



Metternich

STRATEGIST AND VISIONARY

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW BEGINNING

Reform and Reconstruction, 1815–1818

METTERNICH'S IDEAS AND POLICIES ON THE NATIONALITY QUESTION:
THE CASE OF ITALY

Defensive and Constructive Security Policies after 1815

The Final Act of the Congress of Vienna on June 9, 1815, marked an epochal threshold within European history, and because three of the major powers—England, Russia, and France—continued to strive for an expansion of their spheres of influence beyond Europe, this threshold was also significant in the context of global history. If we try to imagine the immediate future through the eyes of the politicians at the time, it very quickly becomes obvious how misleading it is to describe the ensuing epoch as one of “restoration.” It would be much more appropriate to describe their aims, and the constraints under which they acted, as giving rise to “security policies.” These consisted of two components. One component comprised *defensive* security policies aimed at defending the system of international law established in 1815. As, following the French Revolution, there was no longer any distinction between foreign and domestic politics, the attention of the major powers was also directed toward threats to the Vienna System from attempted revolutions and rebellions, or assassinations and seizures of power, within individual states. The Greek revolution, which aimed to form a sovereign state out of a part of the Ottoman Empire, is one example.

The second component was a *constructive* security policy. Here, the aim was to build on the rubble of the past age of war and complete what had been left undecided at the Congress of Vienna. The post-Napoleonic world was a con-

stitutional world. On June 4, 1814, France was given its *Charte Constitutionnelle*.¹ It “not only confirmed essential achievements of the Revolution; it was also far more liberal than the Constitutions of the French Empire. It marked the transition from a state that in many respects had been despotic . . . to a modern state with a liberal Constitution,” as Volker Sellin puts it. The Constitution’s motto was not to “roll back” the Revolution but to incorporate its results.

Being constructive and pushing developments forward was the plan of the Prussian reformers. The heirs to the Rhenish Confederation began looking for their place within the national mosaic as the “Third Germany,” and reorganized the territories that had been gained through Napoleon into modern, middle-sized states. The outstanding minister Montgelas set a glowing example in Bavaria, followed by others such as Sigismund von Reitzenstein in Baden and Eugen von Maucler in Württemberg. Metternich also followed this trend. Between 1815 and 1819, he developed promising plans for policies to be implemented by the Habsburg Monarchy in Italy, for the reorganization of the monarchy generally, and for the relationship between Austria and “Germany.”

During the time of the wars of liberation, Italy had already had an important place in Emperor Franz’s vision for the monarchy after Napoleon. Italy was the only case in which Metternich developed ideas that were important for domestic matters—something that, strictly speaking, lay outside of his competence as a foreign minister. In the case of Italy, however, his services were required, because despite the fact that the larger part of the Apennine Peninsula was foreign territory, the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia had been an immediate part of the Habsburg Empire since 1815. What Metternich said about the question of different nationalities in the case of Italy can also be straightforwardly applied to his treatment of other nationalities within the monarchy more generally. The Italian example can therefore be used to illustrate the fundamental ideas that informed Metternich’s practical attitude toward the question of nation and nationality. As we saw in the Introduction, Srbik, for ideological reasons, put forward the absurd claim that “nation and state were alien concepts” to Metternich and that he had a “non-national” attitude. Had Srbik’s authority not been so overwhelming, and had people not been so ready to bow to it, then a different picture of Metternich on this issue would surely have emerged some time ago. As early as 1963, a study fundamentally refuted Srbik’s judgment regarding the question of nationalities. This work, which has only been studied by experts, had been undertaken because Hans Rothfels, the founding father of contemporary history in Tübingen, had doubted the evaluations of the biographer. Rothfels had chosen nationalism as his topic and encouraged a doctoral student to check Srbik’s conclusions, which were based on printed documents, against the originals in Vienna. For reasons of historical

justice, the name of this excellent but underrated American PhD student deserves to be highlighted here: it was Arthur G. Haas.²

The Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia as a Model State

Having arrived in Milan on December 29, 1815, Metternich began to develop his principles for new Italian policies. From talking to people in Milan, he knew of the fear in Lombardy-Venetia that the Habsburgs might treat the regained provinces as entirely subordinate political entities. And he observed that the civil servants who had been sent by Vienna were appreciated. Metternich made concrete proposals to strengthen the autonomy and self-government of the country. The third-instance court was to remain in Milan. The greatest fear, he wrote, was that Milan might deteriorate to the status of a mere provincial town. The people there did not want their city to become like Brünn or Graz, or to see it fall behind Turin or Florence. They therefore wanted the court to sit in Milan. The administration, he added, had made significant progress in recent years—that is, during Napoleonic times. The civil servants were well educated and the administration worked efficiently. But the fear was that the local administration would be “jettisoned” for a “hereditary” [*erbländische*] one—imported from Austria—and that the posts for local civil servants would disappear. The desire was for an independent intermediate instance representing Milan. Metternich’s recommendation to the emperor was “simply to establish an Italian chancellery” in Vienna. When doing so, however, it would be important to avoid certain mistakes:

The countries here must be governed from here, and their local governments must be represented in Vienna. If the running of the local business is done from Vienna, Your Majesty will soon not see a single penny coming from these countries and everything will come to a halt. If, by contrast, Lombardy and Venice are governed under the strict responsibility of the governor according to principles that must be formulated and controlled in Vienna, Your Majesty will have spread calm [*Ruhe*], happiness, and peace among the countries this side [i.e., south] of the Alps. . . . The question actually can be reduced to the following: does one want five-hundred or fifty questions arriving monthly in Vienna?³

This statement already contained a political program. Metternich was also highly critical of the policies the Austrian administration had pursued so far, which, he wrote, had gone against its own instructions by not respecting existing legislation. An organizational committee had been set up whose mem-

bers had no knowledge whatsoever of local affairs; the administration was paralyzed and the “public most severely disgruntled.” Metternich was concerned to rectify the mistakes that had been made in the past, “in order to enlighten the people about the true intentions of Your Majesty.” Metternich was sensitive to the “momentary wishes of the nation,” as he called them. He urgently recommended that the emperor instruct the governor not to abolish any of the existing institutions. Were such plans to be suggested in the future, the emperor would need to examine them before their implementation.⁴

In October 1819 Metternich presented the emperor with a provisional summary of the developments in Lombardy-Venetia since the dissolution of the Kingdom of Italy and the “reunification of the Italian provinces with the Austrian monarchy,” as he put it.⁵ He had tried, he said, to satisfy “the wishes of the inhabitants of this beautiful country,” but had been only partially successful because among the educated of Lombardy “the principles of the Revolution that had only just ended” still had an influence. The “class of the independents,” with their connections across the whole country, pursued “the phantasm of a unification of all of Italy under one scepter.” In this connection Metternich made an insightful observation: those who were politically active engaged in agitation among the Italian people “and showed them in the case of every popular movement in other countries, in every political constellation in Europe, the moment when the realization of this chimera becomes possible.”

Metternich was describing the revival of nationalist movements and nationalist demands in the various regions of Europe. He recognized that the national idea—the unity of nationality, language, and territory—was being proclaimed across Europe, that it was perceived across borders and thus continually reinforced itself. What Metternich in October 1819 identified as a phenomenon of political communication, the revolutionaries of 1820–1821 put into practice. Beginning in Spain in 1820, the rebellions spread to Portugal, Italy, and Greece. Common guiding principles—most importantly the Spanish Constitution of Cádiz of 1812—connected the otherwise geographically dispersed events. This was not a figment of Metternich’s imagination; it was not a case of absurd conspiracy theories. It was a reality that has been affirmed by subsequent historical research. All the revolutions of 1820–1821 “connected the three Mediterranean peninsulas like a system of communicating tubes.”⁶

Metternich, however, was wrong to believe that he could manipulate the nationalist stirrings in Northern Italy. His idea was “imperceptibly to drain politics of these superfluous activities and to provide them with an object that is not harmful and possibly even useful.” He referred to the renowned poet Vincenzo Monti, who was celebrated among the Italians as “Dante redivivo,” Dante reborn. It did not irritate Metternich at all that Monti had previously been

Napoleon's poet laureate of the Kingdom of Italy; from 1814 onward, he had sung songs in praise of Emperor Franz. Monti was engaged with the *Accademia della Crusca* in a "literary feud" regarding the purification of the Italian language. Metternich wanted to transform this personal battle into a general and national one between the competing centers of Florence and Milan. His expectation was that the "literary jealousy will morally solidify the political division between the regions. The more heated the literary feud becomes, the weaker the effects which the contemporary political events will have on the minds of the educated parts of the population."

A Plurality of States within Cultural Unity

Metternich's intention to keep Italy politically divided while considering it a cultural unity might easily be misunderstood as cynical. For him, it was a case of pragmatism, of *realpolitik*, because he believed that the only feasible Italy was an Italy of regions. He considered the country to consist of competing political entities of the sorts he also saw in Germany: "Therefore, in Italy provinces are against provinces, towns against towns, families against families, and men against men. If a movement broke out in Florence, the Pratoian or Pistoian would take the contrary side, because he hates Florence; thus Naples hates Rome, Rome Bologna, Leghorn Ancona, Milan Venice."⁷

It is remarkable that, given all this, Metternich spoke of a nation and its wishes. His strategy assumed that the cultural promotion of nationalities led to their depoliticization. He overlooked the fact that the concrete conflict did not weaken the fundamental idea of a national commonality, but even strengthened it. He suggested to the emperor that he should promote the *Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera*, the Academy of Fine Arts in Milan, which had been founded by Maria Theresa, but more importantly that he should reorganize the already existing, but deteriorated, "Literary Institute" by filling the vacant posts of "this national institution." With this, Metternich also pursued a particular cultural policy that was designed to disarm the opponents of the Austrian government by undermining their argument that the Austrians harbored "hatred against any kind of enlightenment and science." As the public honoring of Italian artists in Rome had been greeted as a pleasant surprise, a similar measure in the case of scholars and artists in Milan was likely to elicit a similarly positive response. Metternich already had concrete plans for reforming the Academy of the Arts and for the reorganization of the Imperial and Royal Institute of the Sciences, Literature, and the Arts. The Austrian Viceroy of Lombardy-Venetia, Archduke Rainer, was to preside over both institutions.

Metternich also suggested relaxing regulations in order to make it easier for Austrian students to study at the universities in Florence and Parma, especially

given that Tuscany, being a *secundogeniture* of the imperial house, could hardly be considered a foreign state to which the prohibition of studies abroad categorically applied. Metternich was thinking in particular of the humanities and the Italian language as subjects of study. Metternich made the case for Austrian subjects to have the opportunity "to dedicate themselves to the study of the Italian language, which has acquired its most developed form in Tuscany." He considered it a necessity that civil servants coming from Austria to Lombardy-Venetia had a command of the Italian language.⁸

The Central Observation Agency

From Count Bubna, Metternich regularly received secret reports on the mood in the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia, which he sent directly to the emperor. From the perspective of the Austrian administration and military, the mood was significantly calmer by the end of 1818. It should not be overlooked that these reports on the general mood served the purposes not only of the modern "political police" but also of the old traditional "administrative police"—that is, it allowed them to detect administrative shortcomings. Police measures aimed at stopping violent fights and thefts from "getting out of hand," for instance, appeared insufficient. The judicial processes were too slow, they said. The viceroy and archduke were too cut off from the population. Metternich expected the archduke to use his public appearances to promote the good standing of the Austrian government. But the main purpose of the strictly secret Central Observational Agency, which Metternich established in Milan, was to keep an eye on the political situation in the other states on the Italian Peninsula.⁹

Metternich engaged the services of Tito Manzi, who was born in Tuscany, as a source of information about all of Italy. During the reign of Grand Duke Ferdinand III, he had been a professor of criminal law at the University of Pisa for nine years. He then worked for Napoleon's brother-in-law Murat, the King of Naples, and was a judge at the Court of Cassation in Naples. He was also appointed a state councillor. This career did not keep Metternich from calling Manzi a man who was praised in all of Italy for his talents and knowledge. He was always loyal toward the present regent and had the reputation of being an "entirely selfless, moderate man." Metternich recommended to the emperor that he should appoint this civil servant as a court councillor at the highest court in Verona.¹⁰

At the Central Observation Agency, Manzi's memoranda were also seen by counts Guicciardi and Bubna, who were in charge of the institution. Metternich told the emperor that, in his opinion, Naples was developing well and there were no signs of a revolution there. The weaknesses of the Papal States

Metternich considered obvious, but he thought Manzi exaggerated them. Tuscany had distanced itself from the Papal States and followed Austrian policies. There were no changes in Lucca, Modena, and Parma; all was quiet there. In Piedmont there was still an expansionist appetite that seemed ludicrously strong, given the size of the state. In Genova, Sardinia, and the Dukedom of Nice there was great dissatisfaction about the desperate financial situation. In this context Metternich made a judgment that illuminates the fundamental framework of his European politics: "If general peace is consolidated in Europe, the expansionist intentions of the court in Turin are hardly a cause for serious concern." In Metternich's eyes, Piedmont's hostile policies toward its neighbors required continual surveillance. Bubna, he wrote, was exceptionally well suited for this task because he knew the country and had many secret contacts there. For Metternich, there were two signs that seemed to guarantee calm [*Ruhe*] in Italy: the decreasing activities of secret societies and the disappearance of Russian agents. He saw these tendencies as the result of his determined intervention against Russian agitation in Italy at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818.¹¹

In April 1819 Metternich learned that the situation in Northern Italy was set to change. This, he wrote, was not the fault of the government but instead was due to events in France and Germany—more precisely, efforts in those countries aimed "at the phantom of independence omnipresent in a nation."¹² The people had been duped by talk of "alleged rights." Like any other country, he said, Italy was dreaming of a "so-called liberal Constitution." Bubna was of the opinion that it would be easier to calm people down if the emperor visited and a much-needed contribution were made to the preservation of the Scala and an educational institution for boys. The government should give Lombardy and Milan "something useful and pleasant." The arrests in Venice had been premature and had made a bad impression. The sources make it clear that the person who was actually fully informed and, in turn informed the monarch, was the president of the police, Sedlnitzky, whereas Metternich was not even familiar with the background details. It seems that there was also unrest because of the continuous conscription of soldiers. The question of how far back in the line of generations the recruitment should reach, Metternich explained, was also outside his remit.

Metternich granted the secret service a unique special status. Its center had to be in Milan because this was where postal traffic from all of Italy crossed over, and the control of letters—the so-called *Perlustrierung*¹³—was to be carried out only by special civil servants who were directly under the command of the imperial secret cabinet. This meant that even Metternich had to go via the emperor to receive information from this source.

Italy under the Habsburgs

Emperor Franz and Metternich looked beyond the borders of Lombardy-Venetia to all of Italy. Metternich developed various ideas, all of which contradict the view that he defined the country only in terms of a "geographical concept." Although he occasionally used this expression,¹⁴ what he actually had in mind was an integration of the individual Italian states into a "Lega Italica," similar to the German Confederation. On June 12, 1815, in a letter to Bellegarde—from whom he kept no political secrets—Metternich wrote that he was "occupied for a long time with the project of creating a federal system of defense [*un système fédératif de défense*] in Italy that would be able to secure a solid and also lasting peace and domestic calm [*Ruhe*] in this important part of Europe. I am only waiting for the first opportunity to carry out this plan."¹⁵

In the style of an empirical social scientist, Metternich set about getting a survey of the conditions and problems across the whole peninsula. On March 28, 1817, Manzi presented a voluminous dossier to him.¹⁶ It was also Manzi who first provided him with information on the secret association of the Carbonari. But the information about the social and economic shortcomings in the country was more important. Metternich produced a lengthy memorandum for the emperor from Manzi's material.¹⁷ It is noteworthy that Metternich was concerned about the country's level of socioeconomic development and pointed out its backwardness. There was "little taste for manufactures: most of the articles in daily use Italy imports from foreign countries." France and England, by contrast, had made the "greatest advances" in "industry" and supplied "all the markets of Italy." In Austria, the manufacturing spirit was also "in a torpid condition," and manufacturers "care but little to make themselves known in foreign countries."¹⁸ This was the task of the Board of Trade at the court.

The most striking aspect of the memorandum is Metternich's presentation of the achievements of Austrian policies in Lombardy-Venetia. The administration of this kingdom, he wrote, must serve as a model for all other Italian states. Metternich considered the following points important:

- All classes of the population were subject to the same laws.
- Nobility and rich individuals could not exploit their positions.
- The clergy had to obey the state.
- The changes in possessions that took place during revolutionary times, and were later sanctioned by the law, were respected.

- There was no restoration or reactionary politics because “a veil of oblivion had been drawn over the past—that is to say, that no one was exposed either to public or private persecution.”¹⁹

But Metternich also found points to criticize:

- the “progress of business” was too slow, and
- the emperor was seen as “wishing to give an entirely German character to the Italian provinces, . . . where the Italians daily see with sorrow German magistrates appointed to offices.”²⁰

Metternich here expressed a maxim regarding the treatment of non-German nationalities that he heeded consistently throughout his time in office. He decidedly disapproved of all attempts at a “Germanification”—of pressure being used to bring about linguistic assimilation—in any part of the Habsburg Monarchy. Metternich advised his emperor “to flatter the national spirit and self-love of the [Italian] nation by giving to these provinces an administrative shape which might prove to the Italians that we have no desire to deal with them exactly as with the German provinces of the monarchy, or, so to speak, to weld them with those provinces.”²¹

Metternich put this conviction into practice in all his dealings with the nationalities of the monarchy. Together with Emperor Franz he supported, for instance, the foundation of a Chair for Slavonic Languages in Laibach and similar chairs for the cultivation of the national language, in this case Czech, in Bohemia (University of Prague) and Moravia. He demanded a Chair for Polish at the University of Lemberg and promoted professorships of Italian at German universities and professorships of German at Italian universities.²²

JOURNEYS TO ITALY, A HAPPY, UNGOVERNABLE COUNTRY

Metternich's Three Italian Journeys, 1816–1819

“Beautiful Italy”—this was how Metternich described it in a presentation for Emperor Franz. Italy was the country to which they both, from 1815 onward, devoted the greatest attention, sometimes even more attention than they paid to the situation in Germany. Before the outbreak of the revolution in Naples, which then spread across the peninsula up to Sardinia-Piedmont, Metternich traveled around the country for several months on three occasions.

The first occasion was Emperor Franz's tour of the region to mark his regained—or newly gained—rule over the various countries, and give the local communities and their dignitaries the opportunity to pay homage to him. In this context, Metternich was developing his plans to redesign Austrian rule on the Apennine Peninsula. Between December 29, 1815, and mid-May 1816, he joined the emperor in visiting Venice, Milan, and other parts of the country in preparation for the organization of the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia.

The second journey was undertaken as a political mission in the service of the monarchy. History seemed to repeat itself: Metternich was again acting in the capacity of the “k. u. k. Übergabekommissär” [imperial and royal handover commissioner], accompanying the daughter of the emperor, Leopoldine, on her way to her groom, Dom Pedro de Alcantara, the second son of King Johann VI of Portugal and Brazil. Metternich's task was to accompany the princess and her court on their way from Vienna to the harbor of Livorno, where he had to hand her over to the royal Portuguese commissioners. From Livorno, the princess then sailed to Rio de Janeiro. The party left Vienna on June 3, 1817, and Metternich carried out the handover ceremony in Livorno on August 12. He also visited the city's synagogue—the most splendid in Italy—and reported that 12,000 Jews lived in the city, where they enjoyed great privileges. He went thence to Lucca, where he stayed until the end of the month. His problems with his eyes cleared up, and he had the opportunity for a meeting with Marie Louise.

The third journey was the most curious. It had the character of one of the “grand tours” taken by nobles in early modern times. The emperor had initiated it, and it gave Metternich a welcome opportunity to make up for what he had not been able to afford as a young aristocrat. The emperor set off from Vienna with a large traveling party of about ninety-eight people in fifty-four carriages.²³ Political meetings could not be avoided altogether—for instance, in Rome, Florence, and Naples—but the main focus was on visits to art collections, natural history museums, and libraries. There were also family meetings, including in Florence, which were attended by Grand Duke Ferdinand III, Archduke Franz IV of Modena, Marie Louise of Parma, or Archduke Joseph, Palatine of Hungary, who also made the trip.

For an astute observer such as Metternich, all three journeys provided valuable insights into the country and its people, and they provided the basis for his plans for policy reform. In addition, they allowed him to form a personal image of Italy, which is less well known, but which we may deduce from his private letters to his wife Eleonore, Beatrix, his mother, his daughter Marie, and—during the third journey—Dorothea von Lieven.

The Myth of Italy

Italy had its own myths. For half a century Rome had been the mecca for modern artists and art historians such as Winckelmann, David, or Canova. By the time of the appearance of the second volume of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* in 1795, at the latest, the members of the educated class knew what was meant by the longing for Italy, swooning over the lines of Mignon's song: "Do you know the land where the lemon-trees grow." Scores of German painters and sculptors went to Rome to be inspired by the masters, and Caroline von Humboldt, the patroness, for a long time provided them with accommodation, contracts, and upkeep.²⁴ Shortly before Metternich sojourned in Italy, the so-called Nazarenes, disciples of the Vienna Academy of the Arts, had founded an artists' colony in Rome.

Metternich took in the country with all of his senses. The three feet of snow on the Simplon Pass still in mind, the landscape appeared even more beautiful, the sun even friendlier, when he descended into the Po plain. To his mother he wrote that she would certainly prefer the Isola Bella to her house in Grünberg.²⁵ Venice, which he had seen for the first time in December 1815, now, in June 1817, appeared an altogether different city.²⁶ The heat was moderated by the nearby sea. Every evening a mild breeze set in. The Piazza San Marco was filled with large tents. People were out in the streets until the early morning hours, and the cafés stayed open until five in the morning. He walked about Venice "as if it were a city of the 'Thousand and One Nights.'" It was warm. The women no longer had "red hands; blue noses have disappeared."²⁷

Metternich visited all the attractions along the way: the library in Bologna, Palazzo Pitti and the Academy of the Fine Arts in Florence, the Uffizi—everything he saw exceeded his expectations. Florence had everything beautiful and grand one could wish for. He was amazed by what he saw: "Great God! What men they were in past times."²⁸ Cultivation, he wrote, "has made Tuscany one of the most productive countries in the world." The climate he considered "divine; there is great heat from eleven till five, but the morning, the evening, and the night are like what a day in Paradise will probably be."²⁹ It was understandable, he added, that this country produced so many painters and poets. Everywhere he admired the vegetation, the olive groves, the fig trees, the catalpa, the peasants' orchards with their orange trees, the jasmine hedges, the pomegranate trees, the grape vines, the flowering plants, which lined the paths and roads and filled everything with their scent. He was less enthusiastic about the millions of midges in the night.

In Pisa he visited the cathedral, the leaning tower, and the Baptistery of St. John. He felt that the "sovereign of all Italy could not be received as" he was, and that the "Jacobins hide themselves." To Eleonore he wrote: "If I have

ever been inspired in any step I have taken, it was in deciding to come here; and you are witness that I made up my mind in a quarter of an hour."³⁰ He also visited Rome and the Etruscan Fiesole, with its remains of an amphitheater in an olive grove nearby. Everywhere he was overwhelmed by the landscape and the echoes of antiquity—as in the valley leading from Pistoria to Volterra, where Catiline had been defeated.

While on his Italian journey in the summer of 1819, he reported in more detail about his experience of Rome. He understood why it had been the center of the world. Everything there, he wrote, was gigantic and superior; everything made one's thoughts turn toward the past. He was enthusiastic about the extensive remains of the emperor's palace, the arches and remaining walls on the Palatine Hill, the Colosseum, which had a capacity of 80,000, the Caracalla thermal baths—a closed room built of marble that was large enough for 3,000 visitors and had a basin the size of a swimming pool. Metternich dryly commented: "How small does our present life appear. I am afraid the freedom of the press will not restore the former condition of human society."³¹

Metternich felt that the civilized behavior of the people of Tuscany was remarkable. Every peasant, he said, spoke an Italian as sophisticated and elegant as any member of the Accademia della Crusca in Florence. It was curious to speak to these upstanding people: their language was that of the salon, wholly without jargon, and without the exclamatory and temperamental intonation that one found in the rest of Italy. A vine dresser, who appeared to him to be half African, was his guide. He explained everything to him, he wrote, as an archaeologist would. What we learn from Metternich's report is that he spoke and understood Italian, and did not shy away from contact with ordinary people. He was not the haughty courtier—uninterested in the opinions of the common people—to whom "the innermost reasons for the social movements were a closed book," and who was incapable of feeling the "need of the people."³²

The Ambivalences of Christianity

Particular experiences Metternich had in Italy help us to understand further the happy picture he formed of the place. One of his observations deserves to be highlighted because of what it says of him as a person. It concerned his idea of what Christianity should be like. He remembered a small painting, which he thought he had seen in Padua, whose fundamental idea surprised him. It showed Christ as he,

with an air simple though triumphant, holds up the cross in the middle of a vast grotto. It is the entrance of Limbo. On the right of the picture are the patriarchs weeping with joy and love. St. John the Baptist calls to

him a number of beings, who are coming from all parts of the interior of the cave, and shows them the cross. There is an inspiration in this picture which is quite magical. It is no longer Christ suffering on the cross, but Christ having triumphed over death, and sharing His triumph with the just, who are entering into His kingdom. Expectation and happiness are equally depicted on the faces; Christ alone is calm, and St. John more inspired than ever. We hear him cry from the abyss, "The hour is come!"³³

On his Italian journey two years later, when visiting the Basilica of Saint John Outside the Walls (Basilica papale San Paolo fuori le mura), Metternich engaged with Christianity even more intensely. The architecture, he wrote, was crude, the mosaics "in extremely degenerate taste." He judged this to be a sign of decline and explained it—a thought that had come to him while looking at the monument—in terms of the "complete descent of the arts in the Middle Ages." He saw the reason for this decline in the Christianity implemented by Constantine:

The Christian elements were unable to unite with heathen ones; Christianity had to destroy in order to purify and order its realm before taking possession of it. . . . The first Christians . . . had to take it upon themselves to eradicate, root and branch, those arts which produced temples and depictions of heathen deities. . . . The image of the mother of God was not allowed to be reminiscent of the lure of a Venus or the majesty of Juno; it could not be veiled by the graceful robes of Roman matrons. . . . The Christians took advantage of the decay of the empire by destroying the monuments of the cult they hated. Nothing is more common than to see victims turn into hangmen; the Christians took revenge on the residues of heathen life.³⁴

These insights express something of Metternich's anthropology, and they reveal him to be a free spirit with the same fundamental pessimism regarding human nature that is expressed in Kant's image of the "crooked timber"³⁵ of humanity.³⁶ Metternich thought along similar lines when speaking of the trail of destruction Christianity had left behind: "This shows that nothing good ever prevails without surrounding its victory with the traces of destruction. Human nature, my friend, is a highly endangered thing, it is made up of opposites, feeds on extremes and acts through them, and reason will always be only a late final solution."

A Conclusion: "Internal Improvement"

At the end of August 1817, Metternich came to a very positive conclusion about Italy:

I am leaving a little country which is in every way very interesting, and from which I carry away a remembrance very dear to my heart. My departure from here—I have been told—is like a public catastrophe. I have had the happiness of repairing many faults and follies, and I have prevented new ones being committed in a time more or less remote, which is very important for a country about to pass under another Government. I am more and more convinced that one only does well what one does oneself, and that one ought to be everywhere to do well.³⁷

Metternich's aim was thus not to keep Italy calm through efficient surveillance. He aimed to use agreements to establish a trans-regional infrastructure, such as agreements on taxes, on trade relations, on the expansion of the postal network and roads; none of this suggests a striving for political domination. He afforded the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia a special role within the Habsburg Monarchy: it should be allowed to correspond directly with all Austrian embassies in Italy. It is worth noting that Metternich distinguished between political and diplomatic matters of a general kind that could be directed only from the center—that is, from his Chancellery—and other diplomatic business pertaining to Italy that could be dealt with in Milan, where, he said, there were numerous individuals who spoke Italian and were privy to diplomatic matters.³⁸

At the time, Metternich—rightly—did not think that Italy could be a united nation-state. In a strange way, he might have seen his opinion confirmed today. In 2011 the city of Rome organized an exhibition on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Italian state; the slogan for the exhibition—"1861–2011: Regioni e Testimonianzi d'Italia" [Regions and testimonies of Italy]—expressed the very opposite of the idea of unity.³⁹ But the conviction that it was impossible to unite the country contradicted the nationalist sentiment of the "Risorgimento" movement of the time before 1848. In a sort of dialectical move, Metternich devised a method through which, in the long term, the peninsula could nevertheless come together politically in its own best interests. This method has been observed in the context of the formation of multiethnic states within composite states, as in the United States. In the nineteenth century, the United States and Italy both had weak central governments. Impulses toward unity came from the debts incurred by individual

states because of wars, debts that had to be met with the help of the political center. Like Metternich in Italy, Jefferson used infrastructure measures in order to integrate the country—building postal roads, removing trade barriers, and pursuing other projects that were in the national interest. He thus created what Wolfgang Knöbl called a “society-wide communication sphere,” on which the internal formation of the nation was mainly based. In the individual states of the German Confederation, the constitutionalism of the countries’ Parliaments served this function. Modern sociology places all this in the category “internal improvements.”⁴⁰ Metternich also opted for gradual evolution and not abrupt revolution. The wave of revolutions in southern Europe between 1820 and 1822, and further such waves in Europe following the July Revolution of 1830, ignored this option. They forced Metternich to move from a constructive to a defensive security policy.

