

"Communicating the Congress's Values."

DRAFT PAPER.

*Women, Men, and the Making of Modern International Politics*  
Glenda Sluga, University of Sydney

1.

The Congress of Vienna, which ran from September 1814 to June 1815 and was to settle the terms of a post-Napoleonic world order, lies at the heart of an historical narrative of the modern transformation of European politics, setting new thresholds of international political cooperation and coordination in the interests of peace, and identified as the 'Concert of Europe'. When we reflect on the Congress 'values' its place in the birth of the modern world seems confirmed, particularly if we take as our guide Paul W. Schroeder's magisterial study *The Transformation of European Politics* which has rendered the conferencing—and collective experiences of struggle against Napoleon—that preceded and included the Congress of Vienna, over the period 1813-1815, 'the decisive turning point' in the transformation of 'the governing rules, norms, and practices of international politics', 'above all in the field of ideas, collective mentalities, and outlooks', competing even with the French Revolution for political significance.

In my talk yesterday, I argued that the protagonists of the peacemaking Congresses were as apt as Woodrow Wilson a century later to frame the cause and challenges of the Congress in the language of 'general principles' *and* sovereign rights. The modernity of the congress was constituted by the coincidental emphasis placed in its debates, and outcomes, on an international or more usually European politics, and the 'public law' of state legitimacy; on the promise of a structured science of government, and the ambiguously public/private practices of political congressing, often represented as characteristic of the cosmopolitan values and practices of the *ancien regime*.

In the 1960s, the Austrian historian of the Congress of Vienna Hilde Spiel noted 'Never before - or after - have a group of statesmen and politicians, assembled solely and exclusively to deal with matters of commonweal interest, labored so extensively and decisively under the influence of women - not in Munster, nor in Rastatt, not in Versailles, nor yet in San Francisco'.<sup>1</sup> Readers of political histories of the Congress may have been surprised by Spiel's observations, since women have no place at all in more scholarly tomes which focus on the actions of men. By contrast, the theme is a familiar one for those who have preferred the narratives of what Metternich termed the Congress' 'secret life,' in which women are served up as the source of the cosmopolitan practices and distractions of the dancing congress, as the purveyors of the private, as the corruptible, or pliable, double agents of statesmen and sovereign causes, often in the interests of personal gain, or passionate revenge. At the same time the representations of the sexual power of women common to the story of the dancing congress sit in striking contrast with the historical view being put together by early

modern historians, in which noble and aristocratic women acted as brokers of patronage, political agents to foreign rulers, the hosts of underground political networks, and operators of informal news-related and networking activities, including, into the eighteenth century, *salons*.

In this paper, I want to explore this conjunction of the new and the old—in terms of both the Congress values and its methods of communication—in the context of the creeping popularity of the adjective 'international', and the specific evidence of the roles of individual women. Taking this tack requires revisiting the significance of the Vienna meeting as a story of the 'dancing congress,' that is, as representative of the moral foibles of a dissolute and disappearing aristocratic and pre-modern European order, a tagging that was imposed because of the overt presence of women. The lens of the 'dancing congress' brings into clearer focus the international dimensions of the radical structural shifts in modern European history: that is the alignment of new political values with the gendered separation of spheres, identifying (in principle) men with public/political life, and women with domestic concerns.

## 2.

'...in matters of importance one must get the women going.'  
*Talleyrand*<sup>2</sup>

In 1814, there was no expectation that women would not attend the Congress of Vienna. They had converged as wives, sisters, friends, lovers, and sovereigns at the Paris conferencing that had taken place over the months of spring and brought the war against France to an end. Certainly, women were still thought of as capital to be traded in the interests of peace; just as Marie-Louise was Austria's peace offering to Napoleon, and the Russian government had toyed with the competing (unsuccessful) idea of having Napoleon marry Grand Duchess Catherine, the Tsar's sister; in 1814, the British and Russians competed to have their 'woman' cement dynastic connections with the Prince of Orange. As importantly, however, as diary manuscripts, secret police documents and intercepted correspondence make clear, women themselves were vitally engaged in the politics of the peace. They utilised the salon, the *souper*, the *diner*, notes, letters and all manner of connections and communication, to defend their interests, whether the claims of the mediatized sovereigns, or the prospects for a federated Germany or the rights of Jews—witness the Jewish Prussian Fanny von Arnstein, married to the Austrian banker Nathan. Arnstein and her sister Cecilia Eskeles, who were under police surveillance both because they had joined in the delegation attending the conference from Frankfurt on behalf of Jewish rights, *and* because their homes were regarded as headquarters of the Prussian delegation, and pro-Prussian interests. For historians, the significance of women in this story is I want to venture, less a question of noticing how men 'got' 'the women going', than of examining the role of the independence of some women in *fashioning* as well as communicating the values of the Congress, even at a distance.

\*

It is no easy task to begin the story of the Congress with any woman. Whatever the seduction of her private tragedy, there seems little to connect her to the great themes of world history, the schemes and nostrums of public life, the fatal flaws of public men. Even the most celebrated woman at the time, Germaine de Staël, is not remembered by international historians as relevant to the story of the Congress, despite the fact she was a published intellectual and *salonnière* with extraordinary political, and cultural capacities and influence. (Technically an *ambassadrice* by marriage, contemporaries also regarded Staël as a diplomat by temperament and practice.) From 1812 to 1814, Staël found herself literally in the middle of the intellectual and diplomatic machinations of a new European-wide coalition against Napoleon. Elsewhere I have tracked in detail Staël's role across the period Schroeder regards as vital to the employment of these principles in order to illuminate the agency of individual women, operating at times in the context of the salon, but also through networking, letters and (in rarer cases) publications.<sup>3</sup> In Staël's case, that agency leads us to the Paris-based peace discussions of May 1814 that established the terms for the peace with France, and for the Congress of Vienna.

Although drafting of the Treaty of Paris was a less celebrated affair than the Vienna meeting, at stake in these formally 'informal conversations' between the ministers of the four Powers and France was the detail of France's future, and the conferencing system taken up at Vienna, including the status of colonies, European rivers, trade, and abolition, and the principles of diplomacy on which a commitment to 'harmony and understanding' between all the states of Europe might be based. It was in this context that all the key political and intellectual figures and spectators who had descended on Paris in order to influence the terms of the treaty, or watch history as it was being made, were drawn to Staël's salon.

In May 1814, Staël's salon—alternating between her residence in Saint Germain and the chateau of her friend Juliette Recamier at Clichy, on the northern outskirts of Paris—was a crucial site of diplomatic negotiation. Police spies warned the King that Staël's salon was operating as a 'centre of opinion.'<sup>4</sup> Her admirers claimed it was a space in which people were encouraged 'to think who have never thought before, or who had forgotten how to think.'<sup>5</sup> For the American ambassador John Quincy Adams, it was 'a kind of temple of Apollo,' where one could meet 'the world.'<sup>6</sup> For the pragmatically-minded, the crucial point was that Staël still had the Tsar's ear. According to the Swiss envoy Pictet de Rochemont, it was at these salon gatherings that the Tsar promised publicly to suppress serfhood in his empire and joined Staël's criticism of Bourbon anti-liberalism.<sup>7</sup>

Staël utilized her salon to direct conversation to the specific ends of *libéralisme* as she understood it: constitutional guarantees against abuses of political power and in defence of freedom of religion, press, and

association; meritocratic rather than hereditary government; the cultivation of public opinion in thriving public spheres.<sup>8</sup> On her view, laid out in writing as well as in conversation, these points were directly relevant to the reconfiguration of the French polity, on the grounds of their *universal* applicability, as the principles of peacemaking on the international scale augured by the end of the war.

A three hour long gathering on «un soir mémorable» in mid-May 1814 offers a useful example of just how, guided by Staël, contemporary salon culture still did its political work. The Marquis de Lafayette, acting as the emissary of American wishes, records that Staël began by commenting on her correspondence with Jefferson and his 'observations relative to the United States and the spirit of monopoly in England, extending even to liberty itself.' She then steered the conversation to the importance of passing on these concerns to the English. Before the evening's end, it had been arranged that the Russian Tsar and the Swiss-born American envoy Albert Gallatin would have a private audience in England, and the Tsar would represent the American perspective on their political differences to the English.<sup>9</sup> Other causes that profited from Staël's salon strategizing that same evening were Geneva's territorial claims in the drawing of a new French border, liberalism in Sicily and South America, and the abolition of the slave trade.

At the same time as Jeremy Bentham was touting his constitution-writing skills in anticipation of peacemaking outcomes, Staël was busy actively inserting her 'liberalisme'—a term she is credited with coining—into the debates among the great powers of the time.<sup>10</sup> Maurizio Isabella has recently confirmed that Staël's rendition of the French Revolution up to the events of the Congress, her uncompleted and posthumously published *Considérations sur la Révolution française* (1818), had a key role to play in the shaping of post-Napoleonic 'moderate liberalism', providing 'the intellectual tools to make a critical assessment of Napoleon and to accommodate their political ambitions without denying each and every theoretical achievement of the revolution'.<sup>11</sup> Further, working against the current historiographical practice of effacing Staël from the intellectual histories of the individuals who made up the otherwise all-male Coppet group, Jennifer Pitts has argued that, Staël 'long stood at the center of French and Swiss anti-slavery activity,' dating Staël's involvement in the articulation of this 'humanitarian outlook' to 1789.<sup>12</sup> By 1814, Staël was producing essays and pamphlets that attempted to persuade the negotiators of the Treaty of Paris to ban the trade as a condition of the peace, as well as take military action against political tyranny, and on behalf of constitution-based political societies. If she was only one actor among a school of British and other activists, hers was a singular elaboration of the philosophical and practical terms of the universality and international legitimacy of liberalism that became the conceptual axis of postwar political debate conceptualization:

'Is the question the abolition of the slave trade, or the liberty of the press, or religious toleration? Jefferson thinks as La Fayette, as Wilberforce; and

even they who are now no more are reckoned in the holy league. Is it then from the calculations of interest, is it from bad motives that men so superior, in situations and countries so different, should be in such harmony in their political opinions?'<sup>13</sup>

Staël's anti-Napoleon texts also offer evidence of the extent to which the new age of international thought was bound to the new age of nation-states (according to John Isbell, it is in Staël's writing that the French-speaking world first encounters the term 'nationality').<sup>14</sup> The bourgeois-aristocratic Staël whose *De L'Allemagne* brought down on her head Napoleon's wrath in 1812, and garnered her European-wide celebrity in 1813, stood for the modern liberalism of a cosmopolitan Europe composed of its national cultural particularities, for the virtues of patriotism in defense of pluralism and against Napoleon's political and cultural imperialism. Her international thought was a product of her accumulation of a European cosmopolitan, if not global, knowledge, extending from her Genevan home-in-exile 'Coppet' — 'ce foyer imaginaire du libéralisme européen' — to her life of exile from the less familiar borders of the Russian empire, to the almost familial shores of England.<sup>15</sup>

As Vienna filled up with sovereigns, dignitaries, plenipotentiaries, and numerous interested parties, Staël remained connected to events there, despite her physical absence. Alerted to her ongoing 'efforts to engender constitutional heat' in Paris, and her resistant reputation as 'the high-priestess of liberty and peace', Talleyrand—now the King Louis XVIII's foreign minister—wrote from the Congress rebuking her.<sup>16</sup> While party publications emanating from Paris blamed her for the Allied occupation of Paris, John Quincy Adams wrote to his mother Abigail: 'since the overthrow of Napoleon, and the European peace, she [Staël] has been among the most distinguished friends of our country, and contributed in no small degree to give the tone to the public opinion of France and of Europe, with regard to the vandalism of the British exploit at Washington.'<sup>17</sup>

Over this same period, Staël's own correspondence shows that even though she moved between Paris and Geneva, and away to the Italian peninsula for the sake of her husband's health, she assiduously kept up her network of correspondents (the Tsar, Wellington, Jefferson among others), and developed sturdy lines of political information connecting her to the major international discussions concerning Europe and the Americas. She persisted in arguing for representative liberal constitutions and institutions as the future of Europe, along the lines of both American and English practices, even as she urged Jefferson to abolish slavery in that otherwise perfect republic. She worked up her critique of English political behaviour in Ireland and abroad as the precedent that explained the English disregard for liberty at the Congress. Responding to news of the agreements in train in Vienna, she denounced '[a]ll those political reasonings on the balance of Europe, those old systems which serve as a pretext to new usurpations'.<sup>18</sup> In this context, Staël provides a rare benchmark for the spectrum of 'liberal' thought in this period and the limits of the liberal modernity for which the Congress might stand. 'Humankind,' she wrote, 'is very far from liberty at

this moment. The miscarried revolution in France has caused those enlightened spirits everywhere to step back.' A noticeable world-weariness strained her summation of political progress in Vienna: a 'world spectacle made to inspire sadness, with the only consolation that discontent is being aroused.'<sup>19</sup>

Staël's history of the French revolution criticized the Vienna congress for giving France a say in the affairs of Germany, sacrificing Poland to short-sighted concerns, and only weakly stamping the peace with the cause of abolition.<sup>20</sup> She directed her rancour particularly at Castlereagh, the English Foreign Minister (he had read all Staël's works, and she knew him through her London salon). England, the great model of a liberal political system, she wrote, had failed to support the cause of liberty elsewhere, choosing Spanish repression over the independence movements in 'Mexico and Peru'. Having given Napoleon every practical and ideological opportunity to attempt his return (she was writing after Napoleon's infamous resumption of power in France, March to June 1815) and after defeating Napoleon a second time at Waterloo, England had imposed a new peace on France intended to punish its population by subjecting it to five years of military occupation and decimating its economy and politics.<sup>21</sup>

Staël's critique of the second Treaty of Paris (1815) revolved around what she construed as the abandonment by England of liberal principles. Her evidence? The weakness of political institutions that had been put in place in France; the toll on political morale of the occupation of France under Wellington; the failure to bolster freedom of the press or religion, or to prevent the murder of Protestants in the French countryside.<sup>22</sup> She blamed not only English diplomats, but also the self-interest of Talleyrand, who made a small fortune out of the Vienna decisions. From her perspective, by 1815, a long anticipated opportunity to reshape political institutions in the image of liberty had been lost.

Staël was an outspoken advocate of the universal relevance of liberal principles. She measured against those principles the political leaders of the time as they worked to overthrow Napoleon and inaugurate a post-Napoleonic international European order.<sup>23</sup> As summed up in *Considérations sur la Révolution française*, Staël articulated and gave force to the liberal tenets of the ideological revolution in 'international norms' that Schroeder associates with this period: 'This sense of inherent limits, acceptance of mutual rules and restraints, common responsibility to certain standards of conduct, and loyalty to something beyond the aim of one's own state.'<sup>24</sup>

\*

Staël was hardly the only woman with an opinion on the 'liberal' values that the Congress should represent, or who communicated them through networks and salons. Of the numerous available examples, the most intriguing perhaps is the correspondence of Caroline Humboldt with her husband Wilhelm, and her close friend Frederike Brun, the Danish salonnière who modelled her salon on Staël's own. These letters press the question of

the influence of women, even those not present at the conference, of correspondence as evidence of a contemporary mood, of the broader circulation, if not origin, of ideas. Humboldt's letters make clear that anti-semitism and what we might describe as republican patriotism, was in full bloom. (Indeed if the German historian Friedrich Meinecke had incorporated them into his study of the congress, he may have had to search for more complex explanations of Wilhelm's relatively cosmopolitan rather than nationalist tendencies). Caroline was most forthright arguing against Jewish rights in a future Germany in her correspondence with her husband. For our purposes, however, her exchanges with Brun are further evidence of the extent to which the values represented by the Congress were discussed and questioned between women while it was in progress, and the values themselves turned on questions of political patriotism, cultural hierarchies, and the limits of women's political agency.

Humboldt had been living in Vienna with her husband, but left to avoid the expected chaos of the planned European meeting (she passed by Staël's at Coppet on her way home to Berlin, where she waited out the Congress ). On January 2, 1815 (200 years and 3 days ago), Brun, who was even farther away in Copenhagen, wrote to Humboldt in Berlin expressing her disapproval of the geopolitical give and take that had undermined the expected general principles on which the peace would be built, at the expense of Denmark:

'Dear Friend, you were evidently quite right in not wanting to see the Congress from close at hand— this Empire of Right and Justice, which began by coupling Norway to Sweden will not easily gain the approval of posterity.'<sup>25</sup>

On May 13, 1815 Humboldt wrote from Berlin, feeling as qualified to express her own views on the limits of this 'Empire of Right and Justice', who could or could not be a nation:

'When the Italians are ripe, they will deserve to become a nation-- at present I fear they are not yet [up to it] ...

Brun replied from her salon headquarters in Sophienholm a week later: 'About Italy I now think as you do; ... these better ones think they are still in the 13th-14th century. The Kingdoms of Italy and Tuscany may be considered lucky to have been freed from the yoke of the hated dynasty, and since the hour of reawakened nationality has not yet struck, to remain under a wise old regime -- ... Let them just keep the Poles and Saxons apart, and the Danes-- the Holsteiners will manage all right.'<sup>26</sup>

On June 20, 1815 Humboldt reiterated the view 'that time is plainly working toward the union of nations that belong together.'

Even if we did not think ahead to the Wilsonian era, and the echoes of right and justice, or national evolution, and federalism, Humboldt and Brun's exchanges, on the periphery of the actual events, give us an insight into the profound ways that the national and international as Europeans would come to think of them in the early twentieth century, were already closely bound

as ideas, even if the specific forms of nation-states and national identities were not (as Brun outlined):

a)'serious justice is the true god.'

b) the German [a category in which she included herself and Humboldt] and the English count as 'the most noble peoples on Earth'.

c)'Political incitement in women is something I hate to death—through it we become furies.' (Here the extent of Staël's political involvement in international/European events was uppermost on their minds)<sup>27</sup>

Even as a mid-level intellectual 'chatter,' Brun and Humboldt's exchanges speak volumes of the assumptions brought to the Congress, as well as the spread of ideas, deliberated through the conversation of letters as well as the salons in this period, namely, secular liberalism, nationalism, and bourgeois gender norms. Taken together, Brun, Humboldt, Staël, lay out the spectrum of ideas—and their communication—that comprised the liberal trend Schroder claims had been set by Napoleon's defeat, 'launching Europe on a century of genuine political, social and economic progress'.<sup>28</sup> They contextualize a Congress connected through familial and cultural networks. They also remind us of the diverse strands of cosmopolitan and national thought, and hierarchical premises that were already embedded in the liberal trend, as it would continue to be understood through the nineteenth century.

\*

My last example of individual women's voices, and their interventions, turns to the relevance of the humanitarian thinking that is increasingly associated with the emergence of a modern international politics in this period. It addresses the imperative of humanity which, by the last of the congresses that marked peacemaking at the end of the Napoleonic wars (1822 in Verona), was invoked less in the cause of anti-slavery and more in defense of persecuted usually Christian minorities, on often Christian moral grounds.

When historians of international politics remember Dorothea Lieven, it is usually because of her romantic relationship with the Austrian Foreign Minister Clemens Metternich, which began in 1818 at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle and sparked a substantial correspondence for posterity.<sup>29</sup> In the latter nineteenth century and 1920s, enthusiasts of British history occasionally recalled Lieven too because of the epistolary traces of her hold over English political life.<sup>30</sup> For our purposes, these same documents show the changing ways in which, from 1814, when Lieven arrived in London with her ambassador husband, she was an active conduit of information between the British and Russian courts. The Russian foreign minister, Nesselrode, used her reports rather than those of her husband, 'for accounts of British politics and personalities.'<sup>31</sup>

We know more about the diplomatic ambitions of Lieven than other women in this period in part because she was not shy of inserting herself in history.



Her memoirs date her 'diplomatic apprenticeship' to the 1814 visit to London of Grand-Duchess Catherine—The Russian Tsar's opinionated sister was *en route* to the Congress of Vienna. From this time on, Lieven's home, as she liked to describe it, was 'the centre of diplomacy and of the elite of society'. There she welcomed Whigs and Tories and built up a reputation that reached the Russian court.<sup>32</sup>

The launch of a European conferencing system at the Congress of Vienna saw Lieven drawn deeper into the questions of international politics that had begun to shape diplomatic practices and its concerns. The French writer François-René Chateaubriand, who was himself an occasional diplomat and Lieven's ideological kindred spirit, thought her 'nulle et vaine'; he also described her as 'la douairière des congrès' [the congress widow].<sup>33</sup> He may have had in mind the last of the post-Napoleonic peacemaking congresses in Verona, which they both attended in 1822. Lieven claimed that over two months the Verona congress gathered nightly at her place (there were few other options), usually until two in the morning.<sup>34</sup>

But it was really in the period after Verona that Lieven's agency was vital to the specifically 'humanitarian' ends of the value system that had begun to be normalized at Vienna. (There are other stories that Stella Ghervas might tell us here about the Congress, including the status of philhellenism amongst the Swiss bourgeoisie) The Cambridge historian Harold Temperley has backed Lieven's claims of having turned Tsar Alexander from a disinclination to drawing his alliance partners into the question of Russian interests in Porte territories, to a policy of defending the Christians on the other side of the Russian empire's borders, in territory over which Russian leaders had long had economic designs ('I said to him "Put your foot down. Sire, and you will make the whole world tremble", for that was precisely what the emperor did not think that he could dare to do.').<sup>35</sup> Having turned the Tsar, Lieven went on to convince George Canning—the British Foreign Secretary with an anti-interventionist reputation—to intervene in the Eastern Question on Russia's side: 'establishing in the East an order of things conformable to the interests of Europe and to the laws of religion and humanity.'<sup>36</sup> In this account of the power of individual agency, Lieven's intervention led Canning to shift from refusing Russian requests even to hold a conference on the question, to accepting an alliance with Russia against Turkey in defence of Greek independence and the lives of Christians. Lieven was also instrumental in obtaining the agreement of Canning's envoy, Wellington, to the Protocol of 4<sup>th</sup> April 1826, which consolidated the revolution in Anglo-Russian diplomatic relations and European diplomacy.<sup>37</sup>

In sum, the anti-liberal Lieven used her networks, her correspondence, her salon to great effect in this period, ensuring 'international' intervention in support of religiously defined humanitarianism in a period which saw 'the end of the Neo-Holy Alliance and the congressional or international system of government... [and] the beginning of the break-up of the Turkish empire, [starting] England and Russia on a slope which was bound to end in the freedom of Greece'.<sup>38</sup> In this context, we should not be surprised to find that in the mid-1850s, the Imperatrice Eugenie, another woman who tried

to involve herself in the political affairs of her husband, remarked that Lieven and her 'embassy of women' were responsible for fomenting one of the most appalling conflicts of the nineteenth century.<sup>39</sup> Whether or not history sides with Eugenie, what we can say is that in the context of the Concert of Europe, Lieven's politics involved her in the nineteenth-century internationalization of the cause of Greek independence, as the humanitarian defence by a Christian Europe of Christians in the Ottoman empire. To the extent that humanitarianism was defined in terms of national emancipation, and nationalism was symptomatic of modernity, Lieven is an important cog in the linear narrative of the significance of the Congress, as a site of political and ideological change; her agency fashioned in critical and intentionally conservative ways the international and intersecting politics of nation-making, humanitarianism and religion.<sup>40</sup>

### 3.

'What was Christian? What secular? What was the relationship to public opinion? How were the Congress's normative values expressed during and after? Did these more cultural-normative dimensions have the effect of legitimating the Congress order?'

These important questions, posed for this session of the conference on the Congress of Vienna, draw us back to the importance of an older historical strategy of adding women. Stirred back in to the political history of the Congress as the transformation of 'the governing rules, norms, and practices of international politics', the addition of women highlights the gendering of international politics that was as important a dimension of that transformation. From this perspective, the congress looks like the last gasp of an aristocratic order, with its emphasis on sociability, and its space for women a presence as rulers, and as salonnières, and even as mistresses. But it also reveals the extent to which a gendered bourgeois revolution had already taken social and political hold, reinforcing negative associations of women who transgressed a growing public/private divide; at Vienna, even as women continued to run salons, or even present as the sovereigns or claimants of disputed territories and rights, women's place was only ambivalently and ambiguously acceptable and subsumed in cynical accounts of the dancing congress.

It was not only Thomas Jefferson who thought that republics were spared the insidious influence that women had exercised in absolutist states,<sup>41</sup> but also his postwar correspondent Staël. She explained in her historical recounting of the revolution and the struggle against Napoleon, that where there was 'arbitrary and repressive government,' women were compelled for personal advantage to exert influence in the public sphere damaging to transparent and equitable political practices.<sup>42</sup> How ironic then that during the Congress, as well as after, the absent Staël herself as much as Lieven (and more famously Baroness Krudener), would stand for an *ancien* political disorder driven by the passions (from sex to religion), even when they were the intellectual or practical, even involuntary agents of the liberal,

national, and patriotic ambitions associated with a modernizing, gender-segregated, bourgeois Europe.

The story of women's simultaneous absence and presence from the Congress of Vienna leads us to an alternative reading of their significance to the story of values and their communication: Staël nurtured through her written as well as verbal agency a liberal international agenda that rendered the gendered nation the means to universalist liberal ends; Humboldt and Brun expanded the spectrum of liberalism in the directions of a (Germanic) Protestant cultural-political collusion, as prone to challenge women's overt political participation, despite their own political inclinations; Lieven's influence can be traced through her promotion of an Orthodox conservative-derived religious humanitarianism.<sup>43</sup> At a time when 'nationality' had only limited influence on the imperatives of international intervention, these women promoted diverse national and religious patriotisms, for divergent reasons, on a European scale through their presumption of political connexions. Stirring women back into the history of the Congress reconnects the political and dancing versions of Vienna, and the gendered legacies of not only political agency, but of political ideas. For historians of gender in political history, there are no surprises in the paradoxical conjunction of political modernity, and gender conservatism. The paradox of course belongs to modernity, not merely the early nineteenth century. The task that remains is to understand both the processes by which women and men became separated out in the narratives of international politics, and to restore the potency of the more ambiguous and entangled status of the secular and religious, the cosmopolitan and national, and the aristocratic and bourgeois, in that political past.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hilde Spiel, *The Congress of Vienna: An Eyewitness Account*, 1968.

<sup>2</sup> Cited in R. Harris, *Talleyrand*, p.91.

<sup>3</sup> See Sluga, *International History Review*, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Bulletin de l'état des esprits en France, Direction Générale de la Police de France, July 1814; 24 Sept 1814; 26 Sept 1814, MAE, Paris, vol. 337, *France, Affaires Intérieures, 1814-1815*.

<sup>5</sup> *Mémoires of Mme de Remusat*, vol.2 (London, 1880), 155.

<sup>6</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams* vol.1 (Lippincott, 1874), 278-9, 371.

<sup>7</sup> L. Cramer (ed.), *Correspondance Diplomatique de Pictet de Rochemont et de François D'Ivernois* (Paris: Librairie H. Champion, 1914).

<sup>8</sup> For more on Staël's politics in this period, see A. Craiutu, *A Virtue for Courageous Minds: Moderation in French Political Thought, 1748-1830* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> 'Letter from Gen. Lafayette to Mr. Crawford, giving an account of an interview with the Emperor Alexander and showing the latter's inclination to promote peace, May 26, 1814', in Count Gallatin, ed., *The Diary of James Gallatin: Secretary to Albert Gallatin A great peacemaker, 1813-1827* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1920), 22.

<sup>10</sup> M. Delon, 'Le Liberalisme au feminine', *Europe*, jan-fev 1987, p. 5. The word *liberalisme* appeared at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the circles of de Staël as a mode of denouncing the feudal privileges and reactionaries in the aftermath of the Revolution.

<sup>11</sup> Maurizio Isabella, *Risorgimento in Exile: Italian Emigrés and the Liberal International in the Post-Napoleonic Era* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009), p. 15.

<sup>12</sup> Jennifer Pitts, 'Constant's Thought on Slavery and Empire,' in Helena Rosenblatt, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Constant* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009), pp. 126-128.

---

<sup>13</sup> Staël, *Considérations sur la Révolution française*, edited by J. Godechot (Tallandier, Paris, 1818, 1983, 2000), p. 755.

<sup>14</sup> On Staël's view, nations were not intrinsically expressions of liberty, but rather politically significant forms of sociability that were produced by, and led to, an effective and enduring organisation of public power in the interest of civil liberty. Like many of the acknowledged ideologists of the nation that followed her, including Fichte, Mazzini and Michelet, her work emphasised not only the mutually reinforcing relationship of the individual and society, of the personal and political, it promoted a particular social subjectivity, with its related emphases on urban civility, the role of passions, embodied habits, and the political significance of gender differentiated patriotisms. This cosmopolitan face of Staël's view of nations and cultures sits most comfortably with her interest in sustaining individuality and difference and of happiness as the reconciliation of contrasts, including the individual and society, men and women, and distinctive nations. Lucia Omacini, who has suggested that Staël's texts are torn between 'a desire for self-affirmation and an act of submission to the Norm', K. Szmurlo, 'Introduction', M. Gutwirth et al (eds) *Germaine Staël: Crossing the borders* (Rutgers University Press, New Jersey, 1991) cited, p. 4. J. Clairborne Isbell, *The Birth of European Romanticism: Truth and propaganda in Staël's 'De l'Allemagne'*, 1810-1813 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994), p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> G. Gengembre, 'Fréquentation et sociabilité mutuelles,' *Revue Française d'histoire des idées politiques*, special issue 'Les Idéologues et le Groupe de Coppet', 18, 2 (2003): 259-270, pp. 266-268.

<sup>16</sup> Talleyrand to Staël, Vienne 21 octobre 1814, letter 456, Solovieff, *Madame de Staël*.

<sup>17</sup> 'To Abigail Adams', Paris, 21 February 1815, *Writings of J.Q. Adams* vol. V, 1814-1816, Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1915), 279.

<sup>18</sup> Staël, *Considérations*, 719.

<sup>19</sup> Staël to Prosper de Barante, Geneva, 28 octobre, 1814, 'Lettres de divers ouvertes et copiées à la poste de Paris,' f.395, MAE, vol. 675 *France et Divers États de l'Europe. 1814*; see also Staël, *Considérations*, 744.

<sup>20</sup> Staël suffered a stroke in December 1816, from which she never recovered, and died in July 1817.

<sup>21</sup> Staël, *Considérations*, 598, 709-711.

<sup>22</sup> V. de Pange, *Madame de Staël et le duc de Wellington, correspondance inédite, 1815-1817* (Paris: Gallimard, 1962).

<sup>23</sup> Robert Escarpit, *L'Angleterre dans l'oeuvre de Madame de Staël*, Paris: M. Didier, 1954), p. 167.

<sup>24</sup> Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, p. 802.

<sup>25</sup> Brun-Humboldt correspondence, Frederike (Copenhagen), jan 2 1814[actually 1815]

<sup>26</sup> May 22, 1815

<sup>27</sup> [All Brun, Sophienholm, July 7 1815] Fred Aug 12, 1815, Sophienholme 'May we Germans not forfeit the high fame of humanity! That of the truly most cultivated and pious people on earth-- and [let] needlessly bloody revenge not befoul us...

<sup>28</sup> Schroeder 578; The precedent of having a clause on abolition as part of a peace treaty had already been established by the English foreign minister in the case of the peace concluded with Denmark, and Portugal (although the latter only agreed on restricting trade, not outlawing it).

<sup>29</sup> Dorothea Lieven, *The Private Letters of Princess Lieven to Prince Metternich, 1820-1836*, New York: Dutton and Co, 1938.

<sup>30</sup> Ernest Daudet, *Une Vie d'Ambassadrice au siècle dernier, La Princesse de Lieven*, Paris: Plon, 1904, p. 12.

<sup>31</sup> Harold Temperley, ed., *The Unpublished Diary and Political Sketches of Princess Lieven Together with some of her letters*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1925, p. 76. Temperley drew on a wide range of sources in order to ascertain the extent to which Lieven exerted influence over political affairs in Europe from the 1820, English politics and foreign policy.

<sup>32</sup> Diaries, *Lieven Papers*, Add 47379, f. 13 p.14.

<sup>33</sup> Emmanuel Waresquiel, *Talleyrand Immoblie*, Paris: Fayard, 2003, p. 578.

<sup>34</sup> All cited in Daudet, *Une Vie d'Ambassadrice*, p. 98; see also Lieven to Neuman, 'Verone, le 21 Octobre 1822', *Lieven Papers*, Add 47374, f. 193 and 'Verone le 26 novembre, 1822'.

---

<sup>35</sup> Temperley, *The Unpublished Diary*, p. 107.

<sup>36</sup> Temperley, *The Unpublished Diary*, p. 97.

<sup>37</sup> Temperley, *The Unpublished Diary*, p. 233.

<sup>38</sup> Harold Temperley, 'Princess Lieven and the Protocol of 4 April 1826', *The English Historical Review*, pp. 39, 153, 1924, 55-78.

<sup>39</sup> 'C'est cette ambassade de femmes qui a fait la guerre,' in Daudet, *Une Vie d'Ambassadrice*, p. 310.

<sup>40</sup> See the classic study, Maura O'Connor, *The Romance of Italy and the English Political Imagination*, New York: St. Martins Press, 1998. Although Daudet presents Lieven's moves as inspired by personal hatreds rather than a position on Greece and Russia, *Une Vie d'Ambassadrice au siècle dernier*, p. 109.

<sup>41</sup> C. Allgor *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government*. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000, 21

<sup>42</sup> G. Staël, *Considérations de la révolution française*, 735; 692.

<sup>43</sup> Princess Lieven to Lord Aberdeen, 'Paris le 25 fevrier, 1853', in *The Correspondence of Lord Aberdeen and Princess Lieven, 1832-1854*, p. 640.