

**Maximilian Lanzinner: Arbeitsfelder und Forschungsfragen zum Immerwährenden Reichstag, in: zeitenblicke 11 (2012), Nr. 2.**

1. Hitherto, the occasional Imperial Diet on the one hand and the Perpetual Diet on the other were always analyzed on their own. By contrast, a continuous diachronic perspective could focus on the following aspects:

- the structures of communication and information
- the Imperial Diets effectiveness regarding foreign security
- the role and the type of the envoy at the Imperial Diet

2. In spite of an intensified research on the estates during the past years, we are not yet able to sufficiently assess the Imperial Diet in a pan-European comparative perspective. Above the normative-institutional approach, a comparison of the individual political contexts, of the different mindsets, traditions, procedural manners and decision processes is essential.

3. The system of European powers has already been studied in depth, not including, however, the function of the Imperial Diet in just this regard. Hereunto, the negotiations at the Imperial Diet still offer a vast potential of insight.

4. Regensburg always constituted puny scaffolding for the struggle for symbolic capital, albeit lavish ceremonial, seemingly endless rituals of notification, session protests, and etiquette gave distinction to the envoys disputing. An appropriate analysis would have to pay high attention to the particular phases the Perpetual Diet went through as we do not yet know enough about them.

**Karl Härter: Der Immerwährende Reichstag (1663-1806) in der historischen Forschung, in: zeitenblicke 11 (2012), Nr. 2.**

Research indeed turned increasingly towards the Perpetual Diet. Nevertheless, it is still earmarked by heterogeneous methods, findings, and assessments reflecting the abundance of written record, the complexity of the institutions and manifold potential approaches. Hence, the article tries to systematically summarize these, in an attempt to outline pestering desiderata while highlighting new perspectives of research. It illustrates the results of erstwhile dissertations on the Imperial Diet's employment during specific periods of the political history of events, followed by surveys of the constitution of the Imperial Diet and studies examining the respective protagonists, especially the envoys. One last focus stresses the Imperial legislation and the different issues of negotiation as well as procedural manners, ceremonial, symbolic representation, communication, media, and the public view of the Imperial Diet. On these fields, recent research developed new approaches and made remarkable progress, but it also requests critical response. Altogether, current research is characterized by a much too narrow sight angle on the Imperial Diet as a "mirror" of the political history of events as well as on its resolutions, or rather the normative end-products. Written record for the most part is restricted to personal documents of the protagonists. Besides this, we lack a comprehensive perspective of interaction and function which involves the meeting practice, the interplay with further Imperial institutions, and the setup of patronage, clientele, and networks while still detecting the Imperial Diet as an information and communication system across the Reich. In this way, the Imperial Diet could be analyzed in a more comparative perspective, as an independent actor, and as a complex sphere of interaction within the multi-layer system of the Holy Roman Empire as well as an integral element of the political culture of Early Modern Europe.

**Susanne Friedrich: Der Kurier des Kardinals. Kommunikation als Perspektive auf den Immerwährenden Reichstag, in: zeitenblicke 11 (2012), Nr. 2.**

The article is centered on letters sent by Prinzipalkommissar (the official ambassador of the Emperor at the Imperial Diet) Johann Philipp von Lamberg on March 22nd 1703 which were intercepted by Bavarian agents. These letters form the basis of five examinations of the events at the Imperial Diet primarily focusing on the history of communication. Thereby the analytical potential of this new perspective becomes apparent. On the one hand, the eminent significance of intact communications for the bare functioning of the Imperial Diet is shown. On the other hand, concentrating on communication as a constituent as well as characterizing footing of relationships permits to reveal certain social and emotional aspects. The structures of communication and the formation of factions within the Imperial Diet emerge in almost the same manner as Lamberg's correspondence network and the complex relationship the envoys maintained among each other and towards the Emperor. Diverging interests und expectances come up to the surface which affected the communication and performance of the envoys and by this means clearly had repercussions on the Imperial Diet's policy.

**André Krischer: Reichsstädte und Reichstag im 18. Jahrhundert. Überlegungen zu Reichspolitik und Politik im Alten Reich anhand Bremer und Hamburger Praktiken, in: zeitenblicke 11 (2012), Nr. 2.**

During the "short" 18th century, between the Peace of Utrecht and the outbreak of the French Revolution, the Imperial Diet lost much of its importance for the Free Imperial Cities. Already Walter Fürnrohr ascertained that nearly all of the cities' votes were held by Regensburg councilmen, and no longer by their own envoys. To begin with, this article sums up again the reasons behind the indifference which the Free Imperial Cities showed towards the Imperial Diet. Subsequently, the article examines the opportunities of the Free Imperial Cities to conduct "Reichspolitik" ('foreign policy' within the framework of the Holy Roman Empire) beyond the Imperial Diet. Using the example of Bremen, micro political procedures at Vienna, endowment practices, and embassies to the courts of important Imperial princes are illustrated. In the 18th century, the Emperor was of much more relevance for the Free Imperial Cities than the Imperial Diet as they stood under his patronage which constantly had to be fostered. Basically, one can identify a relapse of the Free Imperial Cities back behind the principles of their corporative policy, which since the late 15th century had been directed towards the Imperial Diet. As a conclusion based on these findings, the essay recommends to substitute the term "Reichspolitik" (see above) by 'policy within the Holy Roman Empire'. That way one may better accommodate the fact that politics were performed at very different levels (Emperor's Court, Imperial Diet, Imperial courts of law, bilateral diplomacy, correspondence). Furthermore, the circumstance, that thereby no consistent policy was directive – even if the term "Reichspolitik" (see above) may imply it – but interests depending completely on the situation, is taken into account.

**Michael Rohrschneider: Strukturgegebenheiten und Vernetzungen der Reichstagsgesandtschaften Franz' I. und Maria Theresias (1745-1763). Ein Problemaufriss, in: zeitenblicke 11 (2012), Nr. 2.**

Around the middle of the 18th century, the Perpetual Diet was purposefully used by Austria as a network opportunity and as trading hub for resources which could, if required, be used to support the own foreign policy or rather the own "Reichspolitik" ('foreign policy' within the framework of the Holy Roman Empire). In this context, chains of activity within the meaning of 'do ut des' formed a structural principal which is not to be underestimated. This principle was especially earmarked by the Emperor's large potential of granting various acts of grace

and favor. There are lots of reasons to assume that the emerging Austro-Prussian dualism since 1740 accelerated those proceedings. The sporadically occurring lack of mutual coordination between the three embassies of Franz I and Maria Theresa at Regensburg, as well as the differentials amongst the individual "Komitialgesandten" (envoys to the Perpetual Diet) hampered the court of Vienna's ability to conduct a uniform policy towards and within the Imperial Diet.

**Lupold von Lehsten: Möglichkeiten und Grenzen prosopografischer Forschungen zum Immerwährenden Reichstag im 18. Jahrhundert, in: zeitenblicke 11 (2012), Nr. 2.**

Research regarding the envoys at the Imperial Diet belongs to the context of the history of persons, the "Landesgeschichte" (regional history), the history of diplomacy, and the broader history of the Holy Roman Empire. Against this background, the article presents written record illuminating the biography, the history of persons, and the prosopography of the envoys to the Imperial Diet. Besides their bequeathed personal evidence, tombstones, registers, residues, and so forth, personal literature (funeral sermons et cetera) underwent decent change during the 18th century. The first contemporary biographies of envoys evolved. Printed tables of the envoys altered just as well. As a third bundle of records, the envoys personal documents come into consideration. These show a drastic change of the relationship between the prince and his envoy. In many cases the envoy himself had to define the scope for self-contained acting and independent policy, and this even in social and familial spheres. The article explicates the limitations of the envoys personal scope in the 18th century by means of tracing the alteration of their corporative origin, their qualification, the professionalization of their acting, disruptions in their careers, and alternative biographies of envoys whose mandate was revoked. For the whole group of the envoys thereby the question arises whether their individual biographies within the miscellaneous councils and estates are even comparable. Those envoys that spent a longer time span or actually their whole career at the Imperial Diet are specified as appending to the influential group of the "Reichspersonal" (Imperial personal). The opportunities and limitations of prosopographic research shown in this essay reveal further perspectives towards a possible encyclopedia of envoys or rather a corresponding biographical data base.

**Guido Braun: Der Immerwährende Reichstag aus französischer Sicht in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, in: zeitenblicke 11 (2012), Nr. 2.**

In France, the Imperial Diet was reckoned to be one of the most important institutions of the Holy Roman Empire. Louis XV was almost permanently represented at the Imperial Diet until 1750. Nevertheless, Regensburg could no longer attain the key role it had had under Louis XIV, especially as the Emperor's influence there was estimated to be very high. Apart from the short intermezzo of the Wittelsbach emperorship, the French policy towards the Imperial Diet up to the 1750ies retained a clear anti-Habsburg leaning. As an emanation of the estates, the Imperial Diet was perceived as a natural counter pole against the Emperor. The emerging Austro-Prussian dualism formed a far-reaching break. As the French had no vote at the Imperial Diet, their opportunities of interference were mainly restricted to informal influence. A key issue was the acquisition of information. The ceremonial at the Imperial Diet attracted special attention, but since the 1720ies, the French policy was anxious to avoid any disputes in this respect.

**Sven Externbrink: Nach der "diplomatischen Revolution". Funktion und Aufgaben der französischen Reichstagsgesandtschaft, in: zeitenblicke 11 (2012), Nr. 2.**

The presence of France at the Perpetual Diet in the second half of the 18th century has yet barely been investigated in a monographic approach. Therefore, the starting point of any respective inquiry is still determined by the study of Bertrand Auerbach dating from 1912. In the middle of the 18th century, French diplomacy could look back on some 100 years of being present at the Imperial Diets or rather at the Perpetual Diet. The last phase of the French policy towards the Holy Roman Empire during the ancient régime started with the Diplomatic Revolution. The Imperial Diet also was involved into the alteration of generations which took place within the corps of the French diplomats. This process began around 1750 and resulted in the resigning of the last diplomats who had yet been 'socialized' under Louis XIV. Since 1756, partly close confidants of the Choiseul family emerge in this place. The Marquis de Bombelles, in Regensburg from 1775 to 1787, bequeathed a diary permitting insights into an envoy's life during the final stage of the Holy Roman Empire. The key task of the envoys, especially after 1756, was to persuade primarily the Protestant estates that the alliance with Austria would be no danger for their liberty. Past 1763 the Imperial Diet kept relatively quiet, but for all that French envoys contributed to the "maintien de la paix en Allemagne".