METTERNICH’S PLAN FOR A REORGANIZATION OF THE MONARCHY

A Federal Empire

On October 27, 1817, Metternich presented the emperor with a draft plan for the reorganization of the monarchy. The plan was based on the system of modern ministries, which was to replace the archaic system of parallel court offices. Metternich suggested adding to the existing Foreign Ministry and Finance Ministry a Ministry of the Interior and a Ministry of Justice. The latter should direct four departments led by “four chancellors, one for each nationality.” These would complement the already existing Hungarian and Transylvanian Chancelleries at the court.⁴¹

Metternich was aware that these were unusually wide plans. He assuaged the emperor’s doubts by reminding him that the emperor knew “from a long history that any desire for unnecessary changes in the administration or risky innovations” was alien to Metternich. “There is nothing crass, nothing revolutionary, not a single risky principle in my suggestion,” he assured him. “I demand some reordering, because an overly complicated administration must lead to disorder.” He invoked the “glorious government of Maria Theresia” and diplomatically distanced himself from the “theoretical initiatives of her successor,” and with this actually implied a condemnation of Joseph II’s experiments with centralist reforms, which had ultimately failed. Since then, “a true communal spirit has enlivened the nation,” and Emperor Franz could present himself “as the most felicitous legislator in the interest of the good of the people.”

Metternich referred to information he had gathered in the meantime, and which gave him an overview of the existing “ills.” He had thought for a long

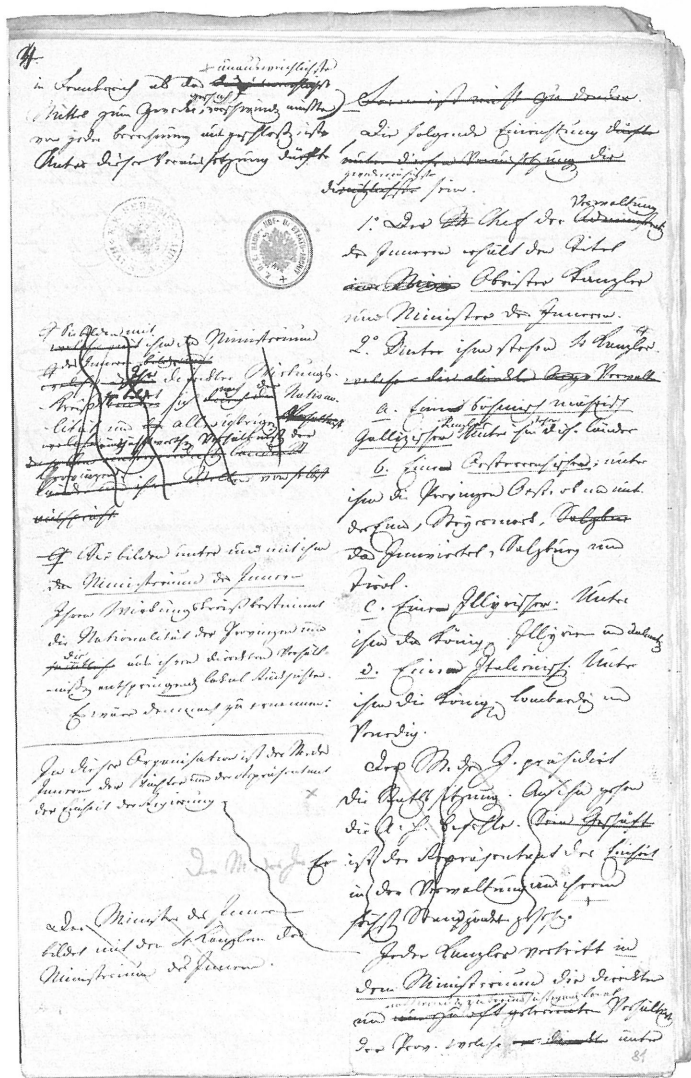
time about these issues, and had communicated them one-by-one to the emperor “in many confidential conversations.” Now he presented his results in their totality. He did not wish to “express in a light-handed, unconsidered, or unexamined way something that had to have very weighty consequences.” His aim was to introduce an order into “the already existing organized parts of the central authorities of the state.” In this context, Hungary played a special and separate role for him. Metternich appealed to “enlightened principles” and “the experience of past centuries.”

In Metternich’s opinion, the present system worked only because “a monarch capable of governing” was at its top. But it was also necessary to think ahead and plan for a possible catastrophe: “Your Majesty must imagine today’s way of dealing with matters without His Majesty’s presence, without Your Majesty’s influence, on which it is almost exclusively based!” With this, Metternich alluded to the possibility that the mentally unstable Crown Prince Ferdinand might—in accordance with the law—become the emperor’s successor.

Metternich again took up his old idea of Austria as a federal state, a “composite state,” ruled by a single monarch. In line with his usual method, he developed two options, ideal types that could guide the emperor’s actions. The *first option* was a “complete unification of all elements of the monarchy in one single form of government.” This is what Emperor Joseph II had attempted to do—and what he had had to undo within a few years of governing. The reason, Metternich argued, was that a “complete unification of mutually alien elements could only be the result of a violent revolution.”⁴² In addition, Metternich thought that too radical a centralization would “necessarily [evoke] the idea of a central representation of the nation,” and such a representation he considered altogether impossible, given the many different languages and “peoples” [Völkstämme] in the empire.

As part of his *second option*, he set out political areas of responsibility for the different ministries, an approach that was now being adopted, he wrote, by practically every larger state. The departments were as follows: (1) Foreign Affairs; (2) Domestic Administration; (3) Finance; (4) War Office; (5) Justice; (6) Police; (7) General Accountancy. The head of the domestic administration would bear the titles of “Colonel Chancellor” [Obrister Kanzler] and “Minister of the Interior.” He would have four chancellors beneath him, corresponding to the different nationalities. Each of these chancelleries would be defined by “the nationality of the province and the interests that result from their local conditions.”

This does not sound like the suggestion of an absolutist of the kind Metternich is often made out to be. Rather, these were the ideas of a statesman who



Page from the manuscript setting out a draft organizational statute for the Habsburg Monarchy, dated October 27, 1817. It shows the division into four court chancelleries, and corrections by Metternich.

thought that the principle of political participation was the foundation for political action. He did not have in mind, however, elected bodies, but the modus operandi of the administration. Traditionally, the latter operated only "top-down." But by taking into account the different nationalities, Metternich also suggested the very modern idea of "bottom-up" processes.

Metternich distinguished four regions of the monarchy that were defined by a particular nationality:

1. A Bohemian-Moravian-Galician chancellery, which covered the northern Slavs
2. An Austrian chancellery, which covered the German provinces: Austria above and below the Enns, Styria, the Inn region, Salzburg, Tyrol
3. An Illyrian chancellery, which covered the Kingdom of Illyria and Dalmatia, and the southern Slavs of that region
4. An Italian chancellery, which covered the Kingdom of Lombardo-Venetia

Each chancellor was to fulfill a double role within his ministry: toward the ministry, he would represent the immediate interests stemming from the specific conditions in the province that had to be taken into consideration; and toward the province, he would have to defend the principles followed by the government, which would aim at political unity. In this second role, he would still have to keep in mind, in an "enlightened sense," the conditions in the province. There would be equality between the chancelleries.⁴³ Each would have to be provided with the necessary number of consultants and subordinate personnel. This "reform," as Metternich called it, would have the effect of increasing equality because it would see the Hungarian and Transylvanian chancelleries "descend from the elevated position where they are today to the level of the common administration." This would also pave the way, Metternich said, for "a reformation of these two countries that must be gradually prepared."

Metternich showed a surprising degree of political sensibility and perspective in dealing with the problem of the different nationalities. His idea of a decentralization from the top down would establish a kind of "equilibrium." It would maintain a balance between equally weighted parts. Metternich thus avoided the grave mistake of the later Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, which led to the Austro-Hungarian double monarchy in which the other great nationalities—the Czechs, the Poles, Croats, and Ruthenians (Ukrainians)—felt disadvantaged and second-rate.

Metternich's reform program pursued the idea of "unity within plurality" a formula that was neatly illustrated by the example of German federalism. It showed him to be a farsighted, reform-minded politician who sought to solve the central problem of the nineteenth century: integrating different nationalities within a single state. As he saw it, only a decentralization of the state could forestall conflicts between the nationalities.

Metternich's suggestion of forming a Kingdom of Illyria showed how hard he strove to take into account the different nationalities of the populations in the Habsburg Monarchy. His justification for the existence of such a kingdom was incredibly modern. He had gathered information from "everyone reasonable" in the region, and the result was: "The majority of this nation here is of Slavic origin and naturally harbors a predilection for [Slavic] stock. A *Southern Slavic realm* can only bring advantage, especially where this nationality coincides with the Roman-Catholic religion." Metternich thought that the provinces of Illyria and Dalmatia, on which the kingdom was to be based, could be retained and the Dukedom of Krain added. He also had the surprising suggestion of investigating "which coat of arms there might be that would point toward some old and perhaps more significant memory of the Kingdom of Illyria."⁴⁴ In this way, he attempted to uncover some historical legitimacy for an Illyrian national identity. He thus revealed that he understood all of his political actions as involving an "invention of tradition," to use the formula of the famous British scholar of nationalism Eric Hobsbawm. As Hobsbawm recognized, the emergence of nationalism in the nineteenth century had to be understood as the result of such construction.⁴⁵

The Habsburg Empire as a Patrimony, and the Case of Marie Louise

The fate of Metternich's draft proposal provides further insight into his role as a statesman of the Habsburg Monarchy. The reorganization of the administration was published on December 24, 1817, in the *Wiener Zeitung* and became law.⁴⁶ But what had become of Metternich's daring plans? They had been diminished, even deprived of their essence. The terms "nation" and "nationality," which, as guiding values, were meant to give life to the reorganization, had been taken out altogether, leaving behind talk of different needs, special situations, and particular conditions. The whole setup was reduced to exchanges between the Ministry of the Interior (which was created, at least) and the subordinate authorities. The parity between the central state and the provinces that Metternich had demanded gave way to the hierarchical, top-down functioning of the bureaucracy. The suggested Kingdom of Illyria was also only partially realized. The separate interests of the southern Slavs were played down to such an extent that they did not get their own Austrian-Illyrian chancellery in Vienna.

All this reflected a peculiarity of the Habsburg state that can be seen as its main structural feature. Emperor Franz considered the Austrian-Illyrian regions as old family property and was only prepared to let go of parts of them.⁴⁷

In Roman law, property that is inherited, distributed, and passed on by the fathers is called patrimony. Emperor Franz, the patriarch of the ruling dynasty, viewed the monarchy, in line with his premodern way of thinking, in terms of the idea of the family clan. He treated it as his family's property, and he provided his numerous sons, and also his daughter Marie Louise, with dominions from his empire. The fecundity of Maria Theresia, Emperor Leopold II, and Emperor Franz created a vast number of princes and archdukes. The secondary lines of the dynasty, the so-called secundogenitures, were usually given prebends on the Italian Peninsula, although we should keep in mind that, in terms of nationality, Emperor Franz was also an "Italian," having been born in Florence. We have already discussed the detail how the parts of the country were distributed among the members of the family in the context of the Congress of Vienna.

The case of Marie Louise reveals in particularly dramatic fashion how deeply the patrimonial claim to ownership was anchored in the thinking of the emperor and his family. With Napoleon's abdication, she became an empress without an empire. During the peace negotiations in Paris, Metternich demanded, on Emperor Franz's orders, that the allies agree to let her keep the status of a ruler, albeit over a reduced territory. The contract of Fontainebleau (April 11, 1814) assigned her Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla as heritable dominions.

On November 6, 1816, the emperor candidly admitted that the costs for "the maintenance" of his daughter—which he had paid until March 7, 1816 (the date she formally took up her rule) from his "Kameralärarium," his private account—were pretty expensive. He officially told his finance minister to draw up a report, in consultation with the foreign minister, on the question of "whether and to what extent the expenses incurred before my daughter entered into the full enjoyment of income from her dukedom [i.e., March 7, 1816] qualify for reimbursement."⁴⁸ This order set in motion a great bureaucratic machinery and produced a voluminous file: all Marie Louise's expenses between April 11, 1814, and March 7, 1816, had to be calculated. In the end, a sum of 799,982 guilders and 40 $\frac{1}{28}$ cruizers was given for the slightly shorter period between May 1, 1814, and the end of January 1816. The precision of the sum is astonishing, given the imperfect basis for its calculation.

The case of Marie Louise was but one of many. We must consider the emperor's interests in as much detail as possible if we are to decide whether Metternich really was the almighty state chancellor that he was claimed to be by, for instance, Viktor Bibl, who hated him.⁴⁹ Metternich's attempts at a modernizing reorganization of the monarchy as a whole, in fact, were futile.



Proclamation made by Emperor Franz on March 7, 1816, in Milan regarding the Duchy of Parma passing to his daughter Marie Louise.

The weight of the territorial hereditary courts overruled the criteria of nationality, and rationality, which would have guided Metternich's decentralization. His comprehensive proposals, supported by the detailed information provided by Manzi, asked too much of the emperor, who recognized very well that the reforms would set him on a collision course with the interests of his house more broadly. Metternich waited in vain for the imperial resolution and comments that Franz would give at the end of his presentations. Even if there was no decision to be taken, he usually added: "Dient der Wissenschaft" [Improves knowledge]—"noted," in other words. In this case, he did not even write that.

HABSBURG AND THE GERMAN CONFEDERATION: AN AFFIRMATION
FOR METTERNICH AND PRUSSIA, 1817-1818

*Competing Options for National Integration: The German Confederation
Is Put to the Test*

Between 1815 and 1819, Metternich recognized that things were still in flux. Many developments could still be shaped further, and Metternich was constructively planning for the future. Even the issue of the organization of the German Confederation presented multiple questions that still needed to be answered. The participants at the Congress of Vienna had felt that the foundation of the German Confederation had inaugurated an indisputable new "Germany," but in 1817 a situation emerged that would have been a sensation had it been public knowledge. Prussia questioned the fundamental principles of the federal organization in a way that seemed, to the Habsburgs, to throw everything into doubt. Metternich was shocked, and a debate ensued that represents such a radical attack on the foundations that it must be discussed in a biography of Metternich. As far as I can see, there has never before been such a discussion.

On November 5, 1816, the Federal Assembly had its first session and, after a promising address to the "German nation" by the Austrian presidential envoy, formally began its work. The Vienna and Berlin cabinets nevertheless discussed all options regarding the "German question" once again at the turn of 1817-1818, as if the organization of the German Confederation might still be changed. In particular, they discussed what relation Prussia and Austria should have with the German Confederation. It all began with a special mission of the Prussian royal councillor Johann Ludwig von Jordan, section head in the Prussian Foreign Ministry and a close collaborator of Hardenberg at the Congress of Vienna. He was the man to be trusted with unusual tasks. Upon the personal suggestion of the Prussian king, Jordan went to Vienna for several meetings in the first week of January 1818. On January 5, he even had an audience with Emperor Franz.⁵⁰ He confronted Metternich with a proposal from King Friedrich Wilhelm III that left the minister speechless. During his time at the embassy in Berlin and the campaign against Napoleon, Metternich had already found the Prussian king to be indecisive and easily influenced. Now, as he had before, the king was being guided by "the impulses of the revolutionary military party" in Berlin, as Metternich told his emperor. Metternich was mostly thinking of Gneisenau, but probably also of Stein. The Prussian king, he wrote, had allowed himself to be misled into making "a proposal bordering on the insane": Either

Prussia as a whole—that is, including the provinces of Eastern Prussia, Western Prussia, and Posen, which were not part of the confederation—should join the confederation, or, if this option were rejected, Prussia should join the confederation with the exclusion of Silesia and Lausitz. Hardenberg had at first, with great effort, managed to dissuade the king from going along with this idea, which treated the difficult compromise between the German states found in 1815 as if it did not exist as a legally binding part of the Vienna System. But now the Prussian state chancellor was seeking support from Vienna. Jordan attempted to persuade Metternich to oppose the king with “the full weight of the Austrian cabinet” in the hope of thwarting the plan.⁵¹

Metternich obliged with a memorandum that probed with great precision each option’s capacity to define the relationships of Austria and Prussia to the German Confederation. In this text, he was already considering all the arguments that later became the controversial issues discussed by the members of the National Assembly in Frankfurt in 1848–1849 and ultimately led them to split into factions. Metternich knew exactly what the German Confederation meant and had achieved for Habsburg and Central Europe, and he knew what the collateral damage would be for any option that dissolved the order agreed to in Vienna. Without having thought about it in any great depth, the spokesmen for a unified German nation-state believed that it could include Austria. It would only be with the debates during the revolution of 1848, not least those at the National Assembly in Frankfurt, that the impossibility of such a solution would be revealed. Long before they began to recognize the options available, Metternich had seen them clearly. In his memorandum, he described the three politically conceivable alternatives to the German Confederation.⁵² For each of them, he also mentioned the disadvantages that the abandonment of the previous order would have.

He began by briefly setting out the common interests of Austria and Prussia. Due to their geographical positions, both major powers were in a unique situation in Europe that forced them to develop and organize themselves in a similar way to one another. Both states were under the same “pressure” [*Andrang*] from the east (Russia) as well as from the west (France). Russia was pushing up against the Ottoman Empire and the lower Danube, which had a direct impact on Austrian interests; Hungary had “a peculiar Constitution”; Italy was in a process of permanent revolutionary or political ferment directed against Austria. Prussia, he wrote, did not face the same challenges; it was in an “alert alliance” with the Netherlands against France. Europe needed Prussia and Austria to fulfill a double function: as major European powers and as predominant powers in the German Confederation. This alone could guarantee stability

in the heart of Europe. Then Metternich went on to present the various possibilities:

First option: *Prussia and Austria join the German Confederation with all their provinces.* This proposal represented almost the same idea that the later Austrian prime minister Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg would moot in 1848–1849 when he offered an “empire of 70 million.” There were three arguments that spoke against this solution:

First, Austria and Prussia had to retain their independence and were not to “dissolve their whole political existence into their relationship with the German Confederation.” If both states were absorbed into the German Confederation, they stopped being independent European powers and left the stage of European politics to the remaining three major powers. Their voices would no longer be able to influence the European equilibrium, which would thus be weakened; this would threaten to undermine peace.

Second, this solution would mean that both states, along with their Polish provinces (Eastern Prussia and Western Prussia, Posen, Galicia), would join the German Confederation. The tsarist empire would then have the right to demand the same for the Kingdom of Poland, with which it was associated. Metternich observed that the different Constitutions of Poland under Russian rule and the tsarist empire made it difficult for Emperor Alexander to consolidate his political power. The accession of the Kingdom of Poland to the German Confederation would allow the tsar to avoid the differences in organization and administration between Russia and Poland, and to resolve the daily difficulties that emerged between the old and new Polish provinces. Metternich correctly saw that the Polish question would immediately reemerge as a subject for negotiation if there was a deviation from the statutory arrangements of the German Confederation. He needed only to invoke the Congress of Vienna in order to draw attention to the potential conflicts that could again arise here. Furthermore, as there was personal union between Russia and Poland; the German princes could call on new member Russia as a protective power against Prussia and Austria.

Third, under this option Austria and Prussia would also lose the military advantage they had gained from their relationship with a separately existing German Confederation. And apart from all that, Austria could never join the confederation and take its provinces Hungary, Transylvania, and Lombardy-Venetia with it. This constituted a difference from the Prussian situation. As things stood, the German Confederation was a “palladium of their common security.” If Prussia were to be dissolved in the confederation, the latter would lose its protective function, and Austria would inexorably be pushed out of it.

Second option: *Prussia alone, with all its provinces, joins the German Confederation.* This is what the National Assembly in Frankfurt later tried to achieve in its Imperial Constitution of March 1849, which stipulated the unity of Germany—without Austria but with the annexed Prussian provinces of Eastern Prussia and Western Prussia and a divided Posen. That was the so-called Lesser Germany answer to the German question. Metternich opposed it by pointing out that the stipulations of the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna protected all relationships between European states. This applied in particular to the first article of the German Federal Act, which stipulated that the German major powers had “entered into a permanent alliance in the name of all of their possessions that formerly belonged to the German empire.” Neither the German princes nor all of the powers who signed the Congress Act would agree to an accession of the kind Prussia desired. It would provoke other states that were prepared to join the confederation, such as Denmark or the Netherlands, who could demand the same right for themselves. And if everything became fluid again, some German princes might also leave the confederation.

In addition, the German princes were not very likely to welcome the admission of the Prussian monarchy, with all its territories, into the confederation. At present, the mutual advantage and commitment on which the confederation was based was “in a well-known and calculated balance.” If a predominant Prussia frightened the German princes, this well-balanced equilibrium would be lost.

Third option: *Prussia and Austria together, on the basis of their territories outside of the German Confederation, enter into an alliance with the confederation.* This option anticipated, at least in part, the makeshift solution to German unification that was adopted in 1849, in which a narrower confederation, including Prussia’s and Austria’s German provinces, was supposed to enable the formation of a *Greater Germany*, including Austria’s non-German provinces, in a wider confederation.

In 1818 Metternich was again compelled to explain the main advantage of the confederation for Europe. He spoke of a “powerful association of states,” a “great political body” that, because of its defensive orientation, maintained peace at the center of Europe. It did not need any alliances because it did not look to form aggressive alliances. But it was able to raise its voice “for those threatened and against the aggressor.” This is how Metternich expressed what he saw as the special political value of a German Confederation that excluded Prussia’s three eastern provinces. Austria and Prussia thus had an ally—in concrete terms: they could draw on additional military resources—if their non-German territories were attacked. As there already existed a federal Constitution that guaranteed support in the case of an attack on one of its members,

there was no need for additional military alliances. The character of this “federal defensive system” meant that in times of peace there was no federal army and no supreme command. In other words: the federation as such was of a defensive character, but if there were a threat, it could form an army out of its members and appoint a common supreme commander. Metternich here hinted at a potential attack by Russia and described the military cooperation that might result from it: “In that case, the two monarchies, backed by the confederation behind them, would be able to position all their troops in the provinces of Eastern and Western Prussia, Posen, Galicia, and the Bukovina.”

The possibility of drawing on military support from the German Confederation gave Austria and Prussia an advantage that no other major power in Europe enjoyed. Both would lose this exclusive advantage if they turned the German Confederation into an ally of the kind that any other European state might be, for other European states could then also enter into alliances with the German Confederation. On this point, Metternich was specific: France, England, Russia, Sweden, Spain, Naples, Sardinia, even Portugal and the Ottoman Empire might wish to form a defensive alliance with the German Confederation. If the confederation were to open itself up to such new members, it would have to prefer some powers and reject others—it would lose its “eminently peaceful character,” would be drawn into the competition for alliances, and would have to take sides. With these reflections, Metternich explained very clearly why he considered appeals to turn the German Confederation into a nation-state to be so dangerous. Metternich asked Hardenberg to keep this memorandum strictly secret; only the king was to see it.

Which Parts of the Habsburg Monarchy Actually Belonged to the German Confederation?

This was a question Emperor Franz asked himself in February 1818, immediately after he and Metternich had formulated the memorandum. Was it really the case that, at the beginning of 1818, the emperor still had to clarify what his minister had settled with the Federal Act of June 8, 1815? That act answered the question of the federal territory. Prussia and Austria were part of it, “with all their possessions formerly belonging to the German empire” (art. 1). Now Emperor Franz wanted certainty about what this meant, and he ordered Metternich to convene a conference with the finance minister (Stadion), the president of the court’s military council (Schwarzenberg), and the minister of the interior (Count von Saurau). They were to establish “how Bohemia once had become part of Germany; whether military contingents or payments had ever been provided for the German empire; then consider Fiume, including the *ter-*

ritoriis belonging to it under the name of a county, namely Flaum [Rijeka], and which parts of it belong to Germany; finally whether, and what kind of adverse or disadvantageous impression it would make on the Galicians if Auschwitz and Zator were declared parts of the German Confederation.”⁵³

Because of his deep knowledge of the Holy Roman Empire, Metternich was the best man to chair the conference. The aforementioned participants met on March 5, 1818, at his Chancellery, accompanied by the court councillors Kübeck and Spiegel. Metternich opened proceedings with a legal-historical presentation that, in the case of Bohemia, went back to the times of Charlemagne.⁵⁴ He emphasized Bohemia's electorship as the most important sign that it belonged to the empire; the Hussite Wars and later religious unrest had loosened the originally close ties. Since the accession of Hanover to the electoral college in 1708, however, Bohemia's electorship had also been revitalized. Bohemia (the territory included Moravia and the Austrian part of Silesia) had to be considered an “integrating part of Germany.” Metternich reminded his listeners that on March 6, 1795, the Imperial Diet had asked the Bohemian estates to provide the outstanding troops. He knew this very well because, as a member of the Bohemian imperial estate, he had had to provide soldiers himself. He was in Königs-wart at the time, looking into the financial situation of his dominion, and in this context he also looked at the imperial register of 1795, the list of estates that were required to contribute to the imperial army. As a member of the Holy Roman Empire, Bohemia had also taken part not only in wars within the German empire but also in European wars. Metternich also confirmed to the conference participants that Bohemia had paid taxes to the empire.

On the emperor's other questions, he remarked: Fiume is not to be counted as part of the empire, while the dukedoms of Auschwitz and Zator are Bohemian-Silesian possessions and thus should be included in the German Confederation. This step was, indeed, taken in 1818. Through this measure, the German Confederation had a common boundary with the tsarist empire. From Metternich's perspective, there were therefore arguments that spoke in favor of assigning the dukedoms to the confederation not only of a “geographical-public” kind—that is, arguments to do with public law—but also of a “military-strategic” kind. The archivist of the Chancellery provided additional information in support of Metternich's presentation in the form of a statistical table that gave a “general survey of the elements, size, and population of the Austrian imperial state.” Tellingly, he did the same, and with the same thoroughness, for Prussia. This documented unequivocally what the term “non-German territories” meant for both major German powers.

In a biography of Metternich, these detailed expositions may appear a digression—but they are not. Here we see Metternich engaged in concrete

work on the national question. Throughout, talk is of the German empire and German territories, a fact that is often overlooked. But this was a nationality that was not primarily defined in terms of language, or even ethnicity. It was nationality on a constitutional basis: membership of decision-making bodies (the electoral college), the provision of soldiers, and the payment of taxes—those were the factors that decided who was part of Germany and who was not. This repeated the principles that we saw operative at the Congress of Vienna: German and other nationalities formed part of the state, but they were not essential to it—they were accidents, not essences. The conference clarified the territories that belonged to the Habsburg Monarchy and, at the same time, to the German Confederation.

II

DEFENSIVE SECURITY POLICIES

Averting Threats under the Vienna System, 1815–1829

NAPOLEON'S "HUNDRED DAYS": ACTIVATING THE EUROPEAN SECURITY SYSTEM

Napoleon's Final Legacy: The Allies' Crisis Scenario

What is the significance of the intermezzo of the Hundred Days, triggered by the abdicated French emperor returning to mainland Europe, forcing the participants at the Congress of Vienna back to their military headquarters? Accounts of the Congress of Vienna usually treat his return as an irritating episode at the end of the great Vienna gathering. Descriptions of the "Concert of Europe" locate the beginning of the system's working in 1818—namely, at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle.¹ But the significance of Napoleon's return is instead that it marked the moment when the European security system began to operate as a fixed element of international political practice.

This resulted from the simple course of events. Metternich described the beginning of the episode vividly in his memoirs.² At three o'clock in the morning on March 7, 1815, one of the conferences of the five powers' plenipotentiaries had just ended at his house. He ordered his servant not to wake him should couriers bring dispatches later in the night. Metternich thought that they could not possibly contain anything of importance, because the representatives of the major powers were all in Vienna. He had been asleep for just two hours when, at six o'clock, the servant, despite his orders, brought him a dispatch from an express courier from Genoa, marked "urgent." At first he put the dispatch on his nightstand, but when he could not get back to sleep, curiosity finally got the better of him. At seven thirty he opened the envelope and learned that

Napoleon had disappeared from Elba—just as Metternich had foreseen in April of the previous year in Paris.³ The memoirs give the exact chronology of the events that followed: at eight o'clock he was with Emperor Franz; at 8:15 with the tsar; at 8:30 with Friedrich Wilhelm III; and at nine o'clock he was back at the Chancellery, where he informed Field Marshall Prince Schwarzenberg, who was already waiting for him. The military units that were in the process of returning back home were ordered to halt. Metternich concluded: "Thus war was decided on in less than an hour."⁴

This succinct sentence expresses the fact that the Quadruple Alliance of Chaumont had unanimously prepared to act immediately. The serious disagreement regarding the Polish and Saxon territories, which had only recently been resolved, did not impact on the agreement at all. Metternich immediately coordinated the action to be taken by the political agents, calling a conference of the ministers for ten o'clock. On March 25, the allies formally renewed the Treaty of Chaumont, which had established the conference system. They defined their goal as follows: "calmness [*Ruhe*] for Europe and general peace, and protected by it the rights, the freedom, and the independence of nations."⁵ The armies of the four major powers were more or less at the ready; the Seventh Coalition had been agreed to. But the outcome of the war was decided on June 18, 1815, near the small Belgian town of Waterloo to the south of Brussels, which gave its name to the world-famous battle in which the British army, led by the Duke of Wellington, and the Prussian army, led by Field Marshall Blücher, encountered Napoleon's troops and inflicted a decisive defeat on him.

The immediate agreement of March 7, 1815, and the renewal of the alliance on March 25 must be seen as the beginning of the European security policies that were applied by the major powers for the next ten years. Historically, the campaign against Napoleon after his return from Elba must be seen as the first common intervention for the protection of the European system; it was the first time that the Concert of Europe defended the Vienna order, the order based on international law, against rebellion from within, despite the fact that that order was not formally agreed upon until the Final Act of the Vienna Congress on June 9, 1815. There was never the intention of entering into new negotiations with Napoleon. He was viewed simply as someone who was disturbing the peace of Europe, and the allies took him as the model for the various subversions, assassinations, and revolutionary uprisings that were to follow. Their way of proceeding did not take the sovereignty of states into account. Their actions were the "anticipation of the doctrine of intervention" that was later explicitly formulated at the Congress of Troppau in 1820.⁶

The negotiations following Waterloo were conducted on the basis of the new European security policy. This is confirmed by the rhetoric and measures of

the second Treaty of Paris, agreed to on November 20, 1815.⁷ The preamble proclaimed that the allied powers had, “by their united efforts, and by the success of their arms, preserved France and Europe from the convulsions with which they were menaced by the late enterprise of Napoleon Bonaparte, and by the revolutionary system reproduced in France, to promote its success.” They had protected France and Europe against rebellion. Napoleon’s deeds are here seen as an “assassination”! The measures of the alliance had been directed against a “revolutionary system” that had supported this assassination. That was precisely the perspective taken under the system of the Concert of Europe. There was no “Metternich system” that would have been responsible for the political decisions taken. Rather, these decisions were determined by the common will of Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Austria as allies. This will had already been invoked earlier at Chaumont. The Habsburg Monarchy, represented by Metternich, was only one of the four actors that made up the alliance. Metternich assumed that the alliance would be stable, because he thought that, even if the Battle of Waterloo had been won by Napoleon, “the cause of Napoleon would nevertheless have been irretrievably lost.” The Austrian and Russian armies “would have spread over France.”⁸

A comparison with the first Treaty of Paris shows that the military operations against Napoleon until the Battle of Waterloo and the peace of November 20, 1815, marked the beginning of a new epoch. Contrary to the stipulations of the first treaty of the previous year, France was now also subject to the principles of the security policies. According to the wording of the treaty, France was secured by an allied “occupational army” that France had to maintain. The number of troops was not to exceed 150,000, and the measure was limited to five years, although it could be shortened if, after three years, the allied sovereigns and the king of France agreed that enough progress had been made toward the “reestablishment of order and tranquillity.” France also had to pay reparations of 700 million francs and hand over some militarily important fortresses. The allies practiced exactly what they later practiced under the principles of the European Concert: they intervened where a ruling government could not guarantee domestic peace—and thus not peace in Europe.

On November 20, 1815, the day of the signing of the second Treaty of Paris, the four powers also renewed their Quadruple Alliance. They referred to the original Treaty of Chaumont (March 1, 1814) and the follow-up Treaty of Vienna (March 25, 1815). In the preamble, they again invoked Europe’s tranquillity [*die Ruhe Europas*].⁹ The German has only one word, “Ruhe,” where the French has two: “repos” (rest, calm) and “tranquillité” (tranquility). The French text distinguished two aspects: “repos de l’Europe” expresses the moment of recovery following an exhausting effort and refers to the consequences of war-

fare; “tranquillité générale” expresses undisturbed peacefulness, and one can detect in it the idea of an order for world peace, which is “the object of the wishes of humankind and the constant end of their efforts” (preamble). The partners in the alliance were “desirous moreover to draw closer the ties which unite Them for the common interests of Their People” (preamble). They wanted to establish principles for the future “which They propose to follow, in order to guarantee Europe from the dangers by which She may still be menaced” (preamble).¹⁰

Why is it of such importance to see Napoleon’s last appearance as part of a new epoch in European security policy? His reappearance created the image of a possible crisis. He provided the experiences and patterns of expectation on the basis of which the allies from then on concluded which signals might indicate that the peace in Europe is threatened. The same revolutionary principles, under a different guise, might disturb its peace again. The allies were on the lookout for similar situations that might lead to similarly unhappy events.

A military cordon was therefore to be extended around France in order to forestall any potential attacks. It was promised that these troops would be reinforced if they proved to be insufficient. Napoleon’s return had made it clear to Europe that a usurper might gain revolutionary support within a very short span of time and topple the existing order. Napoleon thus provided the allies with the model of a possible catastrophe that became a fixed part of their mental map from then on.

The allies’ view of the situation was also shared by the British—they did not follow a special path. Whether they were older or were members of the Metternich generation,¹¹ all signatories to the conventions, and the monarchs on whose orders they acted, had experienced the Janus-faced nature of the Revolution: its lofty ideals and its inhumane degenerations; the dominance of a violent ruler who could almost not be defeated; the ever-increasing risk of a “world war” after 1789; and the threat of the diminution of their territories. These four shared formative experiences gave the Concert of Europe its unifying moral impetus.

FAULT LINES IN THE SOCIETIES OF EUROPE AFTER 1815

When historians look at the post-Napoleonic era from a European perspective, they usually argue at the level of international relations. They look at individual actors, the major powers as acting subjects, and sometimes at institutions such as the ideal type of what Matthias Schulz called a “security council.” The politics that matters takes place on the stage of large international congresses, unless it ceases at times of war. But the influence of social and economic

factors and crises should not be forgotten. Taking them into account is also the only way to answer the often-asked question of whether the possibility of crisis was real or was invoked only as an ideological pretext to justify certain measures. To put the question in a different way: To what extent was European security policy after 1815 a reaction to a real threat? The final judgments on the so-called Metternich system and on the Carlsbad Decrees, with which he is also associated, depend on the answer to this question. It is therefore appropriate to preface a discussion of these two core themes with some remarks on the conditions that the collapse of the Napoleonic system had created in Europe.

The Legacy of the Napoleonic Wars: Enduring State Debt

Accounts of economic and social history typically fail to explain the extent of the disruption and destruction that the Napoleonic age wrought. They give the impression that, with the deportation of the French emperor to Saint Helena, his politics disappeared, without any lasting consequences. The opposite was the case. "On the Complaints of Our Times" is the title of an analysis of the economic situation in the agricultural sector at the beginning of the 1820s, and what the author observed in the case of Württemberg also applied, as he claimed, to "all of Germany." Farmers experienced "ever increasing need and paucity" and ever-growing debt. The same applied to urban tradespeople and "capitalist" bankers. The author was also able to explain the reasons for this:

We further see the reasons for this ill in a disproportion between national income and public income of the state. We also looked for them in the excessively high demands the governments place on their subjects, which—when we look back over the rising public debt of states as well as individual municipalities during the more than twenty years of war that destroyed so much capital—they mostly have to demand.¹²

In the absence of other measurable consequences of the destruction of war and of Napoleon's "robber economy," as Hans-Peter Ullmann called it, the lasting deficits in public finances provide some evidence. In the case of the Habsburg Monarchy, we have already come across the method of financing the war of 1813 by drawing on future tax income from the next fifteen years. That represented only a small proportion of the accrued state debt, as the Habsburg Empire also had to pay twice—for the quartering of French troops and for the reparations agreed to in the treaties of Pressburg and Schönbrunn.

In 1807, Prussia's debt ran to 48 million reichstaler, compared to an annual income of 25 million. After the Treaty of Tilsit in the same year, the income decreased to 12 million for the following year. But Napoleon took 200 million reichstaler out of Prussia in the two-year period between 1806 and 1808, in addition to war contributions Prussia had to pay of some 30 million. In 1811, Prussia's debt had risen to 112 million, and in 1820 it was running at 217 million. It was still at 216 million in 1833. In the mid-nineteenth century about two-thirds of the Prussian population lived at subsistence level.¹³ For the epoch after Napoleon this meant, in Ilja Mieck's phrase, "modesty imposed by budgetary constraints." Until the revolution of 1848, the state's administrative spending remained continually below the level of 1821.

The results of more than twenty years of war were an enormous loss of human life and of material goods in the form of devastated landscapes, confiscated property, contributions to be paid, and, most importantly, the financing of armies on an unprecedented scale. Between 1796 and 1809, Aichach, a village of 220 houses in the Bavarian part of Swabia, had to cater for 18,699 officers, 194,086 ordinary soldiers, and 95,784 horses.¹⁴ And everywhere was like Aichach. The cost, in the years after 1815, was an impoverished and decimated population. One part of the male youth had been lost, and another part—the politically active part—was, as we shall see, often prone to the use of violence and susceptible to the new nationalist doctrines that promised salvation amid pauperism and civil service job cuts. For decades the Napoleonic legacy of large government deficits aggravated economic stagnation because it led states to adopt austerity policies. Many states were not able to consolidate their financial positions, more or less, until the mid-1840s. The southern German states valued their sovereignty, and their motivation that led them to join the German Customs Union, which was dominated by Prussia, was not nationalism but a simple lack of money: they wanted to profit from the payments that, from 1834 onward, they would receive from the Customs Union to redress imbalances. According to Ullmann, the parsimonious state remained the default model until the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁵

From Budgetary Poverty to the "Proletarians of Intellectual Labor"

The empty coffers had a fatal consequence: there were job cuts, and as a consequence those leaving the universities were less likely to get one of the hotly desired positions in the civil service. In Bavaria, state pension payments between 1819 and 1825 still amounted to 1,436,000 guilders in total, whereas between 1849 and 1851 this figure had come down to 571,000 guilders. These figures indicate a reduction in civil service staff.¹⁶ Because of state debt, public investments

that would have been necessary for the transition from the feudal manorial economy to capitalist agriculture could not be made. How effective state investment would have been is demonstrated by an exception to this rule. The inventor and industrial entrepreneur Friedrich Koenig revolutionized the print media with his printing machines and gained an international reputation for his product. But he had had to go to London to find the necessary capital for his development. The first newspaper ever printed with his rotary press, based on a principle still in use today, was the *Times* of November 29, 1814. Only after his return to Germany did the Bavarian king provide him with a credit that allowed him to set up his own, soon-flourishing factory in a former monastery in Oberzell, near Würzburg.¹⁷ But as a rule there was economic underdevelopment and a lack of money. This self-imposed need was complemented by a terrible natural companion, the eruption of the Indonesian volcano Mount Tambora in 1815, which had worldwide consequences: the “year without a summer” in 1816. As a result, corn prices exploded between 1815 and 1817, and the whole of Europe was struck by famine and inflation.¹⁸ In addition, after Napoleon’s continental system was abolished, British goods flooded the Continent and domestic markets collapsed.

Of these crises, it was the crisis in the state finances that was structurally long-lasting. It led to the lasting picture of the German states as backward. The younger generation, however, especially the critical intelligentsia, did not blame the legacy of the war and their originator—that was before their time—but considered the policies of the princely states after 1815 responsible for the stagnation and backwardness.

The opposition forces Metternich was mainly concerned with were the journalists, authors, and poets, who were under pressure to publish and be successful. They lived with the contradiction of an “arrogant elitist self-understanding” alongside meager material living conditions. Journalists became the “tribunes or apostles of collective reason.”¹⁹ The “typical journalist of the *Vormärz* period” (i.e., during the period leading up to 1848) was often a doctor or professor, and thus had both a national mission and a low social status. Academics who were not fortunate enough to get positions as civil servants survived as freelance writers and occasionally projected onto Jews their “discontent over their own status as literati without any prestige,”²⁰ leading to an association between the spirit of modern liberal opposition and a strong anti-Semitism, especially where these writers were in direct competition with Jewish authors seeking to emancipate themselves.

Private lecturers, trainee lawyers without income, authors who could barely survive as free producers without a patron—these groups formed the class of what Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl called the “proletarians of intellectual labor,” and

they blamed the “Metternich system” for their situation. They were supported by apprentice craftsmen who had no hope of becoming masters because of the famine and inflation of the pre-1848 period. In 1848 they could be seen manning the barricades. They all felt that they were suffering an injustice. Due to their economic, social, and psychological situation, they were predestined to become the apostles of the new religion of nationalism.

Nationalism in Backward Regions: Assassination as a “Propaganda of the Deed”

Modern research into nationalism has found that aggressive and xenophobic nationalism is particularly easy to trigger in backward areas. That was precisely the situation during the time after 1815. Whether in individual German cities, especially those with universities, or in southern European regions, Poland, or France (where the wars had also left their marks)—everywhere we find cells, unions, and associations attacking their governments with revolutionary and nationalistic zeal. In the 1820s they called themselves fraternities [*Burschenschaften*], *Deutscher Bund*,²¹ *Jünglingsbund* [association of young men],²² *Griechenvereine* [Greek associations], and after the July Revolution they were called Young Europe, Young Germany, Young Poland, Young Italy, and so on, or the League of the Just, the League of Outlaws, or the Communist League.

The Napoleonic empire was European, and the socioeconomic basis in the transitional period that followed it was also European. The movements to which this gave rise took place in three widening waves of rebellion—in 1820, 1830, and 1848—in the context of European-wide communication that was dominated by a common vision of the future: a free Constitution, a united nation-state, a European “springtime of the peoples,” and—as a rule—a constitutional monarch as the head of state. The classical themes of nationalism—the role of the “chosen people,” the “holy fatherland,” and the “historical mission,” and, importantly, the concept of an enemy—were invoked in the face of economic backwardness. In order to appear effective, nationalism needs the myth of the regeneration of a people, exaggerated through images of “resurrection,” “*risorgimento*,” or a “springtime of the peoples” that promise salvation.²³

There was an immediate connection between economic backwardness and the spread of nationalism as a social movement. This is supported by the “fact that all original nationalisms were established before industrialization.”²⁴ To adopt a functional understanding of these doctrines of salvation, we can say that they emerged as crutches on which all those who felt weak, disadvantaged, or defeated—in short, the latecomers to the process of modernization—could lean.²⁵ Nationalism was in part an answer to the weakening of the public

finances caused by Napoleon and his system. Inferiority and weakness in the face of Napoleon provided the initial impulses. After 1815 the supporters of nationalism believed that a collective German identity could provide them with strength. Nationalism brought about a "mobilization in the name of solidarity among individuals not personally known to each other."²⁶ Mobilization, participation—everything seemed to point toward what Dieter Lange-wiesche called a longed-for "community of resources," and thus power.

This was the context in which Metternich started to worry about the attack on "society" in Europe. Conspicuously, he did not talk about the social entities that had been the basis of the estates: corporations, guilds, orders, and so on. He used the modern collective singular "society." This was why he called 1789 a "social revolution." In his eyes, this revolution continued after 1815. But by then, he believed, the radicals knew that they could no longer reach the "masses." It was not easy, and in some parts of Germany it was impossible, to bring about an "uprising of the masses." Despite this, "the situation is different when it comes to violent attacks on persons, events that spread terror, which people hope will produce confusion and discouragement."²⁷ Metternich thought the real danger to the stability of the system was not the outbreak of a revolution, but terror attacks by underground groups. At the European level, attacks on the prince regent²⁸ and on Wellington, and the assassination of the playwright August von Kotzebue, who was in Russian service, were meant to send a signal. We shall have reason to look at these events in more detail later. All this resulted in a new form of political activism, which had established itself in Europe after the French Revolution: the assassination attempt as the nationalistically motivated "propaganda of the deed."²⁹

Our consideration of the wider context has established a link between the burdens of the postwar period, the economic and financial crises engulfing the states, and the fear of social demotion among social elites. As a result of this fear, the elites became critical of the "system" and developed an inclination to reject evolutionary progress and opt for targeted political violence (assassinations, revolution) instead. Only against the background of this European context is it possible to understand Metternich's way of dealing with "the revolution" after 1815. Once we realize that the reactions in France, England, and the tsarist empire were similar, and sometimes even harsher, than in Austria, Prussia, and the smaller and middle-sized German states, Metternich no longer appears in an ahistorical and personalizing guise as the isolated "reactionary." The hitherto unwritten history of this European-wide terrorism, which developed between 1817 and 1825, is part of this story. It was only because of this terrorism that nationalism was able to become an unassailable social power.

Metternich and Modern Nationalism's Bellicosity

Metternich was very aware of the pan-European crisis, the collapse of the old European order, and the transition to an altogether new age. He saw that the Habsburg order was brittle. It could not be saved by piecemeal repair: the whole edifice had to be built up again from scratch. As a politician and observer of the contemporary scene, he felt that he was living through a time of transition whose end he would not live to see. Whether the topic was monarchy versus republic, absolutist versus constitutional state, the freedom of the press, the rights of the estates versus sovereignty of the people: in his view, all these problems came together in the phenomenon of nationality. Nationality was the element that continued to spur on the bourgeois educated elites after the Congress of Vienna. Historical research has typically contented itself with presenting Metternich as an enemy of national movements and as the leader of the "persecution of demagogues." But what exactly was it that prejudiced him against these new tendencies? It is important to have an answer to this question in order to be able to evaluate whether the judgments of him as a "reactionary" and of the epoch as one of "restoration" are appropriate.

His posthumous papers contain two pieces from his time in exile in which he provides explanations of his attitude toward the problem of nationality and the nation-state. With regard to the revolution of 1848–1849, he wrote: "Among the most remarkable contemporary phenomena is the emergence of nationalities."³⁰ He asks whether this phenomenon meant the revival of a lost good or whether the word was just an "empty sound." He found the basis of the concept of nationality "in the tribe [*Volksstamm*], in the geographical delimitation of a country"; both elements, he held, find their expression in language. He also mentioned the history of a people, their peculiar customs and laws as the product of history, and climatic influences. Following Johann Gottfried Herder, he defined his understanding of nationality in cultural and ethnological terms.

From this he distinguished the modern "urge for nationality" as a weapon in political struggle. He locates this transformation at the end of the rule of Emperor Joseph II, when the Hungarians began to invoke their nationality at the Diets of 1790–1791. But more decisive was the following fact: "The battles which the French Revolution brought to all of Europe increased to fever pitch the same feeling in the subjugated German states." After the "general peace" of 1815, this feeling moved into the world of theory and found a place under the roof of liberalism. "Radicalism," by contrast, which had lost faith in the words "liberte" and "fraternité," used nationality as a political weapon in the sense of the French slogan: "Everything by and for France" ("Tout par et pour la France").

Metternich recognized in this the abuse of the concept of nationality. It no longer served the purpose of protection from external enemies but the subordination of internal minorities by the state in the name of the "national interest." The reference to nationality was used to stir up feelings against those forces within states that protected minorities, and these forces became paralyzed.

While in exile in the English seaside resort of Brighton, Metternich looked back over the changes that had taken place in the period between 1815 and the revolution in 1848. He reached the following conclusion: "Two elements have appeared in society which are suitable to shatter its calm [*Ruhe*] to the core. I call these elements the extension of the *fundamental concept of nationality* to the realm of *politically and legally defined territories* and to their signification through *language*."³¹ Thus, for Metternich, the perennial source for political and military battles lay in the idea of a linguistically defined nationality that was used by states to make territorial demands in the name of a unitary nation-state.

In speaking of the "rule of a progressive spirit of the times," meaning the modern urge toward the nation-state, Metternich anticipated, with breathtaking precision, the potential for violence that later expressed itself in the wars surrounding the formation of nation-states. For him these processes amounted to "schemes of conquest under the pretence of aiming at so-called natural frontiers, an aim which any self-contained State can oppose with equally rightful claims, so that peaceful agreements are to make way for the rights of might alone."³² In other words, he recognized as erroneous the assumption that national (ethnic, linguistic) homogeneity is a suitable principle for building a state. In Central Europe, any state that sought to define itself on the basis of linguistic homogeneity thereby created a problematic minority within its territory. And if these minorities, in turn, demanded their own nation-state, there would be war.

In 1848 Metternich witnessed the arrival of what he had prophesied since 1815. The nationalities, which now presented themselves not just as bearers of culture but as engines for the creation of their own statehood—for their own "self-contained" state—could only end up coming into conflict with each other.³³ In 1849 Franz Grillparzer, one of the most important poets of the Habsburg Monarchy, neatly summed up the same insight in the following lines: "The path of recent education / leads from humanity / through nationality / to bestiality."³⁴

At the domestic level, the new nationalism that Metternich feared increased the separation of the majority from the minorities; it even created the problem of minorities in the first place. This separation was the necessary "mirror image of the creation of the nation."³⁵ The conformist nation created two enemies

for itself. The first—external—enemy had been proclaimed by Ernst Moritz Arndt as early as 1813, during the wars of liberation, in his famous song, which Metternich knew: "That is the German's fatherland, / . . . / —Where every Frank is held a foe, / And Germans all as brothers glow." As a companion piece, Arndt had published a brochure, *Über den Volkshass* [On hatred among peoples]. The dream of the homogeneous nation also created internal enemies. The erstwhile cosmopolitans who shied away from nationalism were among them, as were the European aristocracy, the Jews in general, and Catholics at times, as during the years of the Civil Constitution under Napoleon or of the *Kulturkampf* [culture struggle]³⁶ of the Bismarck era. Nationalism thus created frontiers that the multicultural empires had been able to do without and, in Metternich's view, should do without.

Metternich's analysis of the concept of nationality was untimely: it contradicted the tendency of the nineteenth century toward sovereign nation-states. In that sense, he was a visionary. Against the spirit of his times, he anticipated an insight that historical accounts of the modern state would reach only some two hundred years later. Wolfgang Reinhard sums it up as follows: "The self-contained nation-state as the standard model in modern times since the French Revolution is no more than a fiction. . . . Theoretically, there are only nation-states, but practically there are almost exclusively multinational states. . . . It is obviously high time to bid farewell to this unrealistic model of the nation-state."³⁷ The risks that resulted from the trinity of language, nationality, and territory in the nineteenth century have been sufficiently analyzed in modern comparative research into nationalism, which speaks of, for instance, "nationalism as the duty to be intolerant," "nation-states as the children of war," "springtime of the peoples" and the "nightmare of nations," "territory as the source of conflict," and "exclusion of what is alien."³⁸

It is necessary to take this circuitous route to Metternich's understanding of nation and nationalism in order to appreciate the background against which he acted in the months during which he was confronted with ever-greater numbers of nationalistically motivated deeds of conviction [*Gesinnungstaten*]³⁹—in short, with political assassinations taking place in Europe. This was also the atmosphere in which the proclamations of the Wartburg Festival and the infamous "Carlsbad Decrees" belong. By thus reconstructing Metternich's reflections on "nationality," we are not reading later insights into his earlier stance—early on he pointed out with great clarity the explosive potential of this unity of language, nationality, and territory.

He also thought about Arndt's song "The German Fatherland." Upon its publication, he wrote, he had wondered whether it should be opposed. Arndt's intention was the return of those parts of Germany that had become parts of

France. He did not, Metternich believed, think beyond that aim, but it was not the song that opened the door to the later abuse. "The Polish insurrection and the Hellenism, which was already widespread at the Congress of Vienna, are the true ills which intensified into nonsense during turbulent times."

The Greek revolt in 1821 was the most significant, because it led to the foundation of a new state and thus shook the Vienna System. It was part of a series of revolutionary uprisings that affected the Mediterranean countries between 1820 and 1823, beginning in Spain and Portugal, and moving to the Peloponnese. This wave of revolutions and uprisings brought into operation the coordinated defensive security policies of the system agreed upon at the Congress of Vienna. We shall take a look at these policies shortly. Metternich considered Greece a more important zone of conflict than any of the other countries mentioned, because it threatened the existence of the Ottoman Empire as a whole, and it was supported by some of the allies.

The Warsaw uprising of November 1830 during the July Revolution was just as grave a threat, because a revision of the partition of Poland meant a reordering of the Polish territories of Prussia, the tsarist empire, and the Habsburg Monarchy, and thus it meant intervening in the sovereignty of three major powers. In accordance with his values, Metternich assigned priority to the integrity and stability of the European state order and the general peace associated with it over the interests of individual nationalities. A nationality, as we have seen, could also flourish within the traditional multinational orders. The Swiss Confederation, for instance, proved that a good state was possible without linguistic homogeneity.

METTERNICH AND BRITISH SECURITY POLICIES, 1817–1820: PRETEXT OR DEFENSE AGAINST A REVOLUTION?

Contradictory Interpretations of Metternich

With the European security policies that were implemented after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, our biography of Metternich reaches a point that serves as a sort of watershed between conflicting judgments of him. Was not this the beginning of the police state and the interventionist "Metternich system," the inauguration, under his leadership, of the "restoration" that lasted until he was defeated by the constitutional and liberal resistance of the Western powers—namely, England and France?

This is the almost canonical received wisdom, and it has recently been repeated yet again. Matthias Schulz personalizes the internationally coordinated policies that were implemented after 1815 in opposition to a revival of the Rev-

olution. He constructs a "Prince Metternich congress system," which Metternich allegedly used between 1815 and 1823 to subjugate everything to his "anti-revolutionary dogma."³⁹ And Schultz is not alone: from the perspective of more recent historical accounts of Prussia, there is still today, as there was in the times of Treitschke, a conflation of "Metternich and . . . the reactionary system of the Holy Alliance." This view presents Prussia as having been seduced into becoming a "compliant, overzealous executioner of Metternich's reactionary policies," as if the Prussian politicians did not have wills of their own.⁴⁰

This interpretation constructs a dichotomy between the "reactionary Eastern powers" of Austria, Russia, and Prussia—personified by Metternich—and the "progressive" Western powers of England and France, which took the constitutional and liberal path, initially represented by Castlereagh, later by George Canning and Lord Palmerston. This schematic perspective on international policies casts Metternich in the role of the almighty orchestrator of the reactionary position; it looks at the men responsible for the Concert of Europe without paying attention to the social and economic conditions—not to mention the fundamental psychological orientation—they shared owing to the experiences their generation had in common.

This tunnel vision shown by German historians, sometimes still Prussian in their outlook, when it comes to Metternich is a step backward compared to the view established by older, undogmatic English research as early as the 1920s. In 1925 the British doyen of diplomatic history, Harold Temperley, opened the first chapter of his book on Canning with these words: "At the beginning of 1820 Europe was still governed by Alexander, by Metternich, and by Castlereagh. They were a trio not unworthy of fame, for they had overthrown Napoleon. . . . Their union and friendship still remained to ensure the peace in the world in 1820."⁴¹

He describes Metternich as a politician who tried to mediate and maintain a balance between Castlereagh (who had to take Parliament and the public into consideration) and the vague cosmopolitan mysticism of Alexander. Temperley nowhere uses the term "reaction." In his view, the three politicians sought to prevent a restoration of the Napoleonic dynasty; if a revolution or unrest broke out in France, they would have to come together at conferences to decide what to do.

The aforementioned judgments that Metternich had put his "reactionary" stamp on the epoch, by contrast, rest on a different assumption—namely, that his warnings about revolutions or violent "Jacobins" were nothing but a veil for his restorationist intentions. The uprisings and assassinations mentioned by Metternich are seen by some as merely regional events without broader significance. On this interpretation, revolution is a praiseworthy expression of

civil courage in the fight for freedom, a Constitution, and national unity, and "1789" is taken as a symbol of the struggle for a better future. This naive cliché disregards the experiences of human beings who were looking back at twenty-five years of war and revolution. The question contemporary witnesses asked themselves was whether the more than three million dead on the battlefields of Europe had died for any meaningful goal. In many peasant families, there were no male youths left: in Bavaria, for instance, 30,000 young recruits in the service of Napoleon did not return from Russia; they were later honored with the official inscription on the obelisk on Karolinenplatz in Munich—"They, too, died for the liberation of the fatherland."

No Special Liberal Path: British Fears about a Revolution

Looking at how the British dealt with revolutionary violence serves to refute the old stereotype of the reactionary and antirevolutionary East, especially Metternich, versus a progressive and liberal West that tolerated the constitutional demands of revolutionary movements. We find this cliché in, for instance, the following claim: "As a precaution, Great Britain had opposed the development of automatic antirevolutionary interventions on the basis that such an automatism would violate the independence of states and thus the fundamental pillar of international law."⁴² This claim contains two assumptions: that Metternich pursued antirevolutionary policies and that the British adopted an anti-interventionism. Let us look first at the thesis of Britain's anti-interventionism.

All the differences of opinion here turn on the picture of Castlereagh. How did Metternich's contemporary view the French Revolution, and how did it influence his decisions? When the allies began to march into France in January 1814, Metternich and Castlereagh were both seriously concerned that a wave of solidarity with Napoleon might lead to a renewal of the Jacobin terror, and that revolutionaries might seize power again following Napoleon's defeat. Then, in May 1814, Castlereagh saw the victory in France as associated with "a great moral change coming on in Europe"—the "principles of freedom," he said, "are in full operation."⁴³ "Freedom" was used by Castlereagh, as by Burke, in opposition to the myth of revolution.

With his signature to the first Treaty of Paris, Castlereagh had, like Wellington, committed himself to the antirevolutionary principles of the Quadruple Alliance. All the leading ministers of the alliance between 1815 and 1822 assumed, in light of the experiences of their generation, that there was a continuing revolutionary threat across Europe. They saw their assumptions confirmed when, from the 1820s onward, uprisings spread in the south of Europe—

uprisings that cloaked themselves as revolutions but were often no more than coups rather than popular movements. The ruling elites feared that a new Jacobinism could break out and suspected—correctly—that followers of Napoleon were behind it.

After the outbreak of the revolution in Spain, Wellington reported from Madrid that Jacobinism was rapidly spreading around the clubs. The behavior of one such club, he said, was as repellent as that of the Illuminati in Germany.⁴⁴ The general could still remember the guillotine and the bloodbaths in the Vendée, all in the name of revolutionary reason. Regarding the revolution in Naples, Castlereagh received a report that found the events incomprehensible because the country was well off, the government restrained, and the taxes moderate. The kingdom was crumbling "before a handful of insurgents that half a battalion of good soldiers would have crushed in an instant." The author of the report feared that the revolution might spread to the rest of Italy and suspected that it would lead to "bloodshed and confusion everywhere." The "watchword" was "the Constitution," but what was actually happening was nothing less than the triumph of Jacobinism, the "war of poverty against property"; "the lower classes have been taught to know their own power."⁴⁵

*The Attempted Assassination of the British Prince Regent, 1817:
Canning and the British "Carlsbad Decrees"*

Castlereagh's successor, Canning, is particularly celebrated among historians as an adherent of noninterventionism and a representative of the allegedly democratic bloc of major Western powers, for he was of the opinion that he should not prevent other states from pursuing a liberal and constitutional path. Regarding domestic policy, by contrast, he was far more repressive than Metternich ever was at Carlsbad. Among Metternich's posthumous papers is a hitherto unknown document that sheds new light on European politics after Napoleon and on the role the protagonists played. Metternich had asked for excerpts from Canning's speech to the House of Commons on February 24, 1817; the document contains these excerpts with Metternich's annotations.⁴⁶

In the years 1816–1817, the economic crises and social unrest mentioned above had also reached England and had led to "mass meetings"—that is, mass demonstrations—which were very popular in England. On November 15 and December 2, 1816, there had been incidents of significant unrest in London: the "Spa Field Riots" in the park of the same name in Islington. A leading radical, Thomas Spence, had planned an attack on the Tower of London and on the Bank of England. He and Arthur Thistlewood, who would later become notorious in connection with the Cato Street Conspiracy, were arrested and convicted

of high treason. The situation escalated on January 28, 1817, when the prince regent's carriage was attacked while he was on his way to Parliament. Secret committees of both houses gathered evidence of widespread discontent in London and the country's industrial cities. They saw a treacherous conspiracy at work that aimed to topple the government, engage in general looting, and establish a new distribution of property. Canning's speech was based on the special report of an inquiry carried out by a committee of the House of Commons (the "secret committee"), and it was a passionate plea, in accordance with the committee's advice, for an exceptional law to limit freedom of assembly.⁴⁷

The excerpts from Canning's speech that Metternich received proved a number of things. The attempted attacks were being perceived not as isolated incidents but as part of a Europe-wide phenomenon. Metternich saw this as confirmation of his assumption that there was a common European interest in security. He read the text in English, made his notes in the margins, and underlined passages. He was struck by the parallels between Canning's and his own views regarding the provocative acts of revolutionaries and the appropriate responses for the state. It is striking that Canning, whom Metternich had accused of being a Jacobin, and Metternich himself, Canning's harshest critic, invoked the possibility of the same catastrophic scenario for Europe and used it to justify identical restrictions in the name of security. Table 11.1 juxtaposes the most important passages in Canning's speech with Metternich's comments in the text's margins.

Like Metternich, Canning saw that there was a threat not only to the state—"the Constitution"—but to all of society. The problem was a small, manageable circle of fanatical doctrinaires. Canning angrily rejected the suspicion that all this was just a pretext, a clever and devilish invention by the government, a conspiracy, in order to be able to change the law so as to crack down on the people. He complained that the real, existing danger was being denied, or at least downplayed. In actual fact, these opponents wanted to undermine the state. They abused the desperation and need of the suffering classes in order to prepare for a rebellion. The existing laws, he argued, were not strict enough to deal with the plans that were hatched in Spa Fields. Bad men were plotting "secret cabals" in "midnight counsels." Canning recognized them as the activists of the French Revolution. "They have lain by these twenty years now, without being found to produce mischief." But while "when dormant" the doctrines of 1789 might be harmless, revived they strove for their violent implementation.

Everything turned on property. The much-feared "Spenceans" might not "really wish to partition the whole property of the kingdom" or "carry into effect their scheme for an agrarian division of land," but they would "labor hard

Table 11.1. Excerpts from George Canning's speech of February 24, 1817, with Metternich's marginal notes

Canning's speech (passages which Metternich underlined in italics)	Metternich's marginal notes
<p>"What is the nature of this danger? Why, Sir, the danger to be apprehended is not to be defined in one word. It is rebellion; but not rebellion only: it is treason; but not treason merely: it is confiscation; but not confiscation within such bounds as have been usually applied to it in the changes of dynasties, or the revolutions of states;—it is an aggregate of all these evils[*]; it is all the dreadful variety of sorrow and of suffering which must follow the extinction of loyalty, morality, and religion; which must follow upon the accomplishments of designs, tending not only to subvert the Constitution of England, but to overthrow the whole frame of society."</p>	<p>*"This evil, so well described, is the same that England allows and protects in the case of more than one power on the Continent."</p>
<p>"The Executive Government do not ask for these additional powers as a boon . . . [but] only for the conservation of the public safety. * . . It has been asserted, however, that Ministers call for these powers, the better to enable them to make war against the people. We repel the accusation with disdain. We ask them for the people—for the protection of that sound and sober majority of the nation, for that bulk and body of community, which are truly and legitimately the people. ** . . . But when this incredible resurrection [of the doctrines of 1789] actually takes place, when the votaries of these doctrines actually go forth armed, to exert physical strength in furtherance of them, then it is that I think it time to be on my guard, not against the accomplishment of their plans (that is, I am willing to believe, impracticable), but against mischiefs which must attend the attempt to accomplish them by force." ***</p>	<p>**"That is indeed absolutely central to the interest of the population, that the government preempts the outbreak of the volcano which captures all huts just as much as the palaces. It is the duty of government to protect the mass of the reasonable against this group of a hundred doctrinaires who lead some into misery, others to the scaffold or into exile, but all into the most lamentable anarchy." ***"An argument that tells a great truth, because the evils associated with these matters are most lamentable, even without any damage to their object."</p>

Source: "Extraits d'un discours de Mr. Canning en demandant des pouvoirs extraordinaires pour empêcher ou réprimer des casseurs éléments séditionnels en Février 1817" [Extracts from a speech by Mr. Canning asking for extraordinary powers for preventing or repressing seditious elements], NA Prague A. C. 8, Krt. 8, 44. English translation: Canning, *The Speeches*, pp. 445–46.

to accomplish the spoliation of its present possessors." Canning hoped to be able to "recall the wavering" and "restrain the half-resolved."⁴⁸ Metternich approved of this, noting down: "This follows the same principle according to which preventive measures are demanded in order to avoid having to use repressive ones."

Canning warned against being deceived by the fact that the "would-be reformers and revolutionists are but few in number."⁴⁹ Without "vigorous measures for its suppression," the attempt would lead to the same results as the French Revolution: "Can it be forgotten how frequently, in the course of the French Revolution, the world has seen sanguinary minorities riding in blood over the necks of their prostrate countrymen?" He suggested to his listeners that it would be wrong to believe that "the monstrosity of any doctrine is a sufficient security against the attempt to reduce it into practice."

Atheism "was professed in France as a faith," and, though it seemed ludicrous, "proselytes were made, and a great nation, robbed of its religion and its morality, was thus stripped of the armour and of the shield which might have protected her from anarchy and desolation."⁵⁰ The "'sovereignty of the people' was preached up not as a doctrine of abstract theory only, but as a principle and ground of practical political experiment." Canning reminded his listeners that in the name of the "'sovereign people' . . . France saw the whole of the upper orders of society swept from the face of the earth": "crimes followed by crimes, in a long train of horrors, which ended at last in an overwhelming but comparatively salutary despotism." In Canning's view, "bad men reciprocally corrupt each other," and thus "Robespierre grew from crime to crime, and became gradually familiarized with blood" until he ended up the incarnation of terror.⁵¹

Canning also drew attention to the large number of antireligious pamphlets, which were circulated "wherever there is distress to be aggravated, or discontent to be inflamed." "In the nightly councils of the disaffected . . . the overthrow of the state [is] being settled."⁵² One passage Metternich found particularly worth underlining—Canning's rhetorical question: "If then, the Government demands extraordinary powers, I ask, on the other hand, are these or are they not, extraordinary times? Have we, has England, ever seen the like before?"⁵³ And Metternich added the remark: "a question that is very precisely put and very appropriate today." Canning concluded his speech by saying that the aim was to defend the Constitution and "that system of law and liberty, under which England has so long flourished in happiness and glory."⁵⁴ The House of Commons passed the bill 190–14.

In his speech Canning referred to the spokesman of the Spa Fields assemblies, the radical Henry Hunt, who had tried in vain to hand a petition from

the demonstrators to the prince regent. Hunt had openly declared himself part of the revolutionary tradition by attending the assemblies carrying the symbols of the French Revolution: the pike of the *sans-culottes*, the Phrygian cap (the Jacobin symbol of freedom), and the tricolor.⁵⁵ For the secret committee of the House of Commons, and for Canning, these were all unmistakable signs of the formation of an organized revolutionary movement that had to be opposed with extraordinary measures. Canning implemented his preventive security policies in England, but the frame of reference was the enduring tendency toward revolution in Europe. Canning considered the spokesmen to be intellectual arsonists who wanted to overthrow the English Constitution, society, and the system of 1815.

The Attempted Assassination of Wellington as a Representative of the Security Policies, 1818

What concerned Metternich after 1815 was the fact that the members of Napoleon's family and his most faithful acolytes were distributed all over Europe. Many of them had found shelter in the Habsburg Monarchy—in Bohemia, and preferably in Italy. Metternich's caution was by no means exaggerated, as was later proved by Napoleon's nephew, Louis Napoleon, who twice (in 1836 and 1840) tried in vain to stage a coup in France, before—following his uncle's example—becoming Napoleon III, emperor of France, following a successful coup d'état in 1851.

The first attempt to bring about a Napoleonic restoration through a violent attack was carried out by Louis Joseph Stanislas Marinet, a follower of Napoleon and a Jacobin exile in Belgium.⁵⁶ Originally a lawyer, first in Lyon, then in Dijon, he had been employed as an auditor in the State Council during Napoleon's Hundred Days; as a champion of Napoleon's return, he was forced into exile and given a death sentence in absentia. Later legal investigations uncovered his Bonapartist network in Brussels.⁵⁷ Marinet had recruited a thirty-five-year-old corporal and jeweler's apprentice, Maria Andreas Cantillon, to carry out the assassination of Wellington, the supreme commander of the allies' occupational forces in France. After Napoleon's return from Elba, Cantillon had been an infantry colonel in the Napoleonic guard. He carried out the attack on the night of February 10–11, 1818. When Wellington returned to his hotel in Paris at one o'clock in the morning, the hired assassin shot at his carriage.⁵⁸

On February 22, Metternich learned of the attack from the Paris newspapers that arrived in Vienna and immediately informed the emperor, who—in his inimitable terse style—expressed his horror and gave Metternich a task: "It

is with pleasure that I hear of the failure of this planned gruesome deed, and wish to convey my liveliest sympathy to the Duke of Wellington."⁵⁹ The next day Metternich wrote to the duke and told him that he would make sure that the most important Austrian newspaper would carry a report on the event. Metternich was interested in keeping the public informed in as much detail as possible about the circumstances and perpetrator of this deed. The *Österreichischer Beobachter* published a series of articles on the incident and an extensive report on the indictment in May 1819. It was important to Metternich to publicize such assassination attempts and the internationally growing tendency to carry them out. It seems absurd to insinuate that, for Metternich, the fear of revolution was but an instrument that he "played with virtuosity in front of the European monarchs,"⁶⁰ as the attack on Wellington was an attack on all representatives of the Vienna order. In that respect, Wellington was in the same position as Metternich: both energetically pursued the coordination of allied security policies, pushed back against the followers of Napoleon, and—as Metternich saw it—sought to dampen the still-glowing fire of the Revolution.

There were reactions to the attempted assassination across Europe, and even from beyond. The political public was aware that Wellington had been targeted as the most important representative of the allies in Paris and as the person who was acting as their responsible head in control of the military occupation, which had been limited to five years. A Parisian legal scholar called him "the general of all European armies, one of the arbiters of the world."⁶¹ It was also well known that he was the one who would determine how and when the allies' planned withdrawal would proceed.⁶²

The danger posed by a Bonapartism that was ready to strike at any moment was, bizarrely and yet unmistakably, confirmed by Napoleon himself. In his will of 1821, he bequeathed 10,000 francs to the subaltern Cantillon, citing as his reason that he

has as much right to assassinate that oligarchist as the latter had to send me to perish upon the rock of St. Helena. Wellington, who proposed this outrage [*cet attentat*], attempted to justify it by pleading the interest of Great Britain. Cantillon, if he had really assassinated that lord, would have pleaded the same excuse, and been justified by the same motive—the interest of France—to get rid of this General, who, moreover, by violating the capitulation of Paris, had rendered himself responsible for the blood of the martyrs Ney, Labédoyère, etc.: and for the crime of having pillaged the museums, contrary to the text of the treaties.⁶³

Metternich probably knew of the content of the will through bureaucratic channels. And if not, the French version was published in Brussels in 1824 and,

only a year later, also appeared in German. Metternich read everything related to Napoleon that he could (including the memoirs of Las Casas and of Napoleon's secretary, Fain), so he would certainly have learned, as soon as copies of the will were available, of the strange act of revenge that the former emperor managed to commit from his deathbed.

THE RADICALIZATION OF THE GERMAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT: THE WARTBURG FESTIVAL AND SAND'S ASSASSINATION OF KOTZEBUE

The Wartburg Festival: From Verbal to Political Violence

In Metternich's view, it was not only Greek and Polish patriotism that threatened the European order. The national movement in Germany would also become dangerous if it began to question the carefully balanced construct of the German Confederation. As Metternich emphasized repeatedly, in 1815 the overwhelming majority of Germans still thought of themselves as primarily Prussians, Austrians, Westphalians, Mecklenburgians, Silesians, Württembergians, from Baden or Hesse. Prussians and Bavarians would at times refer to their compatriots as forming a "nation." After the secularizations and mediatizations of 1803 and 1806, many who had lived in the Holy Roman Empire "under the crosier" [*unter dem Krummstab*], as the rule of the clergy was called, still did not feel properly at home in their national identities. During the wars of liberation, the nation was more of an "imagined community," in Benedict Anderson's sense—a design for the state of the future. Before 1815, even the leading minds had hardly any concrete ideas as to how this German nation was to be imagined as a state in concrete terms. The group closest to having such an idea was the German Jacobins, but they were not in a position to command a majority.

The most active disciples of this "imagined community" were German students. In the beginning they were the only social group with a national network, because they could move at will between universities and between the countries of the confederation. They carried the enthusiasm for the national idea into the postwar period. Following the foundation of the first student fraternity [*Urburschenschaft*] on June 12, 1815, in Jena, they became ever more organized. The welcome occasion for such further consolidation was the commemoration of the Battle of Leipzig.

October 18, the day of the Wartburg Festival, took place around the time of the anniversaries of two crucial events, and this attracted particular public attention. Three hundred years before, on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther allegedly nailed his theses to the door of the All Saints' Church in Wittenberg,⁶⁴ marking the beginning of the Reformation. And October 18 was the fourth

anniversary of the second day of the Battle of Leipzig. Because of Luther, about five hundred students had chosen the Wartburg Castle as the location for a spectacular celebration. Despite the fact that schoolbooks often praise this event as an important milestone of Germany's national history, it was the expression of a nationalism that even contemporaries were already highly ambivalent about—even viewing it as dangerous. Celebrating Luther as the incarnation of German unity obviously meant forgetting German Catholics. Luther's translation of the Bible constituted a common German heritage, but his rejection of Rome created a religiously divided nation. The texts of the speeches given at the Wartburg, and the especially the songs that were sung, were quickly circulated among the population.⁶⁵ The ceremonial address by the philosophy student Ludwig Rödiger, delivered next to one of the nightly bonfires, offered the typical admixture of compensatory nationalism: on the one hand, the basic experience of inferiority, frustration, and weakness, and on the other—by contrast—the enthusiasm, the continual emotional appeals, the expressions of preparedness to give one's life for God and fatherland, to fight to the last drop of blood.⁶⁶ There were only two options: one could be with those who were good and for the good, the heroes of the fatherland, the prophets, light, truth, and justice; or one could be with those who were evil and for what was evil, darkness, servitude, shame, the poisonous odor of imperialist aliens, the shamelessly sycophantic princes, cheats, humiliation.

In coded allusions, the present was described as a vale of tears and a call for action issued: "But first the time of strength must return! Because the misery of the souls also enslaves the bodies and pushes them to the ground. Thus, gradually, whole generations of defiant ancestors pass into slumber and endure all violence and deceit with a dull mind, until an alien sword slays them."⁶⁷ This was followed with a threat of conflict: "We have not come together in order to adorn ourselves with the harvest wreaths of quietude [*Ruhe*] but with the oak leaves of dying, and merrily to anoint body and mind—for a fierce battle is still to come with the bad and vain."

We have to imagine that among those listening by the bonfire was the later assassin Carl Sand, who must have felt called upon to act when he heard the following: "In the supreme calling of these times in which the earth purifies itself again and the peoples bow to the waving hand of unchanging universal justice; proud that our hopeful fatherland also looks trustingly toward us; and everyone prepared to become a martyr for the holy cause, we here, surrounded by your spirit, forge a pure and strong bond [*Bund*]."⁶⁸ According to Hans-Ulrich Wehler, the national patriotism of the Wartburg Festival united vague ideas, a "horizon formed of eschatological expectations," militancy, and the willingness to conduct a national "foundational war." Its legitimacy was that

of a political religion, and it drew on all the elements of such a myth: rituals, symbols, and an origin myth that reached back to the old Germanic people.

But what attracted public opprobrium was the book burning. Heinrich Heine alluded to the burning in his tragedy *Almansor* of 1821, in which a copy of the Qur'an is burned and the main character says: "This was only the prologue. Where books are burned/humans will in the end be burned as well."⁶⁹ These words should not be subjected to an ahistorical or overcharged interpretation that relates them to the experience of genocide in the twentieth century. Rather, the book burning was at its heart a terrorist deed because it was presented as the act of an individual conscience, a conscience that considered itself justified in everything by its religious and nationalist motives. Heine's prophesy proved correct in the case of at least one of those present at the Wartburg. It was here that Carl Sand came across Kotzebue for the first time: he cast Kotzebue's book *Deutsche Geschichte* [German history] into the flames. Later he would take Kotzebue's life not by fire but by dagger.

Saul Ascher, a German Jew whose treatise *Germanomanie* [Germanomania] was also burned at the Wartburg, was among those who recognized most clearly the partisan nature of the event. His treatise had criticized the fraternities by pointing out, among other things, that Christianity was not an exclusively German religion. Ascher saw the Wartburg Festival as a Protestant event that was imbued with the spirit of "anti-Judaism." He asked what it said of supposed scholars that they burned books they disagreed with, rather than refuting them.⁷⁰ He was perturbed by the fact "that these nefarious activities . . . have not already been opposed long ago and that it is tolerated when teachers at universities, on their lecterns, take the liberty of animating young men of limited knowledge with eccentric opinions and ideas to such a degree that the latter's eagerness can turn into deeds and actions taken against their opponents."⁷¹ Ascher here anticipated Metternich's idea of placing commissaries of the sovereign at the universities. Instead of "teutonicism," as he called it, he recommended "tolerance, cosmopolitanism, and universal education."⁷²

The *Österreichischer Beobachter*, which appeared under Metternich's auspices, scorned the "intolerance of the new primitive vandals": Professor Oken, who was present at the Wartburg, "and his fellow believers [have] also clearly shown what they mean by the freedom of the press for which they always call at the top of their voice, and that they only want it applied to natural philosophical and demagogic nonsense, but not for reason and order." Their book burning replaced censorship with "terrorist martial law."⁷³

Nevertheless, the *Österreichischer Beobachter* judged the students rather mildly, referring—somewhat as mitigating factors—to surges of youthful liveliness and feelings of strength, rapture, exaggeration, to the statements of

fiery youths caught up in the moment, speeches full of immature thought, half-baked ideas, extraordinary demands, and misunderstood desires and strivings. The students lacked experience and knowledge of the world. The article acknowledged their love of the fatherland and patriotic mentality [*Gesinnung*], and said they only needed to be steered in the right direction. The students' teachers were not granted any such clemency. It was the duty of those who were present to intervene. The professors should have taught them better.⁷⁴ This was the line Metternich would later pursue in the "Carlsbad Decrees."

*At the Margins at the Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle (1818):
A Call for National Struggle*

The original aim of the first major conference of monarchs and ministers after Vienna, which began in September 1818, was to put a conclusive end to the war era. The allies wanted to end the occupation of France, as the contributions they had demanded had been made. The Quadruple Alliance turned into a system of the five major powers again, including France. This development, however, did not mean the end of European defensive security policy. Because a revolution in one state could affect the European system overall, domestic and foreign affairs could no longer be kept separate, and attention was—increasingly—drawn to the domestic situation in the individual countries. The attacks in London and Paris suggested an unstable situation that might be further fueled by what was happening in Germany. At least this is what the Russian state councillor Alexandru Sturdza feared might happen. He presented to the conference a memorandum on the unrest at German universities, which described the domestic situation in Germany, against the background of a broad historical context, as a cause for concern. The tsarist empire, which had signed on not only to the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna but also to the German Federal Act, claimed the right to have a say on internal affairs if necessary. Stourdza suggested controlling the universities and limiting the freedom of the press through decrees passed at the Federal Assembly.

This initiative served Metternich's ends. Metternich and the Prussian police minister, Wittgenstein, had received worrying information on the universities, especially on the fraternities. The pamphlet, *Teutsche Jugend an die teutsche Menge* [German youth to the German masses],⁷⁵ which fell into Wittgenstein's hands, caused particular anxiety because it seemed to signal a continuation of the agitation of the Wartburg Festival and refer to the special effectiveness of the fraternities. As head chamberlain and a close confidant of the Prussian king, Prince Wilhelm Ludwig zu Wittgenstein was an *éminence grise* of Prussian pol-

itics. He bypassed the ministry and corresponded in strict secrecy directly with Metternich, who in this way maintained a direct connection to Friedrich Wilhelm III, whom he knew well anyway from his time as an envoy in Berlin and from the time of the wars of liberation. Wittgenstein was the head of the Prussian police from 1812 until he resigned this office in 1819, at which point he apparently retreated into the background as a minister of the royal household. He provided Metternich with all the documents relating to the fraternities—their protocols, announcements, appeals, and constitutional documents. This allowed Metternich to form a detailed picture of this movement as it emerged within the German Confederation. In the view of both men, its cardinal sin was that it formed a "state within the state."⁷⁶ The author of the pamphlet presumed—not unlike the crushed Prussian "League of Virtue"—that he had a right to an independent judgment on political matters and the right to influence politics, just based on the existence of his own organization.

The poem served as a *pars pro toto* of the crude nationalism that was spreading around Germany. Without any concrete political goals, this nationalism produced in its disciples an irrational compulsion to act. It constructed a simplistic friend/enemy schema and encouraged fanatical action. Its topic was the people's battle for a free state—a term that might evoke the idea of a republic without princes—and the opponents were called "tyrants" [*Zwingherrn*], princes, and the masters of Babel. Talk of a divine mission gave this battle a religious air. Faced with the prince as the incarnation of evil, only one means counted: the sword. Some 6,000 copies of the pamphlet had been distributed. Experts call it the "first case after the Congress of Vienna of a pamphlet calling for a violent coup that explicitly aimed at all of Germany."⁷⁷

Leaving aside the poor quality of the political lyric, it nevertheless contained the stuff of which assassins are made. The text can be ascribed to Karl Follen from Jena, and we know from the questioning following the assassination of Kotzebue that Carl Sand also distributed copies of it. Wittgenstein's description of the lyrical style at the same time characterized the habitus of this nationalism that radicalized the students: "The sequence of ideas and the style of this text appear to me beyond all criticism. Half metaphysical, half trivial, but always confused ideas, endless repetitions of what has already been said, feeble efforts at appearing strong, everything inspired by presumption and dyed in a ridiculous pretense at nobleness, all this would have no effect in another age and in another generation."⁷⁸

In this case Metternich, unusually, attached the pamphlet on the left side of the title page of a presentation for the emperor. He immediately recognized the revolutionary tendency it represented. This did not fail to have an effect on the

Deutsche Jugend an die deutsche Menge,
zum 18. October 1818.

Dreißig oder drei und dreißig — gleichviel!

(Weise:)

C 85313582 | 3028765 | 6628 |

87302 | 287662 | 3-r: | :54567823 |

428765 | 8822 | 3885 | 624282 | 3-r: |

| 624287 | 8-r: ||. Zum 2. Mal:

Menschenmenge, große Menschenwüste,
Die umsonst der Gettesfrühling grüßte,
Reiße, krache endlich, altes Eis!
Stürz' in starken, stolzen Meeresstrudeln
Dich auf Knecht' und Zwingherren, die dich hudekn,
Sei ein Volk, ein Freistaat! werde heiß!

Bleibt im Freiheitskampf das Herz dir frostig,
In der Scheide wird dein Schwert dann rostig,
Männerwille, aller Schwerter Schwert;
Wird es gar im Fürstentum geschwungen,
Bald ist es zerschrotet, bald zersprungen:
Nur im Volkskampf blüht es unverfehrt.

Thurmhoch auf des Bürgers und des Bauern
Nacken möcht ihr eure Zwingburg mauern,
Fürstentum, drei und dreimal zehn!
Babels Herrenthurm und faule Weichheit
Brich mit Blitz und Donner Freiheit, Gleichheit,
Gerechtigkeit aus der Menschheit Mutterwehn.

emperor. Franz reacted with a particularly extensive and emphatic resolution: "The societies in question are so harmful that they must not be tolerated, and therefore an end must be put to them as soon as possible, something that is likely to become more and more difficult, the longer they exist." He asked Metternich to provide him as soon as possible with up-to-date information, especially on the extent to which Austrian students at German universities might come under the sway of these groups. There certainly were such students, because Protestant students from Hungary did not have any universities in Austria where they could have studied theology and therefore were allowed to study abroad. The emperor also at once involved Police Minister Sedlnitzky in the investigations. Metternich had originally planned, together with Wittgenstein, to prevent the meeting of the fraternities on October 18, 1818, but they realized that there was not enough time left to put this plan into operation, and therefore they recommended strict surveillance of the event instead. By October 1818, then, the ground was prepared for an assassination as well as for

Pamphlet of 1818, commemorating the Battle of Leipzig.
German Youth to the German Masses,
On October 18, 1818

Thirty or thirty and three—it does not matter!

A mass of people, a great desert scene
Greeted by the spirit of spring in vain
Crack and open up, old ice, at last!
Strong and proud your waters tumble
Onto servant and tyrant who keep you humble,
Be a People, a free state! Hot and fast!

If the battle for freedom leaves your heart cold
Your sword in its sheath will soon grow old,
The will of men, the sword of all swords
If it is wielded in battle for the prince's matter
Soon it will rot, soon it will shatter
It only shines wholly in the people's battle against their lords.

As high as towers on the citizens' and farmers' back
You may build your strongholds on their neck,
Princes' masons, three and three times ten!
Babel's tower of masters and languid passivity
Are broken by the flash and thunder of freedom and equality,
And the deity is born from mankind's labor then.

control of the universities. Then, in 1819, in light of the positive public and press reactions to Sand's assassination of Kotzebue, there was also a new impetus to limit the freedom of the press.

The Assassination of Kotzebue: Sand's Journey from Jena to Mannheim

On March 9, 1819, an inconspicuous and introverted twenty-three-year-old student of theology embarked on a journey from Jena, where he was studying, to Mannheim.⁷⁹ Carl Sand was on his way to commit a deed that would make him a household name in the more educated circles of Germany and at the European courts. More precisely, "Sand" became the byword for a new phenomenon in Germany: a political assassination in the name of the German nation, of which his act became the archetype.

Everyone who met him during his two-week journey described him as a polite, calm, at times somewhat distracted young man. No one knew the plans he had harbored for more than a year and had confessed only to his diary. In hindsight, many of his casual hints suddenly made sense. He went by foot, in accordance with his social status, viewed various places along the way, and was in no rush; one might have gotten the impression that he was a tourist.

Via Erfurt and Eisenach, his itinerary brought him, as it had in 1817, to the Wartburg again, where, on March 12, he was shown the sights of the castle and had lunch. He wrote some suggestive remarks in the students' book whose meaning immediately becomes clear in light of the subsequent assassination: "What are *the old sleepyheads* likely to achieve? Trust in yourself and build an altar for God and fatherland in your own heart." This was followed by his favorite line from Theodor Körner's poem "Aufruf 1813" [Call 1813]: "Push the spear into your pious heart / A breach for freedom." One can understand how Sand felt at this moment only if one adds the other lines, which the student must also have had in mind. It continues: "Wash the earth, / Your German land, clean it with your blood! / It is not a war the crowned would know / It is a crusade; it is a holy war! . . . / Thus, pray that the old strength may awaken, / That we stand again as the old victorious people! / The martyrs of the holy German cause." His entry in the students' book reveals the essence of his conviction: he acted where politics was idle; he pursued a holy mission—driven by his personal conscience; Germany had a holy character; in his understanding, his deed was an act of war.⁸⁰

On March 23, he confronted the poet Kotzebue at his home. He stabbed him with a long dagger, shouting, "Take this, you traitor of the fatherland!" Afterward, he stabbed himself with a shorter dagger. This has been interpreted as a suicide attempt. This is wrong. It was a knee-jerk reaction triggered by the

poet's four-year-old son, who witnessed the scene and began to scream. Sand himself said during his questioning: "His screaming caused me—in the midst of such mixed feelings—as a substitute for the boy, so to speak, to give myself a stab with the small sword."⁸¹ This fits with the fact that he tried to flee and to nail a text justifying the deed—titled "A mortal blow to August von Kotzebue"—to the door with the same smaller dagger. Because of his wound, he could only hand the text to Kotzebue's servant.⁸²

Sand's Personality: How He Became a Political Icon

If one views Carl Sand as merely a narcissistic martyr and dreamer, his attack appears to be no more than an "event of tertiary importance."⁸³ This judgment misunderstands the nature of the new kind of European terrorism, whose attacks were isolated but followed a consistent ideological pattern. According to his own testimony, Sand sacrificed himself not only for Germany but also for the struggle of the Greeks. Viewing his actions as of marginal importance also neglects the fact that Sand acted with a cool head and after careful planning. He styled himself in such a way that his actions became a media event and he came to embody the idea of a new type of terrorist.

Comprehensive questioning of Sand's academic friends and acquaintances, and numerous conversations between the chair of the investigative commission and Sand, produced an irritating picture of his character that showed nothing of a brutal treacherous murderer. He is described as a calm, well-behaved, and prudent person whom one could not help but like. He was not considered an enthusiastic character, but instead someone who spoke with calm reflection. A great inner calm emanated from him.⁸⁴ It is, however, telling that he calls the war of liberation in 1813–1814, referring to his taking part in it, as a "holy war."⁸⁵

The copper engraving shows Sand after four months in prison. It is based on a painting that was done on August 1, 1819, in his prison cell and is allegedly very faithful to how he actually looked. The chair of the investigative commission was well placed to judge this, because he saw him almost daily. He found him mostly friendly, not particularly witty, but with an open face; he was well behaved. The long curly hair, his youthfulness, the old German style of his dress, the melancholic, serious, rather hesitant facial expression, with the only determinate gesture being the hand reaching for the hidden dagger—all this made him an appropriate icon for the young bourgeois men who were eagerly striving for national enthusiasm and identification.

In addition to this picture, there were press reports that described Sand as someone of keen understanding and broad knowledge. He was not a dreamer, the reports said, even less a madman. The deed was presented as the consequence



Carl Ludwig Sand, copper engraving, after a painting done on August 1, 1819, in his cell.

of a thought-through system. Sand gave the impression that he had sacrificed himself for a good cause. The only category of murder a German judge at the time was familiar with was murder by bandits with base motivations. When questioned, Sand emphasized that he committed his deed out of love for his fatherland and insisted that he did not intend to bring about a violent political revolution.

Sand was born on October 5, 1795, the son of a civil servant at court in the Bavarian town of Wunsiedel. He hated Napoleon. In 1812, he witnessed the retreat of the French on the great army route that led through Hof; he joined the war of liberation as a volunteer, and then, in the winter of 1815, he took up the study of theology in Erlangen, where, a year later, he founded a fraternity. His participation at the Wartburg Festival gave his life a new direction. He subsequently transferred to the University of Jena, where he joined a fraternity. In

the autumn of 1818, he traveled to northern Germany, including Berlin, where he apparently distributed the pamphlet by Follen discussed above, copies of which turned up in Berlin in October 1818. From Berlin he returned to Jena. In lectures by the private lecturer [*Privatdozent*] Karl Follen, he became acquainted with Follen's doctrine of the "unconditional act of conscience" [*unbedingte Gewissenstat*], which removed any scruples he may have had. Sand now called Kotzebue a seducer of the youth, desecrator of the history of the German people, and a Russian spy. Because of his puritanism, Sand despised the erotic allusions in the scenes of gallantry in the poet's works.

At the beginning of March 1819, before the attack on March 23, Sand had explained the reasons behind his action in a confession titled "An Alle die Meinen" [To all those close to me].⁸⁶ It was time, he wrote, to stop dreaming: "The need of the fatherland urges action." Thousands had given their lives for "God's cause" in 1813. The renewal of German life had begun, "especially during the holy time of 1813 with the confident courage given by God." He called Germany "the fatherly house" and "a true temple of God." Kotzebue, he claimed, was a traitor to the fatherland. Sand said that he was not really made for murder, but all his waiting and prayers that someone else might do what needed to be done were in vain. He knew that his deed would not cause a revolution. What he hoped for was straight out of the terrorist's playbook. He wanted to spread terror [*Schrecken*], which he said had a twofold function: The "strong youth" could use it to direct "the revenge of the people" [*Volksrache*] against their governments, who brought only "dishonesty and violence." And it could also affect the governments directly and motivate them to adopt policies in favor of the fatherland. Sand gave as his motivation the following: "In order to save our common fatherland, Germany, this still-torn and ignoble confederation of states, from the great danger that is near, I want to bring terror to those who are evil and craven, and courage to those who are good.—Shouting and talking have no effect—only acting can unite—I want at least to hurl a fire into the present slackness and help to maintain, to strengthen, the flame of the feeling of the people, of the beautiful striving for God's cause among humankind, which has been kindled among us since 1813."

Thus, Sand was dedicated to his own—German—people. But his horizons were broader. He saw himself as a fighter for the rights of Europe's repressed people, and the Greeks seemed to him a prime example. "So many Greeks have fallen already in order to free their people from the punishing rod of the Turks, and have died almost without having had any success or prospect of it, and hundreds of them, sanctifying themselves through education also among us, do nevertheless not lose courage and are prepared to give their lives straightaway for the salvation of their country—; and I should not want to die?" With

these words, Sand unwittingly confirmed Metternich's analysis: It was the Greeks who challenged the Vienna order by raising the national question.

Political Murder as an Act of Conscience and Divine Mission

It is also striking how much effort Sand expended on making sure that his motives came to be widely known. He systematically avoided, however, making statements about others. The core of his political ideology was contained in the statement: "I have to follow my free will, and what my convictions determine me to do, I have to do, even if I shall be defeated and complete derision will be my lot." The investigating judge commented on this: "In the case of a collision with secular laws, no one must be deterred by them when something should be done for the fatherland."⁸⁷ For Sand, the ends justified the means, the investigating judge added, and it was beyond doubt that Sand had put his personal convictions above positive law: under the given Constitution of Germany, Sand thought, the people could not flourish; the existing laws were therefore invalid. According to the investigating judge, Sand considered the existing federalism as a "condition of separation between the German people." Violence against those who opposed the conviction of the individual was legitimate. Sand, the investigating judge wrote, assumed that the acts of men and the acts of God had to coincide: "If everyone were a self-determining being, then all, as it says in the scripture, would be one in God.—No government and no leadership but that of the good, of God in the breast of each individual . . . could be of help."⁸⁸

In his justification on the day of the assassination, the "mortal blow" text, Sand went even further. He addressed the people like a prophet: "My German people, gain self-confidence and the high courage which some of your heroes have already shown! This is life's true spirit of celebration, that you do what the holy scriptures of Christianity and ancient times teach; that you do what your poets sing about. . . . 'A Christ you may become!'"

He who fought for the fatherland could bring freedom as a martyr and thus gain a likeness to Christ and God. The last sentence is a quotation from the revolutionary "Großes Lied" [Great song] by Karl Follen.⁸⁹ Sand's confession makes him out to be the prototype of a "holy warrior" for whom the interpretation of the holy scriptures and political action were one. He was the typical revolutionary fundamentalist: he believed, unwaveringly, to have recognized the truth from one source, and he wanted to impose it on others. Sand understood himself as being at the vanguard of the revolution; his "mortal blow" text ends with the following promise: "Up! I see the great day of freedom! Up my people, bethink yourself, take courage, liberate yourself!"

As a justification of his deed, Sand again pointed to the general political apathy that he had already deplored in his entry in the student book at the Wartburg. He wanted to shake people up, wanted to send a signal: "*There is nothing I hate more than the cowardice and laziness of today's spirit [Gesinnung]. I have to send a signal to you, have to declare my opposition to this slackness—I know of nothing nobler to do but to strike you down, you who are the corrupter and traitor of my people, August von Kotzebue, and the arch-servant and palladium of these corruptible times.*"⁹⁰ No one in Germany had spoken like that since the religious wars had ended. But those wars had been concerned only with God; now the concern was also the German nation. That was something absolutely new and something that, together with the strangely contradictory mixture of character, politics, and religion in Sand's views, gained a great deal of attention. As Metternich immediately became aware from his reading of the official documents, the perpetrator and his deeds were of far greater than merely tertiary importance.

METTERNICH'S HESITANT REACTIONS: THE PRESS, THE PROFESSORS, AND THE STUDENTS

The murder of August von Kotzebue by Carl Sand led to the infamous Carlsbad Decrees. Many hold that 1819 was an epochal turning point at which the originally liberal development of Germany was cut off. In this view, what Wehler called the "perfidious" policies of Metternich, the "Metternich system," subjugated the German states and enforced an "almost cemetery-like silence [*Ruhe*]" on them. Whole books have been written on the topic.⁹¹ And yet not all has been said. To gain a more nuanced understanding of Metternich, it is worth considering him from five possible angles: (1) his moral evaluation of the assassination, (2) his political evaluation of it, (3) his strategy for establishing a consensus on a more defensive course for federal policies, (4) the limitations on freedom of the press, and finally (5) the measures taken against the universities.

Metternich's Moral Judgment: The Freedom of Those Who Think Differently Is Denied by Violence

Metternich's moral judgment of Sand reveals Metternich to be a principled follower of the "golden rule,"⁹² which for him had its foundation in the Bible, and according to which everyone may do as they wish as long as it does not violate the rights of others—a principle which, of course, rests on mutuality. The spokespeople in the struggle for freedom of the press, to which Sand also

committed himself in his emotional texts, violated this principle. Measuring the high-minded goals of the revolutionaries against the reality of their deeds, Metternich ironically stated: "The liberals behaved pretty badly on this occasion, and the principle of a free press is hardly defended very well by men who answer their literary opponents by stabbing them with a dagger. At least, it gives the impression that they did not want to accept any freedom but the one that suits them." The principle invoked by Sand according to which the ends justify the means also violates the "golden rule." Immediately after hearing of the assassination, Metternich wrote: "I don't like it when murder is committed in the name of philanthropy; I don't like madmen or mad deeds of any kind, and even less those who murder good people who are sitting quietly in their rooms."⁹³

Metternich only had to think back to his tutor Simon to remind himself of his disgust at those who kill others in pursuing their good intentions: "The world is genuinely sick, my friend; nothing is worse than the spirit of freedom led astray. It kills everything and ends in killing itself." Metternich could only think in the categories of the revolutionary age. That also applied in the case of his earlier remark to his wife regarding the time before the Revolution: "I assure you that the world was in perfect health in 1789 in comparison with what it is now."⁹⁴ He repeated this argument while in exile during the revolution of 1848: "Murder is a very bad weapon; bloodshed calls for bloodshed, and it is in its nature to soil what it touches, and not to purify it. God help poor humankind!" He had just learned of the lynching of the Austrian war minister Theodor Count Latour by the Viennese. They had hung his body from a streetlamp.⁹⁵

The Political Evaluation: Individual Act or Conspiracy?

Now it had been proven that a terrorist attack was possible in Germany, Metternich could not hide from the fact that he was in as much danger as Kotzebue had been. When he presented the information on the assassination, provided by Gentz, to the emperor, the monarch prophesied that the students would now deal with Metternich in the same way they had dealt with Kotzebue. Metternich replied that for a long time he had thought of himself in the role of a fearless general facing a battery of cannon fire. Emperor Franz replied: "Well, then we shall both be murdered." The remark in the original French uses the term "assassiner," which—in line with Metternich's image—can also mean "bombarded."⁹⁶

Metternich found himself in a difficult situation, and thought about the fastest and most effective strategy for responding to this extraordinary challenge. He received the news of the assassination on April 9 while in Rome, far

away from the central German places of importance: Vienna, the capital; Mannheim, where the atrocity had taken place; and Frankfurt, the meeting place of the Federal Assembly. He even suspected that his absence might have encouraged the assassin to strike at the particular time that he had. Friedrich Gentz had already learned of the incident on March 31 from an article in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, a newspaper published in Augsburg, and the next day he sent a lengthy dispatch to Rome, including some official documents, which Metternich received on April 10.

The most urgent question was whether the assassination had been the act of an individual perpetrator or whether there was a conspiracy. Gentz and Metternich disagreed over this. Gentz thought that there was little point in continuing to interrogate Sand: "A conspiracy in the true sense of the word will certainly not be found."⁹⁷ Metternich held on to the idea that there might be a conspiracy. He had a more accurate picture than Gentz because from the very beginning he assumed a connection between the Sand and the University of Jena. He reminded Gentz of the secret files on the fraternities that Gentz had given to him many months ago. On April 10, Metternich already had at his disposal first results from the interrogations in Mannheim. Early on, he had the measure of the assassin: "Sand was a young man at the University of Erlangen who was calm and well-behaved. In 1817 he moved to the University of Jena, and he stood out at the Wartburg. In 1818 he returned to Erlangen and preached for the fraternities. He was in raptures over the life of the free ones [the so-called *Unbedingten* around Karl Follen], preached loudly, and returned to Jena again."⁹⁸ In support of his theory, Metternich used the following oft-quoted words: "I, for one, do not doubt that the murderer acted, not on his own impulses, but within the context of a secret society. In this case, true evil will also produce some good because poor Kotzebue serves as an *argumentum ad hominem* which not even the liberal Duke of Weimar is able to defend.—My concern is to give the matter the best possible direction in which to develop, to gain the maximum advantage from it, and I shall not waver in my efforts to pursue this concern."⁹⁹ *Argumentum ad hominem* is originally a concept of Roman law and means that the personal fate of a person is used as evidence. Kotzebue's death could not be denied, and it weakened the position of Duke Karl August, at whose university in Jena the threads of the investigations were converging. Metternich also had the European context in mind: "The assassination of Kotzebue is more than an isolated fact. This will be seen by and by, and I shall not be the last to take advantage of it [*tirer un bon parti*], . . . I do not allow myself to be distracted; I go my own way, and if all the ministers did the same, things would not be as they are."¹⁰⁰

Defensive National Integration as a Strategy: The Wait-and-See Approach

These statements from Metternich draw our attention to his strategy of establishing defensive measures at the federal level. The usual interpretation is that he simply waited for a situation to arise that could serve as a pretext for implementing the measures, that he never really saw the situation as particularly threatening. It is assumed that he used scaremongering to corner the German governments. This interpretation is wrong, although it does fit Gentz's conduct. In contrast to Metternich, Gentz was often in the doctrinal vanguard. In his first letter on the matter, on April 1, he urged that the situation be viewed as "useful and even beneficent" for pushing forward measures that one otherwise might never have been able to introduce. He developed a three-point program: first, Tsar Alexander should be used to exert pressure on Prussia, Bavaria, and Germany as a whole; second, measures should be taken against the press, and the "eternally unforgivable article" on freedom of the press should be removed from the Federal Act; third, at the Federal Assembly one had to move against the universities before the effect of the assassination had dissipated—while the "blood of Kotzebue" still demanded revenge.

Metternich, for his part, first wanted more detailed information, and he urged the government of Baden to be as thorough as possible in its investigations. The government was in an embarrassing position because it was notoriously liberal, and the assassination had happened on its territory. The grand duke had therefore quickly set up a commission to investigate the background of the perpetrator, possible accomplices and confidants, and, most importantly, Carl Sand's motive. The investigation was headed by the state councillor Karl Georg Levin von Hohnhorst. His work was so thorough, free of prejudice, and detailed that following the publication of the results—the first part in September, the second part after Sand's execution on May 20, 1820—it was immediately prohibited.¹⁰¹

In contrast to Gentz's intentions, Metternich did not want to play the role of "coachman of Europe"; instead, he waited for the reactions from the German governments. And he was right. On April 23, he was able to tell Gentz, with satisfaction and a good dose of irony: "Among the rare things that have occurred in my life, incidentally, is the fact that I am called upon in Rome to work for hours on end on the German universities, and that I receive cabinet letters from all quarters of Germany with the urgent request to do my best to finish the nonsense that every German prince has provoked and fueled in his country, and now does not know how to appease."¹⁰²

Metternich even planned to have the statutes of fraternities printed secretly, that is anonymously, and then distributed in Germany. They were meant to

be evidence he could use in his negotiations with the princes. Again unlike Gentz, he did not consider it worthwhile to involve the Federal Assembly from the outset; instead he suggested first meeting for preliminary talks in Carlsbad with representatives from selected governments—that is, representatives of those governments that had urged him to take the matter into his own hands. Meanwhile, Gentz provided him almost daily with newspaper articles from the extensive press coverage of the assassination. Gentz strongly recommended keeping them all on file as it was likely that they would need to make use of them. Metternich, indeed, followed his advice, and today they form a separate section in the posthumous papers in Prague, titled "Gentziana."¹⁰³

Preparations for the Press Measures: A Compromise Proposal

The task of reining in the press appeared more important to Metternich and Gentz than any other political task. Both were masterful in their handling of policies for the press within German-speaking territories. Metternich had learned these skills from Napoleon in Paris, where he became familiar with the press as the "fourth estate." The multilingual Gentz had made a name for himself in Berlin, London, Paris, and Vienna as a sharp-witted analyst of the contemporary scene; he was renowned for his rhetorical brilliance. Popular writers or journalists like Joseph Görres or Ernst Moritz Arndt, who reached only the German market, could not compare in terms of their success.

After the assassination of Kotzebue, the press landscape abruptly changed. Far too little attention has been paid to the fact that, in particular, the more or less explicit glorifications of the act in the press had led to many calls for censorship. There was both a formal and a material aspect to the matter. In terms of substance, the question was whether it was permissible to print anything one liked, and whether that constituted true freedom of the press. If, however, limits were to be set to what could be printed, the formal problem arose of how narrowly or widely these limits were to be drawn and what procedures should be in place for administering the regulations.

The laws on censorship in the various states differed widely. In Württemberg, censorship had even been abolished in 1817. Laws for the whole of Germany were therefore uncharted territory. Article 18 of the Federal Act only charged the Assembly with a task: "The Federal Assembly shall at its first meeting concern itself . . . with the formulation of uniform orders regarding the freedom of the press."¹⁰⁴ This had so far not happened, and as far as dealings with the press were concerned a legal vacuum existed at the federal level. It was an open question what would happen if writings were banned in one federal state but circulated freely in another. It was therefore by no means a

case of reactionary politics when the Austrian emperor and other rulers approached the question of the limits to the freedom of the press.

It would actually be more accurate to speak of "freedom of communication." The old term "freedom of the press" referred to all printed products: images and illustrations as well as texts. A common misunderstanding is that any limitation on the freedom of communication counts as censorship. As paradoxical as it may sound, censorship within an authoritarian state and the fundamental right of freedom of expression in a constitutional state have to solve the same problem: they have to find a formula and a procedure for drawing a line between what is prohibited and what is permitted. In both cases, the same process of "regulation" is concerned.¹⁰⁵ In the constitutional state the line is drawn in criminal law. In the case of present-day Germany this is laid down in about thirty articles that deal with a range of offenses, from high treason and incitement of the people to violations of professional and fiscal secrecy.¹⁰⁶

In modern criminal law there are no doubt some new elements, but fundamentally the same six offenses have been identified from the time of the invention of the printing press. These were also the decisive categories for Metternich and his contemporaries. They marked out the following categories as worthy of protection: monarchs and authorities; state and Constitution; the honor of foreign regents and governments; religion, customs, and morality (under which came prohibitions on gambling and pornography); and the honor and reputation of private individuals. In the age of enlightenment, protection against stultification, superstition, and delusive religious doctrines [*Schwärmerei*] were added to these.

This material content of the traditional regulations was incorporated into criminal law through legal codification, with independent courts deciding on individual cases. The British used court-based procedures after the abolition of censorship in 1695. In the case of authoritarian continental states, the regulation was administered by the state—that is, a censor examined works before they were printed, instead of—if appropriate—banning them afterward as a judge would. If there is a justified accusation to be leveled against Metternich and his contemporaries, it is that they did not have sufficient courage to transfer the decision-making responsibility in this area to the law and the independent judiciary, following the successful example of the British and the attempts that were made in France after the Revolution.

But the notion of "censorship in the *Vormärz*"—that is, during the time leading up to the revolutions of 1848—should not distract us from the fact that there were certain publications that had to be prohibited in the interests of domestic peace. The political bards of the wars of liberation, pamphleteers and poets belonging to the radical political opposition, and the extreme wings of

the fraternities all produced bloodthirsty texts that called for murder. Those who, to the present day, want to instrumentalize history in order to forge a tradition of national unity like to overlook these texts, or to play down their significance by seeing them as the products of youthful enthusiasm. Carl Sand's pamphlet *Teutsche Jugend an die teutsche Menge*, which we discussed above, belonged alongside these texts, even if it is a milder example of the genre.

Knowing what we know today about the regulation of the freedom of communication, we can say that Metternich's approach to the problem of regulation, which was pragmatic, reflective, and based on international comparisons, is astonishingly modern.¹⁰⁷ He conceded to modern states such as France and Britain that they could easily "allow freedom of the press and even postulate the principle that this freedom is an indispensable condition for a pure representational system." As centrally organized states, he argued, they could regulate post hoc, through the courts, in order to avoid abuses of press freedoms.

The conditions in Germany required a different solution. Metternich's suggestion distinguished his legal and political form of argumentation from the authoritarian, even absolutist, rigorism of Gentz, who simply wanted to see article 18—on freedom of the press—removed. Metternich explained that Germany, unlike Britain and France, consisted of sovereign states that guaranteed each other protection and help. To the external world they appeared as one power because of their confederation, but internally they were administratively divided. If one of them sought to interfere in another because of some undesirable publication, this would necessarily disturb the inner peace of the confederation. Metternich, incidentally, did not have to remind Gentz that German states waged wars against each other, something that had still been the rule in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. After 1815 it was no longer a possibility.

Metternich then presented a surprising argument: There was, of course, "a nationality that stretches across all of Germany." He essentially called for a degree of national integration within the German Confederation through common legislation that subjected dealings with the press to shared—national—principles. He considered the type of regulation practiced in France or England as impossible for Germany because that would require "the unification of Germany into a single body that is not internally divided." This would be conceivable only under the umbrella of a single German monarchy or of a "German free state." Metternich thus also countenanced a unified German republic. What led him to discard that option was the counterargument. Metternich's opponents always accuse him of "obscurantism" and reactionary intentions, but this argument had nothing reactionary about it and had nothing to do with the wish to persecute agitators. The counterargument sets out from

the idea of German federalism, which would have to be sacrificed if the British or French model were adopted. One had to assume "that there will be no German government that will allow that it is chased out of its home and possessions for the sake of Germanness."

Metternich did not hide the fact that he would have liked it best for all writings, without exception, to be censored. Here, too, his thinking followed the logic, not of restoration, but of the existing law—he respected the different systems of regulation in the German states. He accepted that the freedom of the press might sometimes be controlled by courts as well as through a method of pre-censorship: "Every German state is free to decide whether it wants to retain or introduce an institution for censorship or a censorship law [operated through courts] dealing with all intellectual material produced within its borders."

The public political agitation following the assassination had left its marks on Metternich. For the identification of material that was to be subjected to censorship he suggested a criterion that was not material—that is, did not concern content—but formal. He distinguished between "works" that appeared once—books that contained "scientific content" and had a volume of at least 25 print sheets (equaling 400 printed pages)—and periodicals, such as "news-papers, pamphlets, etc." It was later agreed that the required length for the former would be 20 print sheets, equaling 320 printed pages. The latter, Metternich argued, were characterized by their political or moral content and had to be generally presented to a censor before being printed. This rule has been seen as a social clause which exempted the educated from pre-censorship.

Metternich's suggestion became part of the general press law of the federation of September 20, 1819, as had already been agreed to in Carlsbad. It was a compromise that put the two preeminent German powers, Prussia and Austria, under considerable strain, as they had reserved the right to carry out pre-censorship in all of their states. Metternich's liberal solution, intended to accommodate differences between states, created unforeseen gaps, and so we cannot speak of a closed system of repression or the policing of the press.¹⁰⁸ The best proof of this is the never-ending series of initiatives to strengthen the censorship rules through the Federal Assembly. That was necessary only because the existing system did not work efficiently, and, again and again, loopholes had to be closed. And after 1825, with the invention and introduction of the high-speed printing press, daily publications in Germany increased to such an extent that the conventional censorship bureaus were hardly able to keep up. In 1842, Prussia even experimented with so-called censorship courts.

The Reaction to the Assassination of Kotzebue: National Mobilization

Why did Carl Sand's assassination of Kotzebue provoke new legislation on the regulation of the press in Germany at all? Gentz provided the answer in an almost prophetic vision of the kind of mood Sand's act would trigger in the German public. He predicted that the trial against Sand would be taken very seriously and that he would be punished with all the force of the criminal law. Gentz expected that in the press, "thousands and thousands will become exalted to the point of rapture, will present him as a hero, a martyr for the good cause, the sacrificial lamb of the obscurantists, and will become ten times as raging and as guilty as they already are."¹⁰⁹

Indeed, Gentz's collection of newspaper articles provides convincing evidence that sympathy for Sand was building in the press. The articles begin by routinely distancing themselves from the "terrible act" and assuring the reader that murder is not an acceptable means in politics. But then Sand's noble character is emphasized, followed by—most importantly—praise for his selfless patriotism. This is combined with advice and warnings to the princes to revise their misguided policies. The papers trotted out variations on this narrative, depending on what kind of new information had emerged. Upon closer scrutiny, it becomes apparent that the papers were eager to soak up any information they could: eyewitness reports, whose distribution multiplied exponentially as the papers copied them off each other, and details from the files of the investigation, among them Sand's proclamations and letters. The *Rheinische Blätter*, published in Wiesbaden, can be taken as a good example of this trend. Gentz underlined the following passage from the edition of April 5, 1819, highlighting for Metternich what was particularly objectionable:

But in the case of Kotzebue's catastrophe everyone seems to have a silent feeling that the real deed only begins where in similar cases it ends, namely *after* the perpetrated murder. This was not a matter of individual fighting against individual; the spirit of the new age entered the ring against the spirit of the age that has just ended. . . . This deed proves that the spirit which in 1813 rose up for Germany's independence of *alien* rule, control and discipline is still alive in 1819. The impression the deed makes in all areas of Germany shows that the matter is not perceived as concerning an individual but as a national matter.¹¹⁰

As this commentary reveals, one of the effects of the assassination was to encourage criticisms of the political system directed at the rulers. Further, Sand became a symbol, an icon, a myth, and the object of cultlike devotion. This is

expressed well by Karl Hase, a fraternity member. In 1820, after he had visited Sand's parents, he wrote an obituary in his diary that, though it was only one voice, was representative of the collective sympathy that Metternich and Gentz feared:

Sand appears to me to be one of the greatest men of his century. He freely chose a hero's death for the salvation of the fatherland, the greatest deed known to humankind, and hence his grave be given a citizen's crown. This is why his name will be celebrated by posterity; therefore, whatever evil the deed may have presently brought about, it will not be lost in the workings of providence, as no great deed ever is. . . . But he has become a treacherous murderer, and therefore I would decide for the death penalty if I was sitting among his judges. Justice be done, and if it means humankind as a whole must climb the scaffold; for what worth does human life possess without justice? You tender women may weep for him, he deserves them. . . . Sand wanted to sacrifice himself for the fatherland, how will you execute him for that?¹¹¹

Even Archduke Johann had some sympathy for Sand, although he did undoubtedly condemn the act. In his diary the archduke wrote about Sand and Kotzebue: "A pity about him it is not at all.—The murderer, a young man called Sand—a dreamer [*Schwärmer*]*—*pity about him, that he makes himself guilty of such an act—murder remains murder."¹¹² All of Sand's own statements, however, contradict this idea of the fundamentalist holy warrior as a mere "Schwärmer." What Sand was interested in was attention, impact, publicity—in a word: sending "a signal." In this, he had succeeded. For instance, in those days illustrations in daily newspapers were very rare, and when they appeared it meant that an event had received the highest level of attention; an article in the *Aarauer Zeitung*, "The Execution of Carl Ludwig Sand on May 20, 1820," was illustrated with a lithograph. It showed his execution, alongside a depiction of the death sentence being handed down to Sand while tied to his bed, still suffering from his wound.

The newspaper article expressed not the slightest trace of disgust at the political assassination. But it revealed that Sand envisaged his execution as a staged demonstration. He had been offered the option of executing himself with a dagger, but he insisted on a public execution. "To die on the scaffold, clearly, was a kind of triumph for him." The paper called him a "young man whose fate is deeply to be bemoaned," and stressed that he showed the "greatest calmness in his soul." Before the execution, he was allowed to receive "people who wished to see and speak to him." He wanted to go to the place of execution on

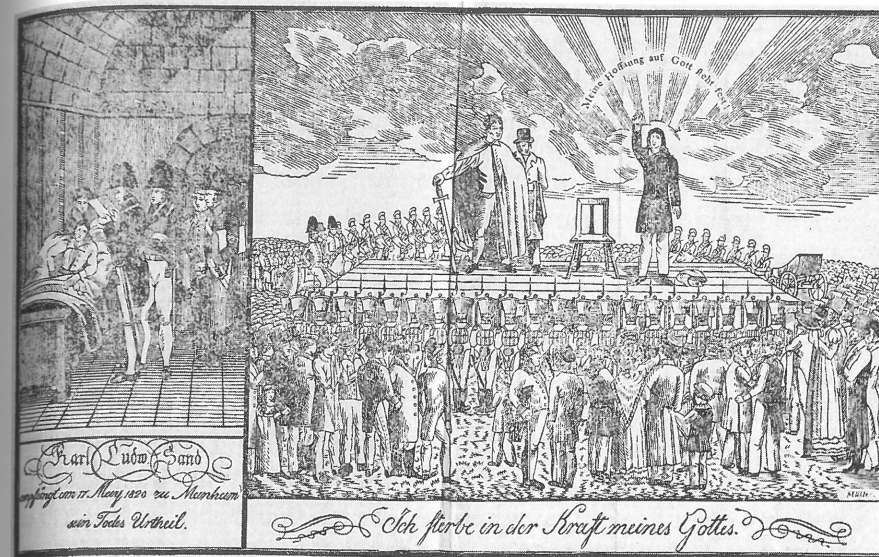


Illustration in the article "Carl Ludwig Sand's Hinrichtung am 20. May 1820" [Execution of Carl Ludwig Sand on May 20, 1820], *Aarauer Zeitung*.

his own, without a priest accompanying him, and dressed in a "German black coat." Before his execution, he said: "My hope in God is unshaken"; then he raised his right hand toward the sky, as if taking an oath, and spoke in prayer: "I die with the force of my God!" and then as his last words: "God, you have taken me into your grace."

Sand presented himself as a holy warrior and martyr, and the newspaper went along with this glorification, describing his last public appearance in an almost Christ-like fashion: "He only wanted the good with all his will, and was prepared to sacrifice his life for it. That is why it was possible to respect and love him. That he nevertheless committed a crime was the fault of the unfortunate error which captivated him. . . . His crime is now atoned. Sand, the criminal, no longer is, but Sand, the noble and unhappy young man, will continue to live for a long time in the memory of many."

As soon as the scaffold was opened to the public, many of those present rushed to it to dip their handkerchiefs in his blood, tear off parts the scaffold itself, or try to take a lock of his hair. Someone who had traveled to Mannheim especially for the occasion took the execution seat, and the calash that had brought Sand to the execution was sold at a profit. But the fraternity from Heidelberg beat all the other relic hunters: a democrat from the Palatinate used the beams and boards from the scaffold to build a garden house at a vineyard in Heidelberg, and secret meetings were held there "in Sand's scaffold as guests

of his hangman."¹¹³ To Metternich, who was thinking instead of the family of the dead Kotzebue, this was indicative of the suffocating nationalism that was dividing the nation. He knew well that the assassin was worshipped like a holy figure; he kept the article and illustration from the *Aarauer Zeitung* with his personal papers.¹¹⁴

Measures Taken against the Universities

As in the case of the measures taken against the press, when it came to the universities Metternich arrived at his concrete ideas about what to do with the encouragement of Gentz and of the Leipzig consul and political observer Adam Müller. These ideas were connected with Metternich's judgment of the students' political actions and of where the real dangers lay. In his opinion, there was no federal state with a university that was not at risk. Even in Vienna, which was allegedly well shielded from these phenomena, Karl Follen and his "Giesener Unbedingte" had their followers. And in a large-scale raid in which 140 students were arrested, the diary of a Sand devotee turned up. It revealed just how easily the idea of terrorist attacks as noble acts of conscience in the service of holy, patriotic purposes had caught on: "Travel plans, battles, booze-ups, revolution, the murder of tyrants, all this constantly drives me around. Only someone who is able to give up for a holy purpose even what the world calls honor makes a truly great sacrifice. This is why only Sand stands as high as he does, because he did not shy away from appearing to the common crowd like a common murderer."¹¹⁵ There was a community of sentiment [*Gesinnungsgenossenschaft*] emerging that reached all the way from ordinary students to the sympathetic tributes of the archduke.

But where should one try to intervene? For Metternich, the real sources of danger were not the students, not even those who were members of fraternities: "The member of a fraternity, taken by himself, is a child, and fraternities are impractical puppet shows."¹¹⁶ The danger emanated from the professors, who, as academic teachers, also influenced the students on a personal and moral level, as the example of Karl Follen showed. They created the ideological networks. No one provided better confirmation of this than the Berlin professor of theology Wilhelm de Wette, who had known Sand personally. He did not suspect that his words of consolation for Sand's mother would fall into the hands of the police. He defended her son's honor against the "opinion of the common masses" that he was a murderer. Of course, he wrote, in secular terms his act was unlawful and punishable by a judge. Her son had erred and been carried away by passion—but then he added what many people thought, and what deeply troubled Metternich:

An error is excused and compensated, so to speak, by firmness and sincerity of conviction, and passion is sanctified by the goodness of the source from which it flows: I am firmly convinced that both cases apply to your pious and virtuous son. He was sure about his concern, and he thought it was right to do what he did, and thus he has done right. Everyone should act in accordance with their conviction, and then everyone will do the best. . . . A young man gives his life in order to eradicate a human being whom many revere as an idol. And this should really have no effect at all?¹¹⁷

In the eyes of the theologian the assassin was a pure young man who was pious and confident that he had done something good that his conscience had told him to do. His deed was therefore "a beautiful sign of the times." The professor lost his position over the letter. He was one of the first. After him, other more or less prominent professors were dismissed for corrupting the youth, among them the prophet of nationalism, Ernst Moritz Arndt, who had only recently been appointed a professor of history in Bonn.

In Metternich's view, when these professors strayed beyond their fields, in these cases theology and history, and became politically active, they became intellectual arsonists. But he also thought that they were altogether incapable of staging a coup. He knew "no conspirators who are as miserable and superficial as professors, individually as well as taken as a group." They were men of theory and put forward propositions, but revolution was not a theoretical pursuit. Scholars and professors did not know how to overthrow existing institutions because they had no sense of the value of property. Advocates, as practitioners, had such a sense, and Metternich saw them as the conspirators who were genuinely capable of achieving their aims. He might have been right—the most-wanted Italian revolutionary, Giuseppe Mazzini, for instance, had studied law and initially practiced as a lawyer for the poor, and had thus learned first-hand about the importance of the distribution of property.

Metternich drew the following conclusion: "I therefore never feared that the revolution might be *created* at the universities; but that a whole generation of revolutionaries must form there if no barriers are set up against the ills, seems certain to me."¹¹⁸ On the question of what had to be done, however, he contradicted the eager proposals of Adam Müller, who advised a "purification of the academic chairs, in sober fashion and without noise." Müller wanted to "quietly remove" the small number of "ringleaders . . . and substitute them with calm, well-behaved scholars"; the latter, he held, had more talent anyway, and they could, in this way, at the same time contribute to a reform of the universities.¹¹⁹ This proposal would have implied an evaluation of the quality of the

professors' work. Adam Müller traced the whole "university nonsense" to the Reformation, and thought that only an undoing of the Reformation could provide a genuine remedy. When he said this he certainly had in mind Protestant theologians such as de Witte and the theology student Sand. In essence, Metternich agreed with Müller's idea; for him, Luther had been a revolutionary because he, too, had placed the justification of his deeds solely in his conscience, independent of what the laws of state and church demanded. But Metternich was a politician and not an impractical theoretician of the kind Müller had become. With a subtle sense for the irony of being asked to pass judgment on Protestantism from Rome, Metternich replied to him: "Being at the Quirinale, I cannot engage with Dr. Martin Luther, and I hope that nevertheless something good may happen without pursuing Protestantism back to its original source." Metternich therefore stipulated that "questions of discipline" had to be separated from "questions concerning study." The latter concerned the content of studies, and the confederation had to leave this alone. The confederation was only to establish formal rules for the supervision of universities, and Adam Müller had suggested how this could be done. A "curator" should be appointed to every university. In the decrees that were eventually passed, this curator became a "representative of the sovereign"—that is, the arm of the state within academic life. This institution can still be found at many universities in the role of "chancellor."

FROM TEPLITZ TO CARLSBAD: THE CONFERENCES ON DOMESTIC SECURITY, 1819–1820

Preparations for the Carlsbad Conferences: Security Pact with Wittgenstein

Metternich learned of the assassination of Kotzebue on April 9, 1819, while in Rome. From then on, he was in intense consultations regarding how to proceed with the "German matters"—as the files call it—with Friedrich Gentz, who was in Vienna. Metternich observed that the public mood in Lombardy-Venetia had deteriorated, but he thought that mistaken measures introduced by the government were only partially to blame, and that the unrest was being stirred by recent events in Germany and France. His awareness was now heightened, and he registered every attack and every sign of unrest ever more acutely, integrating them all into his picture of the progressive revolutionizing of Europe.

Although Kotzebue's assassination struck him as a dramatic event, he did not let it distract him from his travel plans. His stay in Rome ended in the last week of April, and he went on to Naples, where he spent all of May—even climbing Mount Vesuvius. At the beginning of June he returned to Rome, in

mid-June he traveled on to Verona, and in the last week of June he went to Florence, where he stayed until mid-July. Finally, after two days in Verona again, he set off for Carlsbad.

On July 18, he stopped over in Munich and used the opportunity to present the situation to King Maximilian I. After Prussia, Bavaria was the second most important partner when it came to establishing a consensus on a future legal framework for domestic security in the German Confederation. Metternich made contact with the ministers and the king, and he noticed that the mood in Bavaria had shifted. Half a year ago the state had still "lived in a dream of political greatness." Now he found the government "without ideas, without hope, lying prostrate on the floor." The hope that they would be able to help themselves had gone. Bavaria was just one of the states whose representatives flocked to Metternich asking for his advice. After the assassinations, the princes and their ministers were now fearing for their lives. Metternich informed Field Marshall von Wrede about his plans for Carlsbad.

At the same time, more worrying news reached Metternich. He knew about investigations in Berlin, Karlsruhe, Darmstadt, and Nassau. From Berlin he learned of a "Black league" [*Schwarzer Bund*] that had been identified and arrested—this was actually a radical fraternity, the "Blacks of Giessen" [*Gießener Schwarze*]. After an apothecary named Karl Löning attempted to assassinate the president of one of Nassau's seven regional governments, Carl von Ibell, Metternich asked the minister in Nassau, Baron von Marschall, to keep him abreast of the results of the interrogation. Only two and a half weeks later, Metternich knew that the assassin had connections to the "Giessener Schwarze" and that he was dealing with more than sixty suspected sympathizers. Metternich arranged for copies of the files to be sent to the emperor and simultaneously made contact with the minister of police, Sedlnitzky.

In his preparations for Carlsbad, Metternich relied mainly on the Prussian minister of police, Wittgenstein, who had contacted him at the end of June with a cry for help. Wittgenstein felt pretty much left alone with his investigations in Berlin, and wrote that he "therefore need[ed] a strong ally. I therefore very much hope that Your Liebden will come to my aid, and in Your own noble person [*hohe Person*]."¹²⁰ The assassination carried out by Sand led to a close and strictly secret alliance against terror between Metternich and Wittgenstein. With this alliance, Metternich now had a direct line to King Friedrich Wilhelm III. Wittgenstein organized a personal meeting between the king and Metternich in Teplitz. The police minister urged Metternich to attend; the king, he said, would "certainly enjoy it very much" to see him there and to arrange "a rendezvous" with Hardenberg. This would give Wittgenstein the opportunity to have Metternich "as a faithful ally supporting him."¹²¹ Metternich also passed

on to the emperor this offer of an alliance. It is crucial to note just how much this Prussian initiative bolstered Metternich's plans. It shows, also, that a battle over strategy and over who could influence the king was taking place at the Prussian court.

Within only a few months, worrying news of successful and failed attacks, as well as of the conspiratorial activities of the fraternities, reached Metternich. At the same time, he was shocked by the wave of sympathy that was triggered among allegedly patriotic bourgeois individuals by acts like Sand's. He did not doubt for a moment that these sorts of events exerted an amplifying effect across Europe. The declarations of solidarity with the Greeks, issued by Sand, among others, revealed just one dimension of this dynamic. The other dimension became visible in August, when the Carlsbad conference took place and when (on August 16, 1819) English cavalry charged into a crowd protesting against the Corn Laws, causing the so-called Peterloo massacre near Manchester.¹²² The "Six Acts" for the protection of domestic security passed in London were the exact equivalent of the decrees for which Metternich and Wittgenstein fought in Carlsbad. Given the way Metternich summarized his concerns, it is really not plausible to speak of a mere "pretext" here: "Today, more than ever, I am convinced that the evil [*Übel*] will be beyond any human remedy if the German governments do not come close together and take very appropriate and especially uniform measures between now and a few months' time."¹²³ The path toward such measures led via Teplitz.

Teplitz: A Common Platform for Austria and Prussia, July 27–August 2, 1819

Metternich arrived in Carlsbad on July 21, 1819. The most important preparations had been made. He had formed a circle of insiders through diplomatic channels. In terms of the program to be pursued, he was very well prepared; he knew exactly what he wanted to achieve. But before the conference, he still went to Teplitz. "I obey the invitation of the Prussian king," he wrote to Emperor Franz, thus revealing whose idea the meeting was. Nevertheless, a consultation between Prussia and Austria fit with the ideal according to which he had constructed the German Confederation, which implied steadfast agreement between the two.

The joint political program agreed upon at Teplitz rested on two pillars. One of them found expression in the Carlsbad Decrees and concerned "the reining in of parties in Germany"—measures against the press, the universities, and the fraternities, and for the investigation of the assassination carried out by Sand. The other concerned the process of constitutional legislation in Prussia. On May 22, 1815, the king had passed a "decree on the representation of the

people to be formed," in which he called the state an "empire" in which the "Prussian nation is given a pledge of our trust" in the form of a "constitutional document."¹²⁴ To form a "representation of the people" meant nothing other than the establishment of a central Parliament. For Metternich, this was an alarming sign that the idea of "people's representation" had taken hold in Prussia. Although the decree talked about "provincial estates" [*Provinzialstände*], the new Parliament was to embody "the people."

In November 1818, during the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, Metternich had already explained to Wittgenstein, in a confidential letter, why a "central representation" was not suitable for Prussia. If one reads Metternich in the right way, it is clear that he did not fight against the political participation of social forces—he was not an absolutist—but that his concern was always that the political system serve the purposes of internal peace. If it was not able to do that, then it was no good in his eyes. He considered the Prussian Monarchy to be, like the Habsburg Monarchy, a "composite state" as an empire: "The Prussian state, although united under one sceptre, consists of several parts, separated by geographical position, climate, tribes [*Volksstämme*], or language. It has in this respect an essential similarity to the Austrian [state]."¹²⁵

Metternich argued that the centralization of the monarchy in a purely representational system would have led to its disintegration into its already existing constituent parts. As proof, he pointed toward the Netherlands, which was, he said, politically paralyzed by such a system. A central Parliament inaugurated "a composition of individual, mutually alien and hostile deputies—which are far from being united for the *One* purpose of being a state." A state council or central committee of the estates could serve as an alternative central institution, which was doubtlessly needed. What the maintenance of a kingdom required was, apart from the person of the monarch, a strong standing army, as the example of the Netherlands showed. At this point in his letter to Wittgenstein, Metternich called the "arming of the people" a "senseless system" and predicted that "the Prussian state would approach its internal dissolution if ever the king of Prussia should appear, not at the head of an army, but as the leader of seven or eight separate masses of men."¹²⁶ Because of the experiences they had had, because of "the dreadful abuse of power of which the German princes, in their sovereign arrogance, have been guilty since the year 1806," the Germans desired guarantees against despotic rule.¹²⁷

Metternich considered "the restoration of *estate-based Constitutions*" to be the best means for preserving domestic peace, whereas the centralist former states of the Rhenish Confederation tended toward absolutism. One does not have to sympathize with Metternich's political ideals in order to admit that he was hostile toward absolutism, and that he sought ways of guaranteeing legal

forms for political participation that were grounded in regional and provincial traditions. Toward Prussia, he essentially argued for a constitutional conservatism in line with Edmund Burke's philosophy. That was precisely the spirit in which he tried to persuade the Prussian king and Hardenberg in Teplitz "not to introduce a representation of the people, but to limit themselves to representation of the provincial estates in a purely monarchical sense."¹²⁸

Many critics of Metternich will be astonished that his defensive security policies, which came to dominate after Carlsbad, were based on the idea of the unity of Germany. In his presentation for the emperor, he pushed the problem to its dramatic conclusion: "The first of all questions is—will Prussia be drawn into the stream of revolution, or has the king enough strength to save himself, and thus Germany?" How should we understand this claim? Metternich had now realized that there were ideologically motivated people prepared to murder heads of state, and that their actions could not be predicted; they could show up at any time. The uncertainty alone was enough to produce insecurity. What was at stake, in Metternich's view, was therefore "the preservation of the monarchy." The experience of the French Revolution, which had demonstrated how societal violence could transform into an all-powerful military dictatorship, could not be forgotten. It was the matrix behind his political predictions.

Metternich did not seek to draw trivial analogies between the present and the times of the French Revolution. He was looking in particular for the differences. It was the same monarchy now "which [was] threatened in very different but surely no less dangerous ways compared to the ways it was threatened between 1792 and 1814." For him, Austria had a decisive and very specific role to play in connection to the issue of whether another revolution would take place. If a revolution were to take hold of all of Germany, it would soon also reach Italy, and then Austria. That would also mean the end of the German Confederation. Austria, however, was a major European power as much as a German one. If Germany was lost, Austria would remain a major European power. For Metternich, all this brought a sense of déjà vu. When the emperor had lost the backing of the other member states in the imperial war—the Peace of Basel in 1795 was a turning point in this process—he threatened to withdraw from Germany. Metternich recognized this sort of situation as a recurring challenge. The year 1819 was therefore a crucial one. The problem would persist. The German Customs Union in 1833 and the revolution in 1848 were markers of the gradual distancing of Prussia and Austria from each other. It seems like a dialectical paradox of history—a compatibility of the incompatible—that in Metternich's view the maligned, allegedly antinational Carlsbad Decrees were intended to preserve the federal German unity he had helped create in 1815. To the

emperor, he implored: "Our *first* duty is to try to save Germany, which is still possible, because in this alone still lies a certain and true good for us."¹²⁹

On July 27, 1819, Metternich arrived in Teplitz and found himself in the same room, even at the same table, where, six years earlier, he had signed the Quadruple Alliance. It was also almost the same time of the year. On this occasion, he thought the sorry world had committed even graver errors and mistakes than it had made six years ago.¹³⁰

The next day Metternich had a long conversation with King Friedrich Wilhelm III. The king, too, looked back: "Six years ago we had to fight the enemy in the open field: now he sneaks and hides."¹³¹ Metternich disregarded diplomatic custom and spoke frankly about what he saw as the problems at the Prussian court. Hardenberg, he said, was "now old and feeble both in mind and body. He desires what is right, and only too frequently supports what is bad."¹³² Metternich further criticized the state chancellor for surrounding himself with second-raters who would have to be dismissed. Metternich's posthumous papers suppress the urgent questions he added: "Given that only one *Jahn* has yet been arrested, whose activities have been known for years;¹³³ that a new university was built in Bonn, which was then filled with everything known to be bad in Germany; that only after my reporting a *Varnhagen* was removed from his post at the embassy, after he had revolutionized a whole country; how then should well-meaning people support this administration?"

The king agreed with everything Metternich said and asked him for help. Metternich made his help conditional on a categorical demand being met: "not to introduce a representation of the people in your state, which is less suited to it than any other." The priorities, he said, were measures against the press and the fraternities. Friedrich Wilhelm III ordered that Metternich be allowed to access to all his administration's documents, "even the most secret."

Having looked through all of the information he received, Metternich was convinced "that there is a very widespread conspiracy which aims at the overthrow of all German governments *without exception*." Independent of Metternich's conclusion, the police and the Justice Ministry were charged with a systematic investigation that was to establish whether there was a more-organized enterprise behind the violence. What was incontrovertible was that copycat attacks had obviously been planned and executed by individuals who sympathized with one another's attitudes (Sand, Löning, Cantillon and Marinet, later Thistlewood and Louvel). It was also obvious that the attacks had a European character and that there was communication across the Continent; everywhere the attacks were justified with reference to the same values: the national liberation of the Greeks, Germans, Poles, Italians, and so on, and the demand for Constitutions. Metternich took calls for the murder of princes very seriously.

A proclamation, for instance, had been uncovered that said that if there were twenty-one German princes, then twenty-one heads had to roll. Metternich ironically asked why the prince of Liechtenstein had been refused the honor of appearing on the list—that “odd compilation”—together with the Austrian emperor.¹³⁴

In Metternich's view, the conspiracy was far-reaching. Most higher civil servants in Prussia, he thought, were playing crucial roles in it, as were the universities of Jena, Heidelberg, Giessen, and Freiburg. The whole “gymnastics club” [*Turnanstalt*] served the same purpose, especially Dr. Jahn. The “Unbedingten” (the radical and revolutionary core of the fraternities), Metternich thought, were “the real assassins”—all of them young men between twenty and twenty-four. Metternich referred to the fanaticism revealed by the many confiscated diaries, “which overflow with the happiness of wading in blood, handling a dagger and being a regicide, with being called upon to do God's work, etc. Many of the young people wrote down prayers in which they ask God for forgiveness because they have not acted yet—have called upon him soon to offer them an opportunity to die like Sand.”¹³⁵ The professors encouraged the young men to hold on to their good intentions and to prove themselves worthy of their fatherland. There were also alleged connections to French Jacobins. The information Metternich had provided to the Prussian king made Hardenberg highly anxious. He urgently asked Metternich to stay in Teplitz until August 2. Metternich corrected his earlier judgment: the state chancellor was “not in mind but in feeling close on childhood.”¹³⁶

Metternich considered the current moment, August 1819, to be “the most important for Germany as a whole.”¹³⁷ He had succeeded in changing Prussia's political course, steering it away from the introduction of popular representation, establishing a trusting relationship with the king through Wittgenstein, and inviting the important ministers of the German states to Carlsbad. Metternich had, let us recall, been very uncertain as he traveled to Teplitz. Given Prussia's weak king, frail state chancellor, and the unruly, reform-minded faction at court, he did not know if Prussia was ready to exercise joint supreme rule over the German Confederation. The reformist faction were centralists, and they had no interest in supporting the ancient inner plurality of the monarchy or the representation of provincial estates in the capital.

To Emperor Franz, Metternich repeated the only option they had: “To save Germany by the help of Austria, or to leave Austria the possibility, difficult as it may be, to save herself.”¹³⁸ The emperor agreed unreservedly with Metternich, and Metternich was able to dispel his usual worries. It was an overwhelming success. Metternich could be certain of Prussia's unqualified support at the upcoming Carlsbad Conference.

Metternich could now pursue both defensive and constructive security policies. He recognized the need to correct mistakes and uncertainties in the federal Constitution, and to develop it further—to “point out the appropriate ways and means to improve the defects in the Bund.”¹³⁹ He drew up a timetable for the emperor showing what he had contractually agreed to with Prussia in order to achieve that end. In a first period in Carlsbad, questions regarding the press, universities (including fraternities), and the investigative commission for the Sand case were to be dealt with. These were defensive measures that roughly corresponded to the “Six Acts” passed in London. In a second period, in Vienna, the federal Constitution was to be amended in light of those questions that were still controversial.

The Carlsbad Conference, August 6–31, 1819

Metternich had invited to Carlsbad only the ministers of a select group of states, and this he had done as secretly as possible. He was afraid of the as-yet unregulated press, and passionate discussion in the papers could bring the federal states into conflict and might have derailed the undertaking before it had even begun. On August 31, at the very end of the negotiations, Metternich was still claiming: “No one in Germany yet knows what the essence of our negotiations here will be.”¹⁴⁰ All of Metternich's preparations and his experienced handling of the negotiations paid off. In addition to Austria and Prussia, the others of Metternich's chosen eleven were Bavaria, Saxony, Hannover, Württemberg, Baden, Mecklenburg, Nassau, Kurhessen, and Saxony-Weimar. These states Metternich considered sufficiently important or reliable to be invited.

The eleven ministers, assembled like conspirators, agreed upon four pieces of draft legislation that were to be presented to the Federal Assembly for ratification. There could be no talk of taking the waters, as Metternich had originally planned.¹⁴¹ He had underestimated the difficulties. For more than three weeks he had to chair meetings, work on plans, and study documents for twelve to fifteen hours every day. He felt “like a hunted deer.” In the end he felt infinitely relieved; he had not been as sure of success as his outward appearance might have suggested. To the emperor he confessed that something had, in the end, been achieved that “a short while ago might have seemed impossible.” Looking back at this achievement, Metternich explained how he had fought for the right formulation of every point. The text was “strictly scrutinized and calculated to fit not only the situation in Germany, but in Europe.”¹⁴²

1. The law on the universities prohibited student associations, especially fraternities, and regulated the universities themselves. Each of them had to have a “commissioner of the sovereign” [*Landesherrlicher Beauftragter*] who would,

in particular, control the teaching. Metternich had previously warned against revolution and “parties,” but the decree did not yet actually target political associations, the real bodies behind social movements. Those were prohibited only after the July Revolution of 1830.

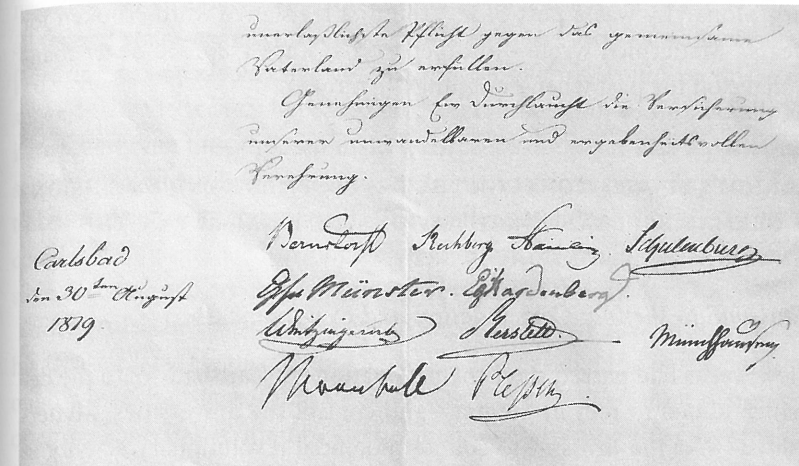
2. The federation now finally possessed a legal framework for regulating the freedom of the press. Smaller texts, especially periodicals, were subject to pre-censorship in all states of the federation. For printed matter of more than 320 pages, states could individually choose whether to practice pre-censorship. Metternich had pushed through the compromise he had designed in Italy.

3. The law on investigations created a federal institution, the Central Investigation Commission, located in Mainz, which was to find out whether there really was a conspiracy behind Carl Sand’s assassination of Kotzebue.

4. An executive order gave the German Confederation the authority to force individual states to comply with the jointly agreed decrees—through military force if necessary. The confederation could thus threaten the use of force, a means it sometimes employed to bring states into line. Württemberg had to give up its own press law of 1817, which had abolished censorship altogether. Later attempts at abolishing censorship, such as in Baden in 1831, also failed; in this case, the law had already been passed by the state Parliament, but had to be revoked in order to avoid the risk of federal retaliation.

There is a widespread view that Metternich imposed the Carlsbad Decrees on the German states through his infamous “system.” But as we have seen, in the days after Sand’s attack Metternich was besieged on all sides by people urging him to take the initiative. At the end of the negotiations, the ministers’ statements made it clear that nothing had changed in this respect. In a farewell letter, they offered him a “unanimous expression of [their] unbounded respect and gratitude.” They praised Metternich’s “prudent guidance, [his] ceaseless efforts, and the confidence [he had] so kindly shown in [them].” He had helped them to fulfill “their most sacred and indispensable duty toward the common fatherland.”¹⁴³ The minister, thus, was clearly believed to have acted not only in the interest of their princes but in that of their common fatherland. Metternich took this letter not merely as a product of official business but as an expression of personal appreciation—he marked it: “to be filed *ad acta familiae*.”

At the crucial sitting of the Federal Assembly on September 20, 1819, the Austrian presidential envoy, Count von Buol, asked the members “to direct their whole attention to the restless agitation and fermentation of feeling prevailing in the greater part of Germany,” which “was unmistakably revealed in sermonising writings, in widespread criminal confederations, even in single deeds of horror.” The decrees they were asked to pass would secure much-needed “order



Signatures to the “Letter of Thanks from the Ministers assembled at Carlsbad to Prince Metternich, Carlsbad, August 30, 1819”: Bernstorff, Rechberg, Stainlein, Schulenburg, Count Münster, Hardenberg, Wintzingerode, Berstett, Münchenhausen, Marschall, Plessen.

and peace, respect for laws and confidence in Governments, general contentment, and the undisturbed enjoyment of all the benefits which, under the protection of a durable, secure peace, would fall to the share of the German nation from the hand of their princes.”¹⁴⁴

Like the British laws, the four decrees that the Federal Assembly finally passed on September 20, 1819, were time-limited. When Metternich heard the news, he wrote to Dorothea von Lieven that “the child which I have carried nine months has at last seen the light and is well.”¹⁴⁵ If this is right, then he must have had his initial ideas for this legislation in December 1818, immediately after the Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle and before the assassination of Kotzebue. This is certainly plausible: the theme of domestic and European unrest was touched upon at the conference. Metternich knew that this legislation was controversial: “Each party will wish to baptize the child by a different name. Some will call it a monster, some a good work, some a piece of stupidity. The truth lies in between. The first legislative words spoken for thirty years that are uttered from a sense of reason, justice, and experience, . . . these words are a great act, one of the most important of my life.”¹⁴⁶ Given that it wholly contradicts the widely shared judgment on the Carlsbad Decrees, this self-evaluation will no doubt come as some surprise. It can be properly understood only if we bear in mind what the experience of war, and the regaining of domestic peace, meant to him, how much he valued the unity of Germany and the fact that the

Habsburg Monarchy was a part of it. "The first legislative words spoken for thirty years," Metternich wrote—in other words, since 1789. He never managed to shake off the past when designing the future.

METTERNICH'S SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION OF THE GERMAN FEDERAL CONSTITUTION: THE FINAL ACT OF THE GERMAN CONFEDERATION, MAY 15, 1820

From Carlsbad to Vienna: Consolidation and Developments

Only a few weeks had passed since the negotiations in Carlsbad. With the decrees, which aimed to rein in the press and control the universities, Metternich wanted—like the British—to counter potential revolutionary activity in the country. The purely defensive measures strengthened the power of the confederation. It would be possible to speak of a negative national integration. But Metternich did not forget that the Federal Act was only provisional, and he therefore embarked on the second part of his constitutional policies, which he had announced previously. He energetically pushed ahead with the extension of the federal Constitution. Even constitutional historians who view Carlsbad as nothing but a "conservative-restorative regression of the federal Constitution" find the tendencies of the subsequent Vienna conference "peculiar and remarkable."¹⁴⁷

On November 18, the emperor granted an audience to the group of ministers who had been invited to Vienna. Metternich provided him with the appropriate wording for the occasion. The conferences in Vienna had been initiated "in order finally to make a direct attempt at putting the confederation on the right track."¹⁴⁸ The only opposition to be expected might come from Bavaria or Württemberg. Such opposition rested either on misunderstanding, which could be easily dispelled, or on diverging principles, which could be combatted with the help of the rest of the confederation. "A common good" had "to be preserved." One or two participants, Metternich wrote, wanted to vote against everything on the basis of their private ideas. "In this case, the opponents will have to bow if the rest of the assembly agrees and has right on their side." When thus addressing those gathered, he was to direct his gaze at those for whom these remarks were intended, without showing any further emotion.

The meetings in Vienna differed from those in Carlsbad in every way. Metternich took the initiative and did not wait for the other governments to call upon him. He did not exclude any of the states, officially inviting all seventeen of the "inner council" [*Engerer Rat*] of the Federal Assembly to Vienna for

negotiations on the federal Constitution. The council was the body in which all federal states were represented, whether in the form of an individual vote [*Virilstimme*] or a collective vote [*Kuriatstimme*]. It would be misleading to suggest that Metternich bypassed the Federal Assembly as the actually authoritative body in constitutional matters, because the latter was a permanent assembly of envoys who first had to ask for instructions regarding any decisions to be made. A matter as complicated as the amendment of the Constitution could not be negotiated through envoys; it was necessary to have the responsible decision makers—the ministers—present at the table.

Metternich held all cards. For the negotiations, he invited the delegates to his Chancellery. He proposed the agenda and handed the participants a thorough paper that set out his approach. On November 25, 1819, there were two opening speeches written by Metternich, one given by the emperor and expressing the emperor's general support for the confederation, and another given by Metternich as the host minister, in which he outlined the aims of the conferences ahead of them. His own speech lasted two hours, and Metternich regretted that he did not have a stenographer on hand, because, as he told Dorothea von Lieven—as usual with some irony—"I spoke like a God."¹⁴⁹

At the beginning of the negotiations, Metternich felt that he was achieving great things: "I am in a very decisive phase of my public life—I shall either perish along with society or I shall have a substantial hand in its salvation."¹⁵⁰ He quoted Talleyrand as saying: "Austria is the upper house (*chambre de pairs*) of Europe. As long as it is not dissolved, it will rein in the lower house (*les communes*)"—that is, the smaller states. Metternich repeatedly emphasized that the Carlsbad Decrees and the decrees to be passed now were important not only for Germany but also for Europe as a whole. He was thinking of the strong defensive central region that the German Confederation was destined to form.

As Metternich had also written the speech he gave on behalf of the emperor, we can interpret both speeches together. Metternich reminded his listeners of the motivations that had led to the foundation of the confederation. It is striking that he described it "as the only possible meeting point for the whole *German nation*."¹⁵¹ He referred to the "federal Constitution" [*Föderativ-Verfassung*] of Germany.

At the same time, he warned about a "party hooked on revolution that is spread across all of Europe," including in the lands of the German Confederation, that had made worrying progress over the past two years. To begin with, there had been only a few dissatisfied individuals, political dreamers, but then whole generations had been caught "under the treacherous cloak of holy words and philanthropic intentions, so that the passion of the crowds were roused with feeling."

The confederation, he went on, guaranteed external and internal peace [*Ruhe*] for Germany; it guaranteed the independence of the individual allied members and protected them against threats from one another, as well as from abroad. In his opening speech, Metternich made the case for the German Confederation, explaining to the participants the implications of its foundation in international law. All existing public law in Germany depended on it: it guaranteed not only the rights of the confederation but also the sovereign rights of the individual states. The existence of the confederation no longer depended on arbitrary decisions, but it was necessary to make sure that it did not continue to carry on in an incomplete, unsatisfactory, and uncertain form. One must not allow it, he concluded, to sink into powerlessness and irrelevance.

A Program for Confederate Policies

Metternich, the allegedly restorationist minister, formulated a brief for reform: "It is therefore an obvious necessity and common duty to give the confederation the perfection which, according to its foundation and the basic idea on which it rests, it was destined to acquire." That more progress had not been made so far was down to the specificity of the confederation itself, the influence of local opinions—that is, of the federal components. Metternich wished the confederation "the perfection, the solidity, and thus the reputation that the association of thirty million Germans, equal in rank and influence to the foremost European powers, deserves."

At the same time, he identified ten tasks to be addressed by the conference. For each of these, a working commission was formed.¹⁵² The catalogue of tasks expressed Metternich's determination to strengthen the confederation's character as a united federal state by giving it central authority in legal, executive, constitutional, military, and even economic matters. This can certainly be interpreted as a progressive step forward for the federal union—as a form of national integration. Metternich himself revealed his political priorities by adding his name to three of the commissions: article 13 [*13. Artikel*], political-military situation [*Politisch-militärische Verhältnisse*], and federal fortresses [*Bundesfestungen*]. Minister Zentner, from sovereignty-obsessed Bavaria, wanted to join no less than seven commissions, closely followed by the equally suspicious representative of Württemberg, Mandesloh, on five commissions. Prussia opted for the permanent court [*Permanante Instanz*]¹⁵³—that is, the high court (Hardenberg)—competencies [*Kompetenz*], article 13, federal fortresses, and trade [*Handel*] (all Bernstorff). From the wide range of topics, we shall select two in which Metternich intervened strongly through written submissions, and which show well what his political convictions and his particular in-

terests as a member of the nobility were. They concern the question of the Constitution and the role of the mediatised within the framework of the federal Constitution.

Metternich, Constitutionalism, and Article 13

At the fringes of Carlsbad and then at the Vienna conferences themselves, the participants conducted heated debates regarding the correct interpretation of article 13 of the Federal Act: "All Confederate states will be given an estate-based Constitution." At one end of the spectrum of interpretations was an interpretation based on the "old estates" [*altständisch*], and at the other, one based on "representatives." Friedrich Gentz had deployed all of his rhetorical skill in arguing for the interpretation based on the "old estates," but he failed, mainly because of resistance from Württemberg and Bavaria. It was agreed that the question would be resolved at the Vienna meetings.

In light of these previous debates, the conference participants were curious to see what position Metternich would adopt on the commission. It was well known that he saw the term "sovereignty of the people" as a demagogic catchphrase. Would he turn the Vienna conferences into a battlefield of restoration? Metternich knew that his question was on the minds of quite a few participants, and he therefore declared to Bavarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Rechberg:

The whole of Germany—her right-thinking men as well as the others—is deceived as to the object of our meeting at Vienna.

Everybody thought we were going to overthrow all that is connected with the forms which unhappily have been transplanted to the German soil (that soil so historical, so classical, and so great) in the course of the two or three last years. Some have thought we were right to do so, others have raised a great outcry. Now, we are not doing what they expected, and I declare frankly that in my soul and conscience I do not allow myself to regret it, because I cannot regret what is impossible.¹⁵³

Metternich did not consider the recently passed Constitution of Württemberg to be workable, unlike the Constitution of Bavaria, and he added, ironically, that he believed that "the result of our Conferences will be most disastrous for the King of Württemberg and for his people, seeing that they will be condemned to preserve their Constitution."¹⁵⁴

At the Vienna conferences Metternich himself presented a memorandum on the question of the Constitution.¹⁵⁵ The content must have surprised everyone, because he did not touch at all on the controversial issue of the

“old estates” versus “representatives.” He considered the Constitutions of the individual states only to the extent that they affected the confederation, and formulated some general rules on that basis. Because the confederation was an association of princes, only a monarchical principle—not a democratic one—could achieve its goals. A Constitution was not to infringe the independence of the confederation in its dealings with external actors, or the inviolability and independence of the individual federal states and their domestic security. To break either of these rules would undermine the confederation’s purpose of safeguarding external and internal security. The participation of the estates in taxation was not to negatively impact on the military expenditure of the confederation. The estates were also not to try to influence questions of war or peace, which were a matter for the confederation. Ironically, it was the Bavarian representative who spoke for the commission on the constitutional question. He thanked Metternich emphatically for his clarifications and drew the inescapable conclusion: “On the basis of the principle that the Constitutions of individual federal states, as *inner* matters of these states, are outside the competence of the confederation and their order is left to the governments of the individual states, neither are the already existing Constitutions to be subjected to revisions, nor are future Constitutions to be subjected to different rules.” In other words, the existing law remained in place, regardless of how it had become law.

Metternich made sure that this principle was secured further. In the previous months the Bavarian king sought his advice about whether he could repeal his country’s Constitution—and if so, how. Metternich had categorically denied this possibility. In Vienna it was now agreed that an existing Constitution could “be altered again only in accordance with the rules of the Constitution”—that is, under the participation of the estates, not by a diktat of the monarch alone. The Final Act of Vienna represented great progress, because it allowed the states to adopt their own Constitutions and at the same time stipulated that the confederation guaranteed these Constitutions. Apart from that, it remained the duty of all members of the confederation to introduce a Constitution. A “violation of the law from above,” as Ernst Rudolf Huber put it, or a “restorationist coup” were from that point on impossible. It was now the duty of the ruler to maintain the Constitution.

The supplementary constitutional law strengthened state Parliaments. The so-called monarchical principle, which was now anchored in the Constitution, did not change that at all, although it is often presented as a sign of restoration. It did, indeed, insist on the fact that “all of the state’s power remains united in the head of the state,” with the estates presented as participating only in the decision process. This was not a genuine separation of powers. But with this principle, the delegates forestalled any constitutional crises that might have

resulted if the votes of the parliamentary chambers clashed with the will of the monarch. Between 1861 and 1866 in Bismarck’s Prussia, the political process was paralyzed because the House of Delegates refused to agree to the necessary taxes for the reform of the army. But beyond that, monarchies were the rule in the nineteenth century.¹⁵⁶ Even states that had just formed in the wake of revolutions retained a king—Leopold of Coburg became King of Belgium, and Otto of Bavaria became King of Greece. The Swiss Confederation and the United States were the exceptions, and the latter only to a certain extent, given the unique position of the president, with his absolute right to veto legislation and his role as commander in chief.

The discussions in Vienna, especially with delegates from middle-sized German states that already had a Constitution, motivated Metternich to explain in more detail what he understood by the law and a Constitution. He wanted to make clear that he was not the absolutist he was often taken to be, and to that end he consciously chose to speak with the envoy from Baden, a state with a particularly active Parliament. Metternich once again unambiguously stated that by preservation he meant “not only the old order of things as they have been preserved in some countries since times immemorial, but also all the new legally established institutions.”¹⁵⁷ Metternich’s overriding aim was to avoid unrest; a return to something that no longer existed was just as dangerous as the transition from the old to something new. He surprised Berstett with his view that the Constitutions established so far (by May 1820) had to be recognized, saying by way of justification: “Every order of things legally introduced bears in itself the principle of a better system.”¹⁵⁸ This sentence expresses Metternich’s categorical commitment to reform and to evolutionary progress in accordance with the law.

A genuine Constitution “is made only by time.” Metternich was thinking of the case of Britain. He assumed that the British legal order is historically founded, hence has a historical origin and is anchored in reality. In a private letter, he wrote: “The English Constitution is the work of centuries, and, moreover, streams of blood and anarchy of every kind supplied the means. Social order ever progresses in this way; it cannot be otherwise, since it is the law of nature.”¹⁵⁹ In 1847 he warned against a general Prussian Constitution, saying: “I have nothing against Constitutions; I admire the good ones and pity the state which is subjected to a bad one, that is, to one that does not suit it. Constitutionalism I condemn to hell; it only lives on deception and fraud.”¹⁶⁰ He hated words that ended in “-ism,” he explained, because this suffix turned them into ideological concepts and rendered them useless for factual description—his examples were: *communitas* and communism; *societas* and socialism; *pietas* and pietism, and, accordingly, Constitution and constitutionalism.

The Cortes Constitution of 1812 was for Metternich no Constitution at all, but “the work of caprice or of a wild delusion.”¹⁶¹ Anyone familiar with Metternich’s way of thinking will see that he was not being purely polemical. This Constitution, in particular, served as an example during the revolutions in southern Europe between 1820 and 1823, and those countries imitating it failed because it did not fit with their specific conditions.¹⁶² This applied even to Spain, because the Constitution only had space for one Parliament, one nation, but not for the countries out of which this great state was composed.

The Mediatized and the Metternichs

We have become familiar with the Metternich family and its venerable tradition of barons, counts, and finally even princes of the old Holy Roman Empire. Metternich’s father, Franz Georg, had continued this tradition and always acted as an energetic representative for the interests of the estate to which he belonged—the former aristocracy that enjoyed imperial immediacy. As far as the interest of the estates was concerned, his son acted cautiously in the background as a minister who stood above these political matters but still was effective, as in the case of the special allowances made for the mediatized nobility in the Federal Act, which preserved most of their rights and made them, in effect, as Heinz Gollwitzer put it, “sub-rulers” [*Unterlandesherrn*].

Franz Georg had died on August 11, 1818, and all rights as the head of the family and the entailed estate had thus passed to Clemens von Metternich. It is therefore not surprising that in the context of the constitutional work to be done in Vienna, he took on the task of compiling the report on the situation and rights of the mediatized.¹⁶³ This report is a rare piece of evidence for how he understood himself in his role as a mediatized prince. According to his interpretation, the former imperial nobility had lost everything associated with rule; all other rights, however, had to be retained. The Congress of Vienna and the Federal Act (especially article 14) had confirmed that “in a no less advantageous sense” than had the Imperial Recess (1803) and the Treaty of the Rhenish Confederation (1806). As Metternich saw, however, the stipulations of this article had not yet been fulfilled. This was now being remedied with article 63 of the Viennese Final Act. The expectations of the mediatized were met. The confederation now had the authority to make sure that the legal rights of the imperial nobility were secured. And if their rights were not being upheld, they now had the right, enshrined in law, to lodge a complaint with the Federal Assembly. In this way, the nobility had been able to maintain an old right even within the new confederation, a right that under conditions of the old “German freedom” all members of the empire had had in the form of the right to appeal

to the Imperial Chamber Court [*Reichskammergericht*]. Forfeiting this democratic right had been a step backward that had damaged the reputation of the German Confederation in the eyes of the people. For those mediatized there nevertheless remained points to be clarified and further demands. There were six points:

1. The promised “equality of rank” [*Ebenbürtigkeit*] with the ruling aristocracy had to be made clear so that it would not be forgotten. Princes therefore had to be legally awarded the title “serene highness,” counts the title “noble.” The federal Chancellery had to establish and continually keep a record of births, marriages, and deaths occurring in the families concerned. Later, in 1848, a majority at the National Assembly in Frankfurt found this demand so objectionable that they discussed whether to abolish the aristocracy as an estate and to deprive it of its titles.
2. The mediatized had to have the right to enter into the services of any of the federal states without being limited in the disposition of their property. Regarding this question, the Metternichs had bitter memories from dealings with Napoleon and the king of Württemberg, especially as the Act of the Rhenish Confederation insisted on the need to be resident.
3. Protection against “sequestration”—the confiscation of property—had to be guaranteed. According to the Act of the Rhenish Confederation, in criminal cases it was not permitted to confiscate the estates of the mediatized—only the income they generated. That was “not unreasonable” and had to be assured.
4. If the estates of a family were distributed over several federal states, it had to be possible, in the case of minors, to arrange a common custodial administration.
5. The family contracts and regulations of family inheritance law were to remain valid.
6. Where formerly imperial estates were sold to individuals who were not of equal social rank [*Nicht-Ebenbürtige*], the titles associated with the rank had to remain with their former owner, because all equality of rank [*Ebenbürtigkeit*] was tied to families and not their possessions.

Metternich added that the Austrian emperor approved of all these demands, and that he wished that all delegates would lobby their governments to provide them with instructions to the same effect.

Difficulty and Resistance: Bavaria and Württemberg

Metternich was prepared to encounter resistance in Vienna, and as in Carlsbad he expected it to come from Bavaria and Württemberg. The Bavarian government had to be convinced of the federation's right to decide on matters of war and peace. The rule that had been agreed upon "deprived smaller courts of the possibilities for pursuing political intrigues with foreign countries," Metternich wrote.¹⁶⁴ But the greatest resistance in the negotiations came from Württemberg, which, after four months of discussions, raised the prospect of the whole conference ending in failure. Württemberg did not want the negotiations in Vienna to end with a final, fixed document—"a definitive resolution," as it was put. It wanted for the results of the consultations to be considered only preliminary work that would then be completed at the Federal Assembly after extensive discussions. As an experienced diplomat, Metternich knew that the most difficult questions could be solved in Vienna, while he was moderating the negotiations. In Frankfurt, this would be very different; he expected disruption. Metternich assumed that the king of Württemberg's proposal was an attempt to present himself as liberal and everyone else as authoritarian. He simply wanted to appear populist, Metternich thought. After his negative experiences of Württemberg at Carlsbad, he now noted that whereas all the other courts had sent their best men to Vienna, Württemberg had chosen someone, Count Mandelslohe, who, although he could not be faulted personally, did not enjoy the trust of others or any ability to influence them. And behind Mandelslohe's back operated a clever, dishonorable adventurer who had been personally involved in criminal proceedings. Count Mandelslohe was subordinate to this character in all of his actions. But the German Confederation could only "prosper under the rule of a firm and united will."

Württemberg's most substantial objection was that the conference could not supplement the Federal Act without the involvement of the powers that had backed the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna, because the Federal Act was a part of the latter. Metternich had more than enough reason to treat the Württemberg government with great caution, especially King Wilhelm, who had a powerful ally backing him. His second marriage was to Grand Princess Katharina Pavlovna, who had died on January 9, 1819. But close family ties were retained between the courts in Saint Petersburg and Stuttgart.¹⁶⁵ Alexander's father, Tsar Paul, had been married to Duchess Sophie Dorothea of Württemberg (who called herself Maria Fjodorovna after her conversion to the Orthodox faith). Alexander thus had a mother from Württemberg, and he made sure to visit his family in Stuttgart each time he passed through. He was one of the signatories of the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna, and he had a lively interest in interfering in the way German political affairs were handled. Only recently,

the behavior of his state councillor, Stourdza, at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle had proved as much.

Metternich knew that foreign countries were paying close attention to the negotiations in Vienna. The interpretation of article 13 was followed with particular interest. Metternich received an article from the French press that registered with astonishment that every German sovereign was allowed "to interpret this famous article according to his whim—whether in the sense of the princes who are absolutist rulers, or in the sense of constitutional princes who take the interest of their people as the main point of reference."¹⁶⁶

Metternich countered the warnings against interventions from abroad, not without some satisfaction, by pointing out that the government of Württemberg had earlier completely ruled out any toleration of foreign interference in the questions discussed in Vienna, calling it incompatible with the independence and dignity of the German Confederation; like any other sovereign power, Württemberg had argued, the German Confederation had the indisputable authority to arrange its domestic affairs according to its own opinions and interests. Württemberg's demand that the signatories of the Vienna order should now participate in the deliberations was in clear contradiction to this.

The representative for Württemberg was steadfast in his refusal to sign the declaration that said that the resolutions agreed to in Vienna did not need any "further consultations at the Federal Assembly." He explained in great detail why his court would not agree to the declaration. On March 31, 1820, Emperor Franz personally approached the king of Württemberg, who finally capitulated: on April 14, 1820, Count von Wintzingerode, the minister of foreign affairs, declared to Metternich that he agreed to the procedures and that he recognized the resolutions passed at Vienna as definitive and not in need of further deliberation at the Federal Assembly. On May 14, Württemberg's approval of the Final Act arrived in Vienna. Thirty meetings had taken place between November 25, 1819, and the official date of the document, which was the following day, May 15, 1820.

Metternich was pleased, but also relieved. The document achieved "the maximum that can be achieved today." At the Federal Assembly, all states agreed to adopt, as a whole and without further deliberation, the sixty-five articles agreed to in Vienna as supplements to the Basic Federal Law. Austria's reputation had been so bolstered by the negotiations and their results that Metternich got carried away: "A word spoken by Austria will be inalienable law in Germany. Only now will the Carlsbad measures truly come to life, and all measures needed to maintain calm [*Ruhe*] in Germany will naturally follow."¹⁶⁷

All in all, the sixty-five paragraphs of the Final Act of Vienna represented great progress when measured against Metternich's ideal of the powers and role of the German Confederation. The federal Constitution was only now complete.

The act strengthened the character of the confederation as a state and equipped it with an army of 300,000 soldiers. These could only be employed defensively: this was guaranteed by the federal structure of the confederation, which meant that a supreme commander would have to be elected each time a conflict arose. Germany, which Metternich had referred to as the "fatherland" several times in conference texts, was now in a safer position among the major powers. As one of these powers, its role, in virtue of its geographical location between France and Russia, was to strengthen peace in Europe without itself taking an active role in the Concert of Europe. This had been Metternich's plan for many years. Germany was now also on the way toward constitutionalism and had opened the door toward common trade and a common economy, even if these initiatives would later fail.

The question of who was responsible for thwarting the promising possibilities for progress is a matter of controversy among historians. Was it the allegedly well-meaning assassins and rebels (until 1848 one can hardly speak of genuine "revolutionaries"), the Simons and Sands? Thomas Nipperdey warns against trivializing them as pathological cases or failing to recognize their revolutionary aspirations, including the "potential for direct terrorist actions."¹⁶⁸ Or is Hans-Ulrich Wehler right when he identifies the "existing despotism," "the governments' errors of judgment," and most of all Metternich himself as really responsible? Metternich, Wehler says, "used the entire repertoire of his Machiavellian art in all directions and at different levels," and used the fear of revolution for "clever manipulation." In that case, it would after all have been the short-sighted and obstinate princes and their followers, who did not understand the historical situation, that were to blame. Our discussion of the post-1815 era, however, has shown how difficult it was to find the right interpretation of the present against the background of past historical experience. That present was characterized by dire public finances following decades of senseless war, by famines and inflation, and by feelings of hopelessness amid economic backwardness.

TERRORISM AND SECURITY POLICIES AS A EUROPEAN PROBLEM:
ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND METTERNICH

Britain's View of German Security Policies

German historians such as Nipperdey and Wehler look at the attacks and other forms of social violence from a national perspective. But this is not how politicians at the time saw them. The British and the Russians carefully followed the German Confederation's reaction to the attacks. An example of this is the

exchange between Castlereagh and the Russian ambassador in London, Christoph von Lieven. They considered the "pre-conferences" in Carlsbad to be characterized by a spirit of exceptional unity and agreement. Now they were eager to see whether this would also be the case in Vienna, because the cabinets in Saint Petersburg and London sincerely, and with equal enthusiasm ("avec sincérité et une ardeur égale"), welcomed the German powers' efforts to arrest the revolutionary tendencies. They also welcomed the fact that at Vienna the connections within the German Confederation were extended in order to secure general peace [*Ruhe*] in Germany, which they saw as inseparable from that in Europe. In this way, the great political expectations that accompanied the signing of the Federal Act in Vienna would be fulfilled. The same principles of security policy had also guided the Court of St. James, which had also followed German politics with the question of European security in mind. The courts in Vienna and Berlin also reported regularly to London on the measures taken.¹⁶⁹

After the Carlsbad conferences, Metternich had even sent the British prince regent a personal summary, explaining the future plans to him. "A new era is beginning," he wrote, "and it will be an era of salvation if the German courts do not go beyond the limits assigned to them." Metternich invoked their common principles, "which would have achieved great work if they had not so often been lost sight of in many negotiations of the years 1813 up to the disastrous epoch of 1815." He thanked the prince regent for sending Count Ernst Friedrich zu Münster—the head of the German Chancellery in London and representative of the prince regent in the Kingdom of Hannover—to Carlsbad and requested that he be sent to Vienna, as he would "consider the direct support of Count Münster in the course of the negotiations of Vienna a real benefit."¹⁷⁰

These exchanges and Castlereagh's comments document clearly that the oft-invoked "East-West contrast" in European security policy did not exist in the early years. On the contrary, in a long programmatic dispatch to the English ambassador in Vienna, dated January 14, 1820, Castlereagh reached the conclusion that the four allied cabinets were fundamentally in agreement, even if there were slight differences when it came to the question of the means for achieving the shared aims. The setup of the British government made it necessary to proceed with more caution when it came to its dealings with other powers, and—hinting at its dependence on the Parliament and the public—he added that it also had to be aware of other considerations.¹⁷¹

During May 1820, Castlereagh continued to follow the consultations on the federal Constitution in Vienna and supported them, saying that enormous progress had been made in the fight against radicalism, but that "the monster

still lives, and shows himself in new shapes." But they would not despair over the task of "crushing him by time and perseverance. The laws have been reinforced, the juries do their duty."¹⁷² Castlereagh approved unreservedly of the substance, intention, and stringency of the measures. After the Final Act of Vienna had been signed, Castlereagh congratulated Metternich on his moderation and persistence. Metternich, he said, had achieved a result that was "honourable" to him and "beneficial to Europe at the present critical conjuncture." Those who "most actively presided" over the negotiations had "added important additional securities to the European System."¹⁷³

On May 28, 1820, a week after Sand's execution, the British ambassador in Frankfurt, Frederick Lamb, reported on the press reaction to the judgment. He was surprised by the passionate sympathy for the murderer, who was seen as a victim, and by the lively outrage against the princes. He approved of the measures to protect domestic security taken by the Federal Assembly, which appeared to have established tranquility. He concluded that the "really dangerous part of the community consisted in some thirty periodical writers, and in the large proportion of the professors in the schools and universities." But since the introduction of censorship, "the former [i.e., the writers of periodicals] have become comparatively harmless." He mentioned an account of Sand's death as "one of the worst articles I have seen," and blamed the government for allowing it to go to print. The universities of the Grand Duchy of Baden, and especially that of Heidelberg, he considered to be "in a worse state than most others." The students there "still wear the absurd dress which is the rallying sign of their party." The students of Göttingen had in the last three days "filled the town of Cassel in the same costume, and their appearance in it in numbers is always attended by a feeling of their strength, and by their proportionate insolence and obnoxiousness." But in general the "measures of compression" had succeeded. Lamb welcomed the aims and the effects of the federal resolution of September 20, 1819.¹⁷⁴

The Assassination of the Duc de Berry (February 13, 1820)

Even if there is occasional mention in the literature of the international character of the attacks,¹⁷⁵ it is never asked whether Metternich learned about them, or, if he did, how he interpreted and reacted to them. The closer we look at this, the more obvious it becomes that the one-dimensional approach that equates Metternich's attitude with the Carlsbad Decrees is insufficient. This approach does not allow us to see the context within which the actors made their decisions at the time, because it ignores their perception of potential crises, and because it entirely ignores what it meant for politicians to feel that their lives

were permanently under threat. The greatest international uproar was caused by the assassination of the Bourbon Charles-Ferdinand d'Artois, Duc de Berry, the potential successor to the throne. His father, who ruled from 1824, was Charles X—the brother of the Bourbon king Louis XVI, who had been executed, and of Louis XVIII, who was at that time on the throne. On the evening of February 13, 1820, Louis Pierre Louvel, a saddler, attacked the Duc de Berry with a knife while the prince was walking from the opera to his carriage. He was not killed immediately, but bled to death, fully conscious, in front of the assembled court in the early morning of the following day. This event left a deep impression on those present as well as on later aristocrats who learned about it. It created a traumatic image of regicide as unpredictable, as potentially occurring anywhere and at any time. "War on the palaces! Peace to the shacks!" went the slogan, from the time of the French Revolution, of the writer Nicolas Chamfort; it spread from Paris and frightened the high nobility of Europe. How else should we make sense of the fact that Melanie Zichy, a descendant of a Hungarian noble family and later Metternich's wife, noted the event in her diary in faraway Vienna? She described how, on February 21, her mother had entered her room in a panic. Her notes show that the assassination dominated the family's conversations for days.¹⁷⁶

The inconspicuous appearance of the assassin contributed to the fear. Chateaubriand, the leading French diplomat of the 1820s, was an eyewitness, having rushed to the scene. In his memoirs, he described the assassin as "a little man with a dirty and sorry face, such as one sees by a thousand on the Paris streets." He thought it probable that he was not a member of any society, but instead an individual fanatic, a member of a sect rather than of a conspiracy: "He belonged to one of those conspiracies of ideas, the members of which may sometimes come together but most frequently act one by one, according to their individual impulse. His brain fed on a single thought, even as a heart slakes its thirst on a single passion. His act was consequent upon his principles: he would have liked to kill the whole Dynasty with one blow."¹⁷⁷ The type of perpetrator witnessed and described by Chateaubriand was like a terrorist who, as a "sleeper," may strike at any time. Because he justified his politically motivated act [*Gesinnungstat*] on the basis of an ideational community, it was not possible to get close to such individuals by infiltrating organized revolutionary networks. In this way, he appeared strikingly similar to the German prototype, Carl Sand.

Chateaubriand had been appointed ambassador in Berlin in November 1820. He loved to walk through the parks of Berlin, and on one of his walks he came across the young assassin's name. He found hearts carved into the beechwood benches and "pierced by daggers: under these stabbed hearts one read the name

of 'Sand.'"¹⁷⁸ Chateaubriand thought that "under the sky of Germany" the "love of liberty becomes a sort of sombre and mysterious fanaticism, which is propagated by means of secret societies." This new terrorism, he summed up in the phrase: "Sand came to strike terror into Europe."¹⁷⁹

When questioned in court, Louvel revealed himself to be a convinced anti-monarchist. He said that he had pursued his plans for years, admired Napoleon, and hoped to be able to take revenge for the foreign invasion of France. He did not feel any personal antipathy toward his victim, but he wanted to eradicate the Bourbons. He had, indeed, killed the only direct heir to the throne.¹⁸⁰ His deed proved that the "murder of tyrants" propagated by blood-thirsty revolutionary lyrics and by radical fraternities, including the followers of Friedrich Hecker, was an actual option. Anyone who carved the hearts described by Chateaubriand belonged to a community that celebrated political assassination as the individual acts of a national conscience.

On February 20, 1820, Metternich received an initial, still sketchy, report about "a not very promising event" in a letter from the banker Rothschild in Paris, dated February 14. At that point Metternich was in the middle of the negotiations over the Final Act of Vienna. At first he recommended complete silence regarding the matter.¹⁸¹ On February 23, the emperor approved Metternich's suggestion that Count von Wallmoden should personally deliver a letter of condolence to the royal family. To Dorothea von Lieven, Metternich wrote very frankly: "Liberalism is doing fine. It is raining Sands ['des Sands']. This is the fourth one in less than nine months. I still have about sixty like them on my lists, and that is for Germany alone."¹⁸² Metternich was thus immediately struck by the parallel between Paris and Mannheim—both assassins shared the same political motive. And he lived under the constant fear that he would become the target of an attack himself. While the impression of Sand's assassination of Kotzebue was still fresh in his mind, Metternich admitted: "My daily battle is against ultras of any kind, until the dagger of some fool will find its way to me as well. But unless the rogue approaches me from behind, he will get a slap in the face that he will remember for a long time—even if he catches me—Until then, fare thee well."¹⁸³ The feeling of being permanently threatened stuck with him; fresh attacks intensified it. In 1831, he warned Gentz at one of his dinner evenings: "I shall be killed in three months; I know it; but I would be killed later as well; better that way."¹⁸⁴

By February 26 Metternich had received the report from Vincent, the envoy in Paris, along with a newspaper article. It said that it was too early to form a final judgment, but the French government was now in a position to change an article of the Constitution—the *Charte Constitutionnelle*—that "had been attacked in equal measure by both extreme parties." The French equivalent of

the Habeas Corpus Act—the rule that citizens who have been arrested must be brought before a judge and can be imprisoned only if that is what the judge rules—was also to be suspended. Finally, the introduction of censorship for a period of five years was suggested. Metternich commented: "These two last laws are fundamentally nothing but an imitation of our Carlsbad Decrees."¹⁸⁵ But he had his doubts about whether the suggested legal initiative would pass through the Chamber of Deputies without further resistance. He reacted with skepticism to the formation of Richelieu's government. Although he welcomed the fact that, politically, it occupied the center ground, he did not consider it assertive enough: "The Jacobins think he is an ultra-socialist weakling, the royalists think he is a weakling without a clear position [*ohne Sinn*]."¹⁸⁶

The Cato Street Conspiracy of Arthur Thistlewood, February 1820

While Metternich was still thinking about the Paris attack and its consequences, news reached him of a much larger attack that had been planned in London. Had the plot not been thwarted, the entire Cabinet would have been killed. Metternich was now facing the fact that the most prominent advocates for the revolution in Britain were about to become perpetrators. He knew them all from having studied Canning's speech and policies three years earlier. He was well informed. Around thirty of the best-known popular speakers from the "time of the radicals' machinations" (at the end of 1816 and the beginning of 1817) had planned to strike on February 13, when a Cabinet dinner was scheduled to be hosted by the president of the Council, Lord Harrowby. The conspirators—all of them heavily armed—had met in a nearby hayloft that could be reached only by a ladder. Suddenly several constables appeared and asked the assembled to lay down their arms. The "ring leader," Arthur Thistlewood, one of the closest friends of the aforementioned Hunt, had previously appeared as a popular speaker at Spa Fields. The conspirators resisted arrest, and most were able to flee; only nine could be detained by the police.

Metternich again evaluated the events by way of a comparison: "This event, and possibly many more, are the best commentaries on the Carlsbad Decrees. In England, incidentally, all is quiet [*herrscht vollkommene Ruhe*]."¹⁸⁷ In his comments on the presentation, the emperor asked that they also monitor the "situation in Spain."

Metternich had not even mentioned the cruel detail of the planned attack, about which he had learned from Dorothea von Lieven. Wellington had given her information about the way in which the attack was meant to be executed that he not dared give the press. The assassins had intended to cut off their victims' heads, and they had quarreled over who was allowed to cut off which

head. Thistlewood had chosen Wellington; there had been longer disputes over Castlereagh. Two people were meant to cut off the heads, a third to hold a bag. From the place of the attack, the conspirators would have headed to the Bank of England and occupied it. Then they had planned to seize six cannon from the artillery firing range and issue prepared proclamations that they had the ministers in their power and that the people should join them. The conspirators would “announce the overthrow of tyranny and establish themselves as the popular government.” There were lists with signatures in support of the plan that included the names of wealthy families, citizens from all classes, and even foreigners. Confiscated papers had provided the details of the plot. The plans were foiled only because a spy had infiltrated the group. At the end of her report, Countess Lieven, hinting at Brutus’s murder of Caesar, commented with irony: “It appears to me that a foible for antiquity must have influenced these Brutus characters.”¹⁸⁸

THE DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD OF INTERVENTION AND THE CONCERT OF EUROPE

Reluctant Intervention

The question that still lingered—not only for Metternich, but for all politicians—was whether “the Revolution” had really ended with the Vienna order. Unrest in all of Europe and attempted uprisings pointed toward a continuation of the Revolution. When confronting social unrest and successful and attempted assassinations, the British government showed that it was prepared to act as energetically as the Habsburg Monarchy, and even temporarily to curb the civil rights of freedom of movement, of assembly, and of the press. Metternich’s comparison with Carlsbad was not arbitrarily chosen.

But what about the principle of intervention in cases in which peace in Europe seemed under threat—an intrinsic part of the Quadruple Alliance’s agreements after Chaumont in 1814? Received opinion draws a strict line of demarcation between Metternich and Castlereagh with regard to this question. But is it a correct description of Britain’s role, and thus also of Castlereagh’s, to say that following the conference of Aix-la-Chapelle it opposed an “automatic antirevolutionary interventionism,” that its aim was to defend “the independence of the state and thus the central pillar of international law”?¹⁸⁹ It all depends on how Castlereagh’s position is seen. In the context of the Carlsbad and Vienna conferences, he indeed said (including to Russia): “The two courts share the same care not to allow themselves any interventions in German affairs—interventions that could be seen as a violation of the right and the independence of the German Confederation.”¹⁹⁰

The Australian historian Hafner has argued for a significant revision of Castlereagh’s image.¹⁹¹ It is correct that the British minister opposed intervention, but it is only half of the truth. He did not oppose intervention categorically. By intervention he meant primarily a joint military intervention of all the major allied powers. That, for Castlereagh, could only be a highly exceptional case. Individual interventions, in contrast, he considered appropriate. As long as states were able to solve their domestic problems themselves—as, for instance, the German Confederation managed to do with the help of its laws for the protection of the state—the powers should stand back. But if states were too weak, Castlereagh considered intervention appropriate. He shared Metternich’s opinion that not just any European conflict demanded the kind of force used in the case of Napoleon. In Metternich’s eyes this would have given the tsar much too much of a voice in Europe. “Metternich had no desire to see Cossacks restoring order in Germany, but he might want to see Austrians restoring it in Italy.”¹⁹² According to Castlereagh, the question of whether to intervene had to be decided on a case-by-case basis; in one case, such as Naples, it could be left to Austria; and in another, such as Spain, to France. While Castlereagh distinguished very carefully between cases in which the use of the double-edged sword of intervention was called for and cases in which it was not, he did not change his opinion regarding internal federal politics. In this, he remained in full agreement with Metternich, his friend.

Castlereagh, though, was mindful “that we have to live with a Parliament.” The Parliament needed to be taken into consideration and forced the government to tone down statements against its better judgment. He considered the meeting of the monarchs and ministers beneficial, calling it “a new discovery in the European Government, at once extinguishing the cobwebs with which diplomacy obscures the horizon, bringing the whole bearing of the system into its true light, and giving to the counsels of the great powers the efficiency and almost the simplicity of a single state.”¹⁹³

Interventions as a Question of Ideology: Canning and Palmerston

Under Castlereagh’s successors Canning and Palmerston, the question of intervention became confused. Canning followed Castlereagh as foreign minister in 1822. He proclaimed a policy of nonintervention and used it as a propaganda tool. He distanced himself from his predecessor and eschewed the politics of the higher European interest, of peace on the continent. Canning increasingly formed British policies with the interests of world trade in mind, and he looked at the European Continent as a place where he could gain allies in the competition with major powers. He declared that the Parliament had to help ensure that Britain’s international policies could enable the principles of freedom and

constitutional government to spread. In the long term, the spirit of democracy would destroy the monarchies, he said—excluding, of course, his own.¹⁹⁴ He saw a fight between two camps, and his biographer, Harold Temperley, took that at face value, writing of a war between the “three Eastern despots” and the “two Western or parliamentary states.”¹⁹⁵ Canning, born in 1770, should have been part of the Metternich generation, but his social roots lay not in the nobility but in the merchant class of London. He knew how important it was to be popular, and many of his statements in the lower house were addressed to the press.¹⁹⁶

From the moment that Palmerston began to influence the fate of international politics in 1830, a divergence between Britain and the Continent became increasingly apparent.¹⁹⁷ Metternich went as far as to call him a mouthpiece for revolutionary propaganda, speaking up for the Greek revolt and the struggle for independence in the Spanish colonies.¹⁹⁸ Metternich perceptively criticized a contradiction between domestic and foreign policy. In domestic affairs, Tories and Whigs were equally conservative and did not practice the principles they preached to the continental powers: “The government, in full agreement with the Parliament, has just taken strong measures for maintaining order in Ireland. Government and Parliament are right. But they were wrong when back then [i.e., at the time of the Carlsbad Decrees] they resented the governments on the Continent for agreeing to the same resolutions for the protection of public welfare. What is right and proper cannot be limited by geographical borders, and the sentence ‘Everything for me and nothing for you’ is categorically wrong.”¹⁹⁹ Metternich observed how British politics fundamentally changed after Castlereagh’s death. Under Palmerston, it was conservative (“for home consumption”) and revolutionary (“for export”), a system which, Metternich thought, was more suited to British industry than to British politics, and which undermined European law.²⁰⁰ He blamed Palmerston, but also cited deeper reasons for the situation: “British politics has become purely functional. Lord Palmerston was the outstanding representative of these doubtful policies.”²⁰¹

Metternich, trained in Burke’s social analysis of the French Revolution, always looked at which economic or power-political interests were associated with attractive-sounding political principles. He knew from experience that it was possible to call for “freedom and equality” as a human being and citizen, while at the same time having one’s own advantage as a trader or landowner in mind, eyeing the estates of the aristocracy and clergy. For him, this also applied to the policies of Canning, whose fundamentally conservative, antirevolutionary convictions when it came to domestic politics he had extracted from the speech Canning gave in the lower house in February 1817.

Historians should once and for all bid farewell to the view that the so-called progressive powers fought against the “Holy Alliance,” especially given that this term seems to be justified only in the minds of its critics and of Tsar Alexander. The juxtaposition of “constitutional and Western” with “anti-constitutional and autocratic” assumes that the Western side had a superior political ethic, and is just as obsolete as talk of a “phantom terror.” In fact, Western politics was just a different kind of interest politics. Anselm Doering-Manteuffel rightly evaluates Canning’s representation of himself as being “constitutionally minded” as liberal propaganda: “Liberal arguments cloaked the politics of a ‘Canningite chauvinism.’”²⁰² In truth, what took place was a fundamental change in politics. Castlereagh and Metternich both still saw themselves bound by a European “general interest,” a “public law of Europe.” Metternich always spoke of the need to respect international law. Canning and his successors replaced this with the “national interest.” They turned “national egotism into the most important point of reference for British foreign policy.”²⁰³

The most telling example is France. It is counted as a member of the constitutional and anti-interventionist power bloc, but the invasion of Spain by French troops—authorized by the Congress of Verona (1822)—is ignored.²⁰⁴ The French state of the July monarchy and Napoleon III used the ideology of freedom in order to advance to the Rhine, to justify conquests in North Africa, Nizza, and Savoy. The tsarist empire invoked the freedom of the Christian Orthodox faith in its battle against the “heathen” Ottoman Empire, and expanded into southeast Europe on that basis, conquering piece by piece important parts of the Balkans and seeking access to the straits of the Bosphorus.

Talk of blocs also ignores the alliance of the “Western powers,” England and France, with the “Eastern power” of Russia, an alliance that intervened on behalf of Greece in the Ottoman Empire. The British Empire propagated the idea that its colonial expansion and the expansion of its overseas trade were the triumph of freedom. The three major powers competed for influence in the Mediterranean. The Habsburg Monarchy did not pursue any such expansionist policies. It was too fragile for that, and it would have cost it too dearly. Its rulers nevertheless insisted on their right to the Apennine Peninsula as their sphere of influence. Prussia took the path toward a domestic colonialism by trying to push through territorial and “moral conquests” (Wilhelm I) within Germany. It either tried to occupy other territories, as, for instance, in the case of Hanover and Saxony, or to economically infiltrate them, as in the case of the German Customs Union.

One phenomenon persisted in Europe throughout all of the changes after 1789. As foreign and domestic policies were interwoven, a revolutionary uprising in the interest sphere of one major power could have repercussions for

all of Europe. In order to avoid a great war in Europe, the Metternich generation, having lived through an age of war, had established a system of international communication that involved regular conferences for the purposes of crisis management. The Metternich–Castlereagh duo must be credited with having invented this system. Their noble idea was repeatedly subverted by powers who got carried away with their expansionist tendencies—as, for example, in 1839–1840, when France’s expansion into Egypt was halted by the concerted efforts of the other four major powers, which subsequently led to the Rhine crisis.²⁰⁵ The system was undermined whenever a situation was no longer susceptible to negotiation and arbitration, as in the case of the Russo-Turkish war of 1828–1829, the first one after 1815 that threatened to expand into a pan-European war, when England and France allied themselves with the tsarist empire against Turkey.

After the collapse of the Napoleonic system, the social and economic basis of Europe was so destabilized, and parts of the bourgeois elites, as well as soldiers who had been released from service, were so susceptible to the provocations of agitators that protest movements, rebellions, and attempted coups triggered the chain reaction of 1820, 1830, and 1848. Optimistic thinkers such as Georg Gottfried Gervinus, trained in Hegel’s philosophy of history, interpreted this as part of the trend of the age toward greater freedom. More-pessimistic contemporaries, including Metternich, interpreted these chain reactions as a warning sign: “It is going to start all over again,” by which they meant another revolution. The French Revolution had become a myth; but the reappearance of its symbols, rituals, and media, including the Jacobins’ red caps and the guillotine, was enough to rekindle fears of new revolutions.

For Metternich it was not an empty phrase when he spoke of “Jacobins.” The first wave of interconnected rebellions at the beginning of 1820 in Spain originated among dismissed soldiers. After the collapse of the Spanish colonial empire they had returned home and began an uprising under the leadership of their field marshal, Rafael del Riego. Their rallying cry was the famous Constitution of the Spanish Cortes of Cadiz of 1812. The conceptual tools of modern history would describe this Constitution as a medium of cultural transfer. In Sicily, Naples, and Turin, the rebels took this document as a model for their own constitutional state. What particularly irritated the governments was the fact that a bourgeois elite, helped by liberal aristocrats, was able to communicate very quickly across state borders and agree to common goals.

Encouraged by the example set by the Spanish, the secret society of the Carbonari in Nola, Avellino, and Salerno started their rebellion on July 2, 1820. From there it spread to Naples, and then they took the island of Sicily.²⁰⁶ By August and September 1820, the movement had also reached Portugal, and

finally in March 1821 Piedmont in northern Italy. The Carbonari formed the backbone of the rebellion. They had gained a foothold in the army, and thus the uprising began with a “Pronunciamiento,” a military coup. Napoleon’s empire was still playing the role of a midwife in this case: the Europe-wide agrarian crisis after 1816 came together with a trade crisis caused by governments abandoning the old protectionism and opening the corn markets to competition from abroad, which, in turn, damaged the landowners at home. Those landowners who had gained their possessions during the Napoleonic era protested against overproduction, the influx of foreign goods, and declining prices. The rebels were what Werner Daum called “agrarian bourgeois provincial elites”—that is, landowners, civil servants, members of the higher military ranks, literati, and scholars. Under Murat’s rule they had gained property, offices, aristocratic titles, and prestige.

There was a striking contradiction between the local character of the southern European “revolutions,” with their regionally based protests against a new administrative centralism, and the effect they had on the outside, where the perception was that of ever-growing revolutionary potential. This effect came about because all the groups appealed to the example of the Spanish Cortes Constitution. It was based on a unicameral system, the limitation of the rights of the monarch (who had only a suspensive veto), and the principle of popular sovereignty. For a short time, Europe was split into two “constitutional spaces,” with the French “Charte Constitutionnelle” of 1814 as the alternative model.²⁰⁷ This was a bicameral system based on the monarchical principle. For Metternich, the real culprits were therefore the adoption of the Spanish Constitution of 1812 and the prohibited secret society. Because he based his views on the collateral effects of the sequence of revolutions in southern Europe rather than on the specific regional situations from which they arose, he considered European peace to be under threat. This required the conference system of the “big five.”

THE CONCERT OF EUROPE AND THE DEFENSIVE SECURITY POLICIES OF THE 1820S

The Conferences of Troppau (1820), Laibach (1821), and Verona (1822)

When regional revolutions threatened to develop into a pan-European conflagration, international peace was threatened—more than enough reason to convene the agreed congresses of the monarchs. The first congress of the pentarchy after the one in Aix-la-Chapelle (1818) took place in the winter of 1820 in the small town of Troppau (Czech Opava), located in the most easterly part of

what was then Austrian Silesia. The uprising in Naples had forced the monarchs to meet to discuss their defensive measures. If we look at the finer detail of how the meeting came about, the old cliché of the East–West opposition is quickly revealed to be unfounded. Castlereagh and Metternich thought that under the Vienna order Italy belonged to Austria's sphere of influence. Austria could therefore intervene on its own, and a large congress was not necessary. It was Tsar Alexander, urged on by his foreign minister, Capodistrias, and a faction at the court that supported Capodistrias, who was seeking to gain dominance within the alliance through a European congress.²⁰⁸ In the end, Metternich gave in. Between October 19 and December 25 three of the monarchs met at Troppau: Emperor Franz, Tsar Alexander accompanied by Grand Prince Nikolaus, and King Friedrich Wilhelm III with the Prussian crown prince.²⁰⁹ Among the diplomats present were Metternich, Gentz, Nesselrode, Capodistrias, and Hardenberg. The British representative was Stewart—Castlereagh's brother, who was the British envoy to Vienna at the time; he only wanted to have the status of an observer. That has been misunderstood as a rejection of any kind of intervention. But the British did not oppose a military invasion; they only rejected the idea that it was necessary to call the entire pentarchy for a meeting. The same is true of the French representative, Comte de La Ferronnays.

At Troppau, two differences between Austria and Russia emerged (further evidence that there was no "Eastern bloc"). The tsar demanded that Emperor Franz immediately launch a military attack. In drawn-out conversations with the tsar and Nesselrode, Metternich vehemently opposed the suggestion, arguing: "We employ the principle that there is no basis in international law for the intervention of a monarch in the moral territory of another, and that *advice* must not be confused with *action*. We may wish for the best of the Kingdom of Naples, but we cannot decide its internal administrative laws. We can tell the nation that we wish for the best and shall never oppose the best. But we cannot determine what is best for others."²¹⁰ The initiative had to come from the king of Naples, who knew his country better than outsiders.

The second difference emerged when the exact wording of the public announcement of the congress results was discussed. Metternich had formulated three principles, which sounded moderate enough. The first was that the three allies' "aim and object . . . is not limited to giving liberty of thought and action to legitimate power, but is also to enable that power to consolidate and strengthen itself in such a way as to guarantee peace and stability to the kingdom and to Europe." The second and third principles stipulated that the power should, "in its reconstruction, consult the true interests and needs of the country" and that "what the King in his wisdom considers satisfactory for the interests of the kingdom, and consequently satisfactory to

the sound part of the nation, will be taken as the legal basis of the order to be established."²¹¹

These principles were formulated specifically with Naples in mind. That was not the case with another text, which was edited by Capodistrias. We are in the fortunate position of being able to reconstruct how the infamous "Troppau protocol" of November 19, 1820, came about. The sentence that sparked the most outrage expressed the alliance's categorical right to intervene. The alliance would "initially take friendly steps in order to return the states which are in sedition back into the fold of the great alliance, and in a second stage will use coercive measures should this be unavoidable."²¹² The passage was later compared to the so-called Brezhnev doctrine of 1968, which was used to justify the invasion of Czechoslovakia by troops of the Warsaw Pact in order to suppress the "Prague Spring." Such a general statement actually contradicted Metternich's cautious and shrewd political thinking. For instance, it made it possible for the tsar to intervene with his troops at any time and in any place in Europe. The example of Naples demonstrates that this was exactly what Metternich, and also Castlereagh, wanted to rule out. They also did not want to take the tsar up on his offer to involve one of his diplomats as a mediator either between the government of Naples and the major powers, or in the negotiations among the major powