

Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice remained British. The new Kingdom of the Netherlands also sensing an opportunity to obtain these territories at the Congress of Vienna, failed to retrieve them from Great Britain.

The fear at the Congress of Vienna of revolution in the Americas became reality in 1815. To support Ferdinand in his fight to put down the freedom fighters, the European powers relied completely on Britain's approval and military assistance. London denied both requests and instead supported the independence movements. France failed to recapture Saint Domingue in 1815 and Spain with the reclaim for Trinidad and Ceylon. But the case of French Guiana, which was occupied by the Portuguese of Brazil since 1809, became a subject of negotiations at the Congress of Vienna. This shows us that colonial issues were indeed discussed during the Congress. The lack of support for Spain eventually led to independence in Spanish America and the spark of revolution spread to Spain itself in 1820. Although Britain had finally expelled Spain and Portugal from Continental America, the territorial and political success did not replace the loss of the colonies in North America but opened a new chapter of history, which was imperialism. The legacy of the Congress in communicating the Congress's value can be found in this topic.