

# CHARLOTTE-BÜHLER-SYMPOSIUM

## New Insights Into Current Attachment Research

UNDER THE  
PATRONAGE  
OF THE CITY  
OF VIENNA



Celebrating  
the 650<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary of  
University of  
Vienna

Dedicated to  
the 80<sup>th</sup>  
Birthday of  
Klaus  
Grossmann

SPONSORED BY

650<sup>th</sup> JAHRE universität wien

KÖHLER-STIFTUNG  
im Sifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft

Fakultät für Psychologie

Alexander v. Humboldt  
Stiftung/Foundation

2015  
APRIL 29<sup>th</sup>  
APRIL 30<sup>th</sup>  
MAY 01<sup>st</sup>

OLD TOWN HALL

MORNING

09:30 PROLOGUE

AM Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Heinz W. Engl (President of the University of Vienna)  
**Celebrating the 650<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the University of Vienna**  
 Univ.-Prof. DDr. Lieselotte Ahnert (Chair of the Dep. of Developmental Psychology at Faculty of Psychology)  
**Dedicating the symposium to Klaus Grossmann**

10:00 MYSTERIES AROUND ATTACHMENTS AND THEIR INNER WORKING MODELS

Moderation: Barbara Supper

HOWARD STEELE [The New School for Social Research in New York City/USA]  
**Observations of stability and change in attachment representations over six years that include the transition to motherhood**

This talk will consider research findings showing stable and positive change towards secure attachment relationships in Adult Attachment Interviews obtained during pregnancy expecting a first child, and then again five years later. These results, and others from the London Parent-Child Project, will be discussed in terms of the support they provide for core assumptions of attachment theory.

PETER ZIMMERMANN [University of Wuppertal/Germany]  
**Changes in attachment representations in middle childhood and adolescence**

Although the attachment system remains activated over the life course, we observe clear developmental changes in the triggers, form and frequency of attachment behaviors in middle childhood and adolescence. This talk will inform about the Late Childhood Attachment Interview (LCAI), as well as concurrent and longitudinal associations with attachment patterns, adjustment and socio-emotional competence.

LIESELOTTE AHNERT [University of Vienna/Austria]  
**Inner Working Models of non-maternal attachment figures**

There is no doubt that children additionally form attachments to non-maternal caregivers. However, attempts to translate research outcomes from maternal to non-maternal caregivers (such as fathers, child minders or child care providers in center-based care) failed to explain formation and developmental consequences of the respective attachments. The talk will present a possible approach for a better understanding of the variation and deviation.

12:00 LUNCH

Location: Restaurant ELLAS, Judenplatz 9, 1010 Vienna

AFTERNOON

02:00 CHALLENGES IN EARLY DEVELOPMENT AND HOW THEY ARE LINKED TO ATTACHMENTS, PART I: OUT OF-HOME CARE

PM

Moderation: Andrea Witting

FABIENNE BECKER-STOLL [IFP Munich/Germany]  
**Die Bedeutung von Bindung in der frühkindlichen Bildung und Entwicklung [The importance of attachments in early education and development]**

Although today's view of children portrays them as quite competent and active, children also appear to be vulnerable and dependent on adults who are willing to invest into child care throughout the first years of life. The present paper deals with the question as to whether and how the accumulated knowledge of the attachment theory and research has successfully informed concepts and practices of early education. Especially in public care, it seems to be quite complicated to understand why it is so important to meet the emotional needs of young children when education is in focus at the same time.

TINA ECKSTEIN-MADRY & BERNHARD PISKERNIK [University of Vienna]  
**Erzieherinnen-Kind-Bindungen und ihre Bedeutung für die kindliche Stressregulation [Child-care provider attachments in child care centers and their importance for child stress regulation]**

One of the most exciting and stressful challenges for a child is to be taken to out-of-home care early in life. This talk will explore changes in the stress reactivity of children who were enrolled into child care centers, will focus on child-care provider attachments and will analyze their impact on child stress reactivity.

03:15 CHALLENGES IN EARLY DEVELOPMENT AND HOW THEY ARE LINKED TO ATTACHMENTS, PART II: FATHER FIGURES AND THE FAMILY

Moderation: Andrea Witting

BARBARA SUPPER & BERNHARD PISKERNIK [University of Vienna/Austria]  
**Vater-Kind-Bindung in unterschiedlichen Partnerschaftskonstellationen [Father-child-attachments in different partnership constellations]**

One of the unproven statements about fathering says that men are not contra-prepared for raising children, although they are not really well prepared for it either. This suggests that fatherhood may be sensitive to the context in which it takes place. This talk therefore explores fathers in different partnership constellations and delineates different qualities of father-child attachments.

NINA RUIZ & BARBARA SUPPER [University of Vienna/Austria]  
**Father-child-attachments and time spent together**

This talk deals with the assumption, that investment into spending time with children seems highly contextual in fathers, whereas mothers are normally highly motivated to care for their children and assume an obligation to do so. We will demonstrate paternal investment in children showing heightened demands for care, as it is the case in preterm children, and how fathers spent their times, and adjust them to child needs.

04:15 HERMANN SCHEUERER-ENGLISCH [Catholic Welfare Organization, Regensburg]  
**Bindungen stärken: Ein Credo in der Familien- und Erziehungsberatung [Making attachments stronger: A creed in family and educational counselling]**

This talk focuses on intervention research, using the STEEP-Intervention Program in three major cities in Germany to demonstrate how and under which conditions this intervention has persuaded supporting young mothers and their infants to strengthen secure and to hinder disorganized attachments.

05:00 END OF SESSIONS

EVENING - CULTURAL EVENTS OF INDIVIDUAL CHOICE

07:00 VIENNA OPERA HOUSE: DON PASQUALE (GAETANO DONIZETTI)

Location: Vienna Opera House, Opernring 2, 1010 Vienna

07:00 SPECIAL TOUR THROUGH SIGMUND FREUD'S HOUSE

Location: Sigmund Freud Museum, Berggasse 19, 1090 Vienna

08:30 PM SCHOENBRUNN PALACE EVENING CONCERT

Location: Orangery at Schoenbrunn Palace, Schönbrunner Schloßstraße 47, 1130 Vienna

\* Conference Location: Old Town Hall, Wipplinger Straße 6-8, 1010 Vienna

MORNING

09:30 PROLOGUE

AM Prim. Dr. Klaus Vavrik (Head of the Austrian League for Child Mental Health)  
**Kindergesundheit mit Beziehungsqualität verknüpfen**  
 Mag. Hedwig Wölfl (Head of the Child Protection Centre "Die Möwe" in Vienna)  
**Bindungsförderung in Wien**

10:00 IF ATTACHMENTS DO NOT EVOLVE AS THEY SHOULD

Moderation: Tina Eckstein-Madry

ISABEL SOARES [University of Minho/Portugal]  
**Attachment disturbances in high-risk children**

Institutional care remains, unfortunately, an intervention for children whose parents, for various reasons, are unwilling or unable to care adequately for them. Indeed, much research chronicles a variety of mental health difficulties that plague institutionally reared children, including symptoms of attachment disturbances. Based on studies conducted with Portuguese institutionally reared children, this talk will present evidence about the contribution of both early pre-admission experiences and institutional caregiving quality on children's disturbed attachment behavior and other emotional and behavioral disorders.

GOTTFRIED SPANGLER [University of Erlangen-Nuremberg/Germany]  
**Attachments in foster children**

Foster children can be clearly regarded as a high-risk group in developing attachments. Thus, over the first year after placement, symptoms of attachment disorder were still heightened, as were symptoms of internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems, even though foster children often have increased attachment security towards their foster mothers. This talk will provide evidence to show that regulations in attachment behaviors and the associated brain reactivity differ in foster children, which points to psychopathological pathways in forming attachments.

ANDREA WITTING & NINA RUIZ [University of Vienna/Austria]  
**Bindungsbeziehungen bei Frühgeborenen [Attachments in preterm children]**

Preterm children are described as vulnerable, therefore the parenting of mothers and fathers of these children may differ from parents with full-term children, which in turn, may cause systematic differences in the formation of attachments. The research background has so far, however, delivered controversial results. The talk will inform about a data base on mother- and father attachments to preterm children as opposed to their full-term counterparts.

12:00 LUNCH

Location: Restaurant ELLAS, Judenplatz 9, 1010 Vienna

AFTERNOON

02:00 THE POWER OF CORRECTING AND REPAIRING ATTACHMENTS

PM Moderation: Nina Ruiz

MIRIAM STEELE [The New School for Social Research, NYC/USA]  
**Observations of an intervention aimed at promoting secure attachments: Group Attachment Based Intervention in risk families**

This talk will summarize findings from the Group Attachment Based Intervention with vulnerable parents in New York City, where increasing reflective functioning in parents and promoting attachment security in children are central goals. Video illustrations of the clinical work and research assessments reveal the sound and look of parents and children demonstrating their newly established security.

GERHARD SUESS [University of Applied Science, Hamburg/Germany]  
**Attachment interventions in risk families**

This talk focuses on intervention research, using the STEEP-Intervention Program in three major cities in Germany to demonstrate how and under which conditions this intervention has persuaded supporting young mothers and their infants to strengthen secure and to hinder disorganized attachments.

AVI SAGI-SCHWARTZ [University of Haifa, Israel]  
**New meaning and hope in life as healing systems: The story of Holocaust survivors**

This talk will address issues of extreme trauma and loss that children experienced under atrocious circumstances. The discussion draws on our programmatic research with three generations of the Holocaust from the respective roles of attachment, vulnerability, resilience and social networks in trauma transmission and healing.

04:00 END OF SESSIONS

EPILOGUE

05:00 HISTORICAL CABARET

Location: Theater-Tribüne, Basement of Café Landtmann, Universitätsring 4, 1010 Vienna

The symposium will end with a CABARET which originated in 1929, when the Buehler team hosted the Inaugural Congress of the German Society of Psychology in Vienna, and performed scenes about the situation of psychology around that time. The revised version of this CABARET now consists of five of the old scenes having been adjusted in order to present some topics of the attachment research which have been both carried out and supervised by Klaus Grossmann and his wife. The CABARET addresses the evolutionary legacy of the attachment system, the landmark projects of the Grossmanns and how to find young scholars to continue with attachment research. In addition, important detailed issues are also focused on, for example, how attachment can be measured and what attachment really means for child stress regulation. The entire staff of the Developmental Department of the Faculty of Psychology will perform these pieces of entertainment in the basement of Café Landtmann where the "Theater Tribüne" is located. It is known as the oldest, still existing small stage area in Vienna which opened in 1953.

07:00 END OF CABARET

EVENING

08:00 SOCIAL EVENT

PM Location: Landtmann's Bel-Etage (Café Landtmann), Entrance: Oppolzgasse 6, 1010 Vienna

KLAUS GROSSMANN

Final remarks: Attachment research in retrospect and with good prospects

BANQUET

\* Conference Location: Old Town Hall, Wipplinger Straße 6-8, 1010 Vienna



### MEET THE SCIENTISTS

These meetings are designed to provide an opportunity for a small number of participants of the symposium to come together in a setting that promotes opportunities to deepen selected issues of attachment research. Separately from each other, some of the speakers will facilitate informal discussions allowing participants to present their questions and gain new perspectives.



09:00 AM HERMANN SCHEUERER-ENGLISCH  
[Catholic Welfare Organization, Regensburg/Germany]

GERHARD SUESS  
[University of Applied Science, Hamburg/Germany]

10:00 KARIN & KLAUS GROSSMANN  
[University of Regensburg/Germany]

MIRIAM & HOWARD STEELE  
[The New School for Social Research, NYC/USA]

ISABEL SOARES  
[University of Minho/Portugal]



FROM  
9 AM TO  
NOON

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### WHAT CONNECTS CHARLOTTE BÜHLER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA?

Charlotte Bühler (born as Malachowski in 1893) was raised in an upper-class Jewish family in Berlin. She studied philosophy, psychology and pedagogy in Freiburg, Berlin and Kiel, and attained her Ph.D. in Dresden where she also met Karl Bühler, whom she later married. After her husband became a full professorship at the Philosophical Faculty at the University of Vienna in 1922, Charlotte joined him with their two children in 1923, in order to help him to build up the Department of Psychology.

Charlotte Bühler was the second female around that time who was accepted as associate professor at the Philosophical Faculty. Her research was concerned with development in early childhood, which she later integrated into developmental theories throughout the life span. Consequently, her contribution to the field of developmental psychology is highly acknowledged until today, even though her awareness that attachments are the vehicles driving development only emerged at the very end of her career.

#### HOW DID RECENT VIENNA DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY INCLUDE ATTACHMENT THEORY INTO ITS RESEARCH PROGRAM?

Vienna developmental psychology deals with development throughout the preschool years. It grounds its research on the principle of attachment theory that an infant needs to develop attachments for the child's successful social and emotional development, and in particular to learn how to effectively regulate emotions.

In more detail, we thus are dealing with variations of attachment experiences in children and how they affect different developmental domains, such as languages and cognitive competencies, social interactions and stress regulation. In doing so, our research on the variations of attachments is specifically oriented to a child's non-maternal attachment figures including preschool teachers, child minders and caregivers in public child care, as well as fathers.

#### WHY DO WE DEDICATE THIS SYMPOSIUM TO THE 80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY OF KLAUS GROSSMANN?

Klaus Grossmann was the first researcher who brought the idea of attachment theory to central Europe where he and his wife, Karin, carried out several landmark projects. Throughout their careers, the Grossmann's have demonstrated the power of programmatic research, observations and longitudinal analyses.

They have supported many scholars studying attachment in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and around the world with great generosity. They mentored generations of students and colleagues, so that they could make their own original contribution to this important field in the development of children and across the life span. It is our pleasure to reward this contribution by presenting new insights into current attachment research through this symposium. Happy Birthday!

\* Location: Hotel De France, Vestibül, Schottenring 3, 1010 Vienna

## SPEAKERS



### HOWARD & MIRIAM STEELE

Professors and directors of the Center for Attachment Research (CAR) in the New School for Social Research. H.S. also serves as an honorary senior lecturer in psychology at University College London and as a consultant on attachment research at the Clinic for Dissociative Studies in London, and is the founding and senior editor of the quarterly international journal Attachment and Human Development. M.S. is also director of Clinical Training. Her work demonstrates the importance of parental states of mind in the development of their children. Their research activities focus on attachment across the life cycle and generations, including low-risk normative and high-risk clinical populations.



### ISABEL SOARES

Professor and president of the School of Psychology at the University of Minho, where she also coordinates the Attachment Research Group/GEV. I.S. investigates children's attachment disordered behaviors using a multilevel approach considering GXE and the role of neural activity in distinct groups of institutionally reared children with autism disorder and with Williams Syndrome. She is also interested in the efficacy of Video-feedback Intervention to promote positive parenting and sensitive discipline in high-risk mothers and their children.

## COMPANIONS & FRIENDS

### LIESELOTTE AHNERT

Professor and Co-Director of the Institute of Applied Psychology: Health-Development-Intervention; head of the department of Developmental Psychology. Her research is concerned with interactions and attachments in infancy, early social and emotional development in different contexts, including out-of-home care. Over the last years, LAH has been most interested in the developmental consequences (such as stress reactivity, emotional regulation and social cognition) of child attachments to non-maternal caregivers (such as care providers in child care centers, child minders, and also newly, fathers), as well as epigenetic processes on gene expression and attachments.



### ABRAHAM (AVI) SAGI-SCHWARTZ

Professor of Psychology and Child Development, Director of the Center for the Study of Child Development, and Head of the International Program in Child Development for Developing Countries at the University of Haifa, Israel. A.S.-S. has studied attachment in different contexts (such as kibbutzim), across the life span and across cultures contributing to basic tenets of attachment theory. His research about socio-emotional developments and adaptations under extreme life adversities is well-known and highly recognized.



## FORMER SCHOLARS AND FOLLOWERS



### GOTTFRIED SPANGLER

Professor at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and head of the Department of Developmental Psychology, Germany



### PETER ZIMMERMANN

Professor at the University of Wuppertal and head of the Department of Developmental Psychology, Germany



### FABIENNE BECKER-STOLL

Director of the State Institute on Early Childhood Research (IFP) and honorary Professor at LMU University in Munich, Germany



### GERHARD SUESS

Professor at the Department of Social Work of the Applied University of Hamburg in Germany



### H. SCHEUERER-ENGLISCH

Residency director of the Catholic welfare organization in Regensburg, Germany

## YOUNG SCIENTISTS FROM THE VIENNA ATTACHMENT LAB



BARBARA SUPPER



TINA ECKSTEIN-MADRY



ANDREA WITTING



NINA RUIZ



BERNHARD PISKERNIK

# SYMPOSIUM OVERVIEW



CONFERENCE: Old Town Hall Vienna  
Wipplinger Straße 6-8



Sigmund Freud House, Schoenbrunn Palace,  
Vienna Opera House

## Wednesday APRIL 29<sup>th</sup>

09:30  
AM

### PROLOGUE

10:00

Howard Steele  
Peter Zimmermann  
Lieselotte Ahnert

12:00

### LUNCH

02:00  
PM

Fabienne Becker-Stoll  
Tina Eckstein-Madry &  
Bernhard Piskernik  
Barbara Supper &  
Bernhard Piskernik  
Nina Ruiz &  
Barbara Supper  
Hermann Scheuerer-Englisch

### CULTURAL EVENTS OF INDIVIDUAL CHOICE:

07:00

Special Tour through  
Sigmund Freud's House

07:00

Performance in the Vienna  
Opera House

08:30  
PM

Concert in the Schoenbrunn  
Palace

## Thursday APRIL 30<sup>th</sup>

### PROLOGUE

Isabel Soares  
Gottfried Spangler  
Andrea Witting &  
Nina Ruiz

### LUNCH

Miriam Steele  
Gerhard Suess  
Avi Sagi-Schwartz

### EPILOGUE Historical CABARET

Klaus Grossmann  
**BANQUET**

## Friday MAY 01<sup>st</sup> FROM 9 AM TO NOON

09:30  
AM

10:00



MEET THE SCIENTIST  
Hotel De France, Schottenring 3

12:00



LUNCH: Restaurant Ellas  
Judenplatz 9

02:00  
PM



CABARET: Basement, Café  
Landtmann Universitätsring 4

05:00

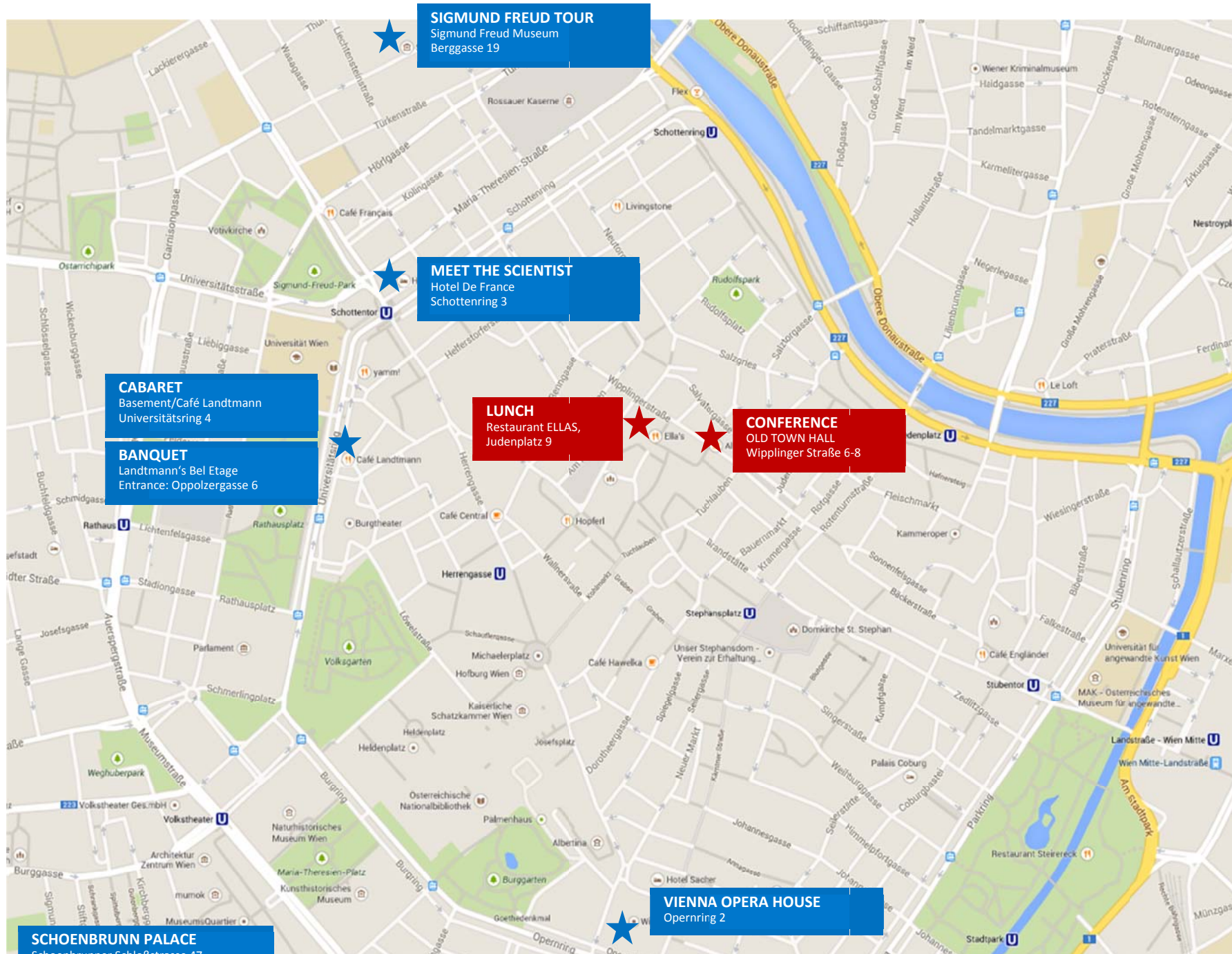
08:00  
PM



BANQUET: Bel Etage, Café  
Landtmann Oppolzgasse 6



# LOCATIONS



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