

Iconography of Peace Congresses during the Formation of the Westphalian System

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Abstract. The formation of the first state system in Europe took place from the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, as a result of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), to the Utrecht (1713), Rastatt-Baden (1714) and Nystad Congresses (1721) which finished the end of the war of the Spanish Succession and the Northern war. The legal fixation of the Westphalian system was accompanied by its public perception and acceptance. First of all, this was demonstrated by International Congresses, which were not only a common negotiation process, but also a place of representation of the significance and culture of each state. In fact, the European Congress was a carefully designed triumph of Peace within the continent, which required considerable funds, was widely covered in the press and glorified in celebrations, paintings, plastic art, release of commemorative medals, poetry and even fashion. The article presents the most striking examples of iconography of Peace Congresses. The author believes that their performative nature and iconography, emphasizing the European character of Peace and the protopatriotic moods that it evoked, made a significant contribution to the civilization heritage of Europe.

Keywords: Westphalian System; International Congress; Representation; Iconography; Painting; Commemorative Medals.

[es] La iconografía de la paz se presenta durante la formación del sistema de Westfalia

Resumen. La formación del primer sistema estatal en Europa tuvo lugar desde la conclusión de la Paz de Westfalia en 1648, como resultado de la Guerra de los Treinta Años (1618-1648), hasta el Utrecht (1713), Rastatt-Baden (1714) y los Congresos de Nystad (1721) que terminaron el fin de la guerra de Sucesión española y la guerra del norte. La fijación legal del sistema westfaliano estuvo acompañada de su percepción y aceptación públicas. En primer lugar, esto fue demostrado por los congresos internacionales, que no solo fueron un proceso de negociación común, sino también un lugar de representación de la importancia y la cultura de cada estado. De hecho, el Congreso Europeo fue un triunfo cuidadosamente diseñado de Peace dentro del continente, que requirió fondos considerables, fue ampliamente cubierto en la prensa y glorificado en celebraciones, pinturas, artes plásticas, lanzamiento de medallas conmemorativas, poesía e incluso moda. El artículo presenta los ejemplos más sorprendentes de iconografía de los congresos de paz. El autor cree que su naturaleza performativa e iconografía, enfatizando el carácter europeo de la paz y los estados de ánimo protopatrióticos que evocaba, contribuyeron significativamente al patrimonio civilizador de Europa.

Palabras clave: Sistema de Westfalia; Congreso Internacional; representación; iconografía; pintura; medallas conmemorativas.

Summary. 1. Introduction. 2. Peace, war and political language. 3. Allegories of Peace in art, on commemorative medals and coins. 4. The artistic personification of Peace by sovereigns. 5. The image of a dog in the iconography of Peace. 6. Curious cases. 7. Conclusions. 8. Written sources and bibliographical references.

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1. Introduction

Thanks in large part to Versailles of the French King Louis XIV, in an amazing Classic Europe's baroque world of "Courts and Alliances" the concepts of rank, reputation and representativeness have acquired a new quality. This

world was born during the process of the formation of the first state system in Europe took place from the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, as a result of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), to the Utrecht (1713), Rastatt-Baden (1714) and Nystad Congresses (1721) which finished the end of the war of the Spanish Succession and

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the Northern war. As a result, the European system of international relations took shape on clearly fixed legal principles, the most important of which was the principle of balance of power, and in the political and ordinary consciousness of the continent the concept of "Europe" replaced the concept of "Christian community". Thereby, a qualitative transition was made to new international realities that directly led to the present.

The legal fixation of the Westphalian system was accompanied by its public perception and acceptance. First of all, this was demonstrated by International Congresses, which were not only a common negotiation process, but also a place of representation of the significance and culture of each state. From the Peace of Westphalia, as the historian from Tübingen A. Schindling aptly remarked, Europe has become the "Europe of Congresses"².

The problematic of Peace have always been relevant, but since the 70s of the last century, as the famous German scientist, director of the Institute of European History (Mainz) in 1996-2011, Heinz Duchhardt emphasized, it began to acquire inspiration, following the "fashionable" trend. In historiography, more and more attention has been paid to the cultural representation of Peace. At the same time, the vast majority of publications on this subject are the result of the collective work of researchers, what is explained by its composite and interdisciplinary nature. Among them, I note the funded editions for the anniversary of the Westphalian peace and a number of collective monographs of the second decade of the XXI century. There are also significant works rethinking the meaning of individual congresses through research of the relationship between culture and politics. Besides, at the end of the XX - present century, there were held a significant number of international scientific forums dedicated to the anniversaries of the end of the European Wars, which clearly demonstrated the broadcast and perception of peace congresses in wide sections of society. Researchers' attention to the public representation of European congresses is very significant in the context of studying the assessments by contemporaries and descendants of key European events of the early Modern Time and commemorative practices. In the culture of the memory of that epoch, peace negotiations played no less, and perhaps even more, role than battles and wars³.

To a large extent, mass consciousness feeds on catastrophes, changes, and triumphs. In this regard, the

representation of Peace Congresses demonstrates considerable scientific interest and great benefit in the reconstruction of a complex historical panorama. The symbolic power of "special days" - whether it is a Christian holiday or an event of exceptional significance - was an adornment of the people of early Modern time everyday life and the moment when they can express their attitude to reality and power. Even any negotiations during the war caused great emotions of the population. The subjects of the warring sovereigns longed for Peace, and the monarchs and their diplomats perfectly understood this. Therefore, the demonstration of the new state of society was stimulated both "from above" - by monarchs and their offices, and "from below" - by the population of European countries⁴.

Peace-making was a performative act, both in a cultural (the performance of peace celebrations) as well as diplomatic sense (the ceremonial nature of negotiations). As is known, the peculiarity of any political representation is its public nature. Creating of an "image" implies the presence of a viewer, to which its effect is directed. During official ceremonies and negotiations the delegates of Congresses, the aristocracy and the street public acted as spectators. At the same time, the compensatory function of concluding peace agreements was manifested: using various forms of representation, an attempt was made to compensate psychologically for economic and demographic losses, for the deprivation of political power by a number of states and to create an illusion of well-being. In fact, the European Congress was a carefully designed triumph of Peace within the continent, which required considerable funds, was widely covered in the press and glorified in celebrations, paintings, plastic art, release of commemorative medals, poetry and even fashion. One of the most significant forms of representation was a strictly regulated system of the real or allegorical image of Peace - its iconography. In this article I will focus on the most striking examples of the iconography of Peace Congresses during the formation of the Westphalian system.

2. Peace, war and political language

"Peace is better than war when it is not known who will win", -the artist Michael Kirmer from Regensburg noticed in 1559. "Peace is the best of good, war is the worst of evil"-, 17th century French thinker and mathematician Blaise Pascal wrote. In essence, these statements, as well as the fundamental provisions of Hugo Grotius, are a reception from the famous work of the Roman historian Titus Livius: "Melior est certa pax, quam sperata Victoria"⁵. Peace was the supreme goal and duty of the sovereigns of the early Modern Time, and its allegories were present in their representation. Like many other things, the perception of War and Peace in the early Modern Time was largely based on ancient traditions. Although the pathos of the denial of directly preceding

² Georg Schild and Anton Schindling eds., *Kriegserfahrungen. Krieg und Gesellschaft in der Neuzeit* (Paderborn: Schönungh, 2009), 7.

³ Heinz Duchhardt, *Friedens-Miniaturen. Zur Kulturgeschichte und Ikonographie des Friedens in der Vormoderne* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2019), 3; Hans Martin Kaulbach, ed., *Friedensbilder in Europa 1450-1815. Kunst der Diplomatie, Diplomatie der Kunst* (Berlin-München: Deutsche Kunstverlag, 2013), 11; Klaus Bussman and Heinz Schilling eds., *1648-Krieg und Frieden in Europa* (München: Editorial, 1998); Irene Dingel et al. eds., *Theatrum Belli-Theatrum Pacis. Konflikte und Konfliktregelungen in frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2018); Timothy Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660-1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Matthias Köhler, *Strategie und Symbolik. Verhandeln auf dem Kongress von Nimwegen* (Wien: Böhlau, 2016); Renger E. De Bruin et al. eds., *Performances of Peace: Utrecht 1713* (Leiden: Brill, 2015); Heinz Duchhardt and Martin Espenshorst, eds., *Utrecht-Rastatt-Baden 1712-1714. Ein europäisches Friedenswerk am Ende des Zeitalters Ludwigs XIV* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2013).

⁴ Kaulbach, *Friedensbilder in Europa...*, 115.

⁵ Hugo Grocij, *O prave vojni i mira*, ed. Sergej Krilov (Moscow: Ladomir, 1994); Titus Livius, *Istorija Rima od osnovanija goroda*, ed. Pavel Andrianov (Moscow: Litres, 2018).

experience was very strong in the culture of the early Modern Time, nevertheless, this denial was organically interwoven with a passionate admiration for the antique tradition interrupted in the Middle Ages. Penetrated by the spirit of innovation, significant epochs often appealed to the experience of their indirect predecessors.

Besides, celebrations are passing and volatile. They are performed in a short time period but they carry messages with a long-term meaning. Therefore the language used by the celebration itself normally is metaphorical because metaphors belong to symbolic systems vested in the community's history. Visual, textual and sensorial metaphors appeal to well-known and coherent registers of memory and allow a compression of the intended meaning into simple representations that can be easily performed but long remembered. The political language was fundamentally designed and controlled by the social elite, which, in spite of the predominance of the early modern court culture and the *civilité* register in its social life, had been educated in the classical culture of the Latin schools and universities. The symbolic language of Greco-Roman Antiquity or the register of the biblical references constituted therefore its main reference frame. Peace, for instance, was always represented by an emblematic figure referring to either the Greco-Roman pantheon with its innumerable deities or to the Judeo-Christian world with its biblical figures, angels or early Christian saints at the centre of the stage⁶.

3. Allegories of Peace in art, on commemorative medals and coins

Usually, the artistic personification of Peace appeared in a female human form, and not only because in Latin and Greek languages the word "peace" is feminine, but also because women, unlike male warriors, personified calm, home comfort and peace. The ancient personifications of Peace were widespread – there were Irene, the goddess of peace in Greek mythology, the daughter of Zeus and Themis, and Pax, the Roman personification of Peace in the image of a goddess who had neither parents nor descendants. Even Emperor Augustus, returning from a campaign in Gaul and Spain in 13 BC, ordered to erect an altar of Peace in her honor «*Ara Pacis Augustae*», which was completed in 9 BC. The goddess Pax was also dedicated to the temple on the Vespasian forum, which was built by order of the emperor Vespasian after the victory over the Jews in 71-75, and after the temple the whole area became known as "Forum Pacis", or "Templum Pacis". Also the attributes of Justice (Justitia) with Sword and Scales, or Europe (Europa-women in Greek clothes with gathered hair) were universally recognized on the continent⁷.

As is known, the famous painting of Gerard ter Borch "The Ratification of the Treaty of Münster" (Fig. 1) be-

came the most common real historical image of the conclusion of the Westphalian peace. This painting shows the swearing of the oath of ratification of the Treaty of Münster, which ended the hostilities between Spain and the Netherlands. But ancient allegories of Peace prevailed in art, on commemorative medals and coins. The striking example of the visualization of Peace treaties in Westphalia in 1648 was Engelbert Kettler's silver coin (Fig. 2). On the obverse of Kettler's coin, under a radiant sun the goddess of peace Pax is sitting in a sun chariot of which the wheels are formed by faces of the sun, carrying a cornucopia in her right arm and holding reins and the scepter of Mercury in her left. The chariot is being pulled by two lions, one with the scepter and crown of Spain, the other one with bundle of arrows and the crown of the States General. Under the chariot there are all kinds of weaponry. The inscription "Münster, North Rhine-Westphalia" is on the reverse⁸.



Figure 1. Gerard ter Borch, *The Ratification of the Treaty of Münster*. Source: Archive, http://archive.ru/artists/1402~Gerard_Terborkh_ter_Borkh/works/498309~Podpisanie_Mjunsterskogo_mirnogo_dogovora



Figure 2. Engelbert Kettler, *Peace of Munster*, Silver Medal, 1648. Source: Verschoor, <http://www.verschoor.com/historie-penningen>

⁶ De Bruin, *Performances of Peace...*, 235, 247.

⁷ Ilija Shifman, *Ceasar August*, (Leningrad, Nauka, 1990), 189-190; Elizabeth Ann Pollard, "Pliny's Natural History and the Flavian Templum Pacis: Botanical Imperialism in First-Century C.E. Rome", *Journal of World History* 1, no. 3 (2009): 309-339.

⁸ Kaulbach, *Friedensbilder in Europa...*, 48-49, 114.

After the Northern war an Italian sculptor Pietro Baratta created the sculpture group “Allegory of the Nystad Peace” (“Peace and Victory”) (Fig. 3), was placed in the Summer Garden in St. Petersburg in 1722. Baratta was one of the early Classicism masters in Veneto plastic arts. He was a nephew of the sculptor Francesco Baratta the Elder (1590-1666), who worked in Lorenzo Bernini’s laboratory in Rome. Since 1716, already being famous in Veneto, Baratta performed commissions for Russia. In the period of 2009-2011 all his original sculptures were fully renovated and replaced to the Engineers’ Castle (St. Michael’s Castle) in Saint Petersburg for permanent museum preservation. Since 2012 their exact copies made of mazzocco marble are situated in the Summer Garden.

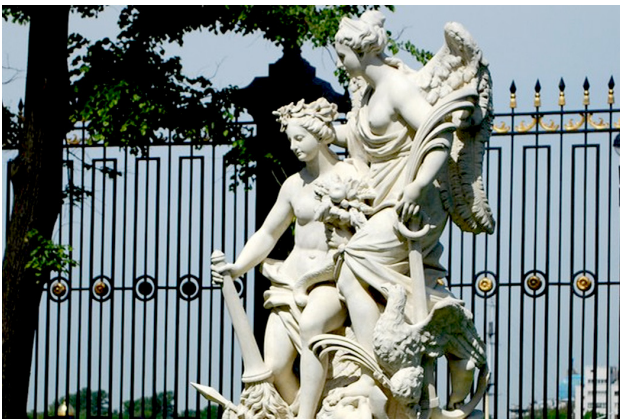


Figure 3. Pietro Baratta, Peace and Victory - allegorical marble statue of Treaty of Nystad, 1722, the Summer Garden. Source: Liudmila Ivonina.

In memory of the Nystad Peace Treaty, a large number of medals were also issued to reward war veterans (Fig. 4). The biblical plot –Noah’s ark and dove returning to the ark with an olive branch in its beak– depicted on the obverse of these medals.



Figure 4. Medal in memory of the Nystad Peace. Source: Medalirus, <http://medalirus.ru/medals18/medaliniishtadskiy-mir.php>

4. The artistic personification of Peace by sovereigns and politicians

Utrecht Peace laid the foundation for the artistic personification of Peace by sovereigns, who generally represented

in canvases and engravings in other roles at the time I am considering. So, in the second half of the XVII-early XVIII centuries, the defender Jupiter or war-like Mars were not random mythological images, but the political program of the encirclement of the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Leopold I and Louis XIV, competing with each other. At the same time, although militaristic tendencies played a large role in the iconography of sovereigns, and artists depicted them as winners and heroes, the role of a peacemaker was extremely significant for their legitimation. It is no accident that even in Versailles the Roman emperor Octavian Augustus, known for his peacefulness, reigned on the canvases. And the same Leopold I and the French king tried to appear in official dynastic historiography as the savior of Europe and the knights of Christianity⁹.

In 1713, after the war of the Spanish Succession, Peace became a reality in Europe, and its persistent engine, England, was part of a trend. The British Queen Anne stopped the destructive war, and a number of medals were issued in her honor. On reverse of one of them –Anne silver Peace of Utrecht medal 1713– the portly Britannic queen (Anne was hefty) surveying her navy whilst peaceful agricultural activities go on behind her back (Fig. 5).



Figure 5. John Croker, Anne silver Peace of Utrecht medal, 1713. Source: https://www.vcoins.com/en/stores/germania_inferior_numismatics_gin/229/product/armedal_1713_great_britain_by_john_croker_queen_anne_the_peace_of_utrecht/610513/Default.aspx

Treaty of Rastatt in 1714 provides the most telling example. The negotiations between Marshal Claude Louis Hector de Villars, one of the most outstanding generals of Louis XIV, and Prince Eugene of Savoy, arguably the foremost commander in Europe who served the Habsburgs, were expedited by their mutual respect and their friendship. On the silver medal to Peace of Rastatt, Ludwig Georg Germany portrayed two famous politicians and commanders of the war of the Spanish Succession, dressed in Roman clothing, face each other and reach out to each other their hands, to the sides of palm trees and warstrophies, with two fishes, to the sides the signs of Jupiter and the sun (Fig. 6).

⁹ Christoph Kampmann et al. eds., *Bourbon-Habsburg-Oranien. Konkurrierende Modelle im dynastischen Europa um 1700* (Köln-Wien: Böhlau, 2008): 196-198.



Figure 6. Ludwig Georg Germany, silver medal, 1714, Peace of Rastatt. Source: Catawiki, <https://www.catawiki.com/l/14483991-germany-ludwig-georg-silver-medal-1714-peace-of-rastatt>



Figure 7. Henri Gaskard, *The Signing of the Peace between France and Spain in 1678*. Source: H. Duchhardt, *Friedens-Miniaturen. Zur Kulturgeschichte und Ikonographie des Friedens in der Vormoderne* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2019), 41.

5. The image of a dog in the iconography of Peace

Within the framework of modern intellectual history, the history of animals takes pride of place. Among the latter, the priority belongs to the dog. Discussions about the role of this constant human companion took place from the works of ancient authors to Nowadays. In his time, the King of Britain, James I Stuart (1603-1625), believed that the devil was able to turn into a dog, cat, monkey and “such a creature”, thus falling into all sorts of tricks to deceive the simple-minded Christians. He even interrupted the scientific debate about the logical understanding of the image of a dog at Cambridge University¹⁰. One way or another, Peace Congresses were held in the Christian community, and in the symbolism of Christianity, a dog means fidelity, vigilance, protection, and sometimes even it becomes an allegory of a priest, a “good shepherd”. Therefore, in the iconography of Peace a very important role was played by the image of a dog, as a symbol of friendship, justice, trust and wisdom. It should be noted that this image is still missing in the images of the Congresses in Münster and Osnabruck in 1648-it appears only during the legal registration of the Westphalian system. In the foreground, the dog is present in the paintings of Henri Gaskard, “The Signing of the Peace between France and Spain in 1678” (Fig. 7) and Johann Rudolf Huber, “The emissaries of the Peace Congress of Baden on September 7th, 1714” (Fig. 8)¹¹.

6. Curious cases

Of course, not all European rulers rejoiced at the conclusion of Peace agreements. This was not reflected in allegorical antique or biblical images-there were some curious cases known to the European community. Thus, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, who claimed the throne of Spain and was even called the “second Spanish king” Charles III, did not accept the Utrecht peace, which recognized the crown of Spain after Philip Bourbon, and continued the war almost a year before the Congress in Rastatt and Baden in 1714. In this regard, an anonymous

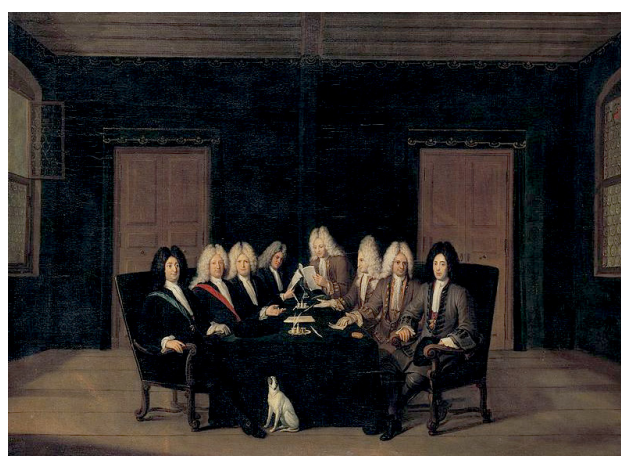


Figure 8. Rudolf Huber, *The emissaries of the peace congress of Baden on September 7th, 1714*. Source: H. Duchhardt, *Friedens-Miniaturen. Zur Kulturgeschichte und Ikonographie des Friedens in der Vormoderne* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2019), 42.

medalist issued a satirical medal. On the obverse of this medal, an Englishman, a Frenchman and a Dutchman sat down nearby to satisfy their natural needs, and on the reverse with the date 1714, these former friends are already fighting, using as shells the material from the heap they created. The author of the image used the consonance of the words “Utrecht” and “trec” - “shit” (Fig. 9)¹².

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, I want to say that the study of Peace Congresses during the formation of the Westphalian system confronts scientists not only with changing concepts of international relations, but also with new public prac-

¹⁰ Duchhardt, *Friedens-Miniaturen*, 37-38.

¹¹ Duchhardt, 41, 42, 64; Matthias Köhler, *Strategie und Symbolik...*, 18.

¹² Ottokar Weber, *Der Friede von Utrecht. Verhandlungen zwischen England, Frankreich, dem Kaiser und den Generalstaaten 1710-1713* (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Berthes, 1891), 148; Gabriele Pedullà, *Machiavelli in Tumult: The Discourses on Livy and the Origins of Political Conflictualism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 20.



Figure 9. An anonymous medal, 1714.

Source: G. Pedullà, *Machiavelli in Tumult: The Discourses on Livy and the Origins of Political Conflictualism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 25.

tices for the presentation of diplomacy in Europe. Representative art united opponents even in conditions of fierce competition. Negotiations between states and the conclusion of Peace made a significant contribution to the civilization's heritage of the continent and were symbolically a way of presenting political unity, both of the European powers, and of sovereigns and their subjects. Paradoxically, the long years of conflict have contributed to the growing perception of Europe as an international community, and performative nature and iconography emphasized the European character of Peace and the protopatriotic moods that it evoked. In fact, Peace Congresses were designed to minimize the heavy legacy of military conflicts in the historical memory.

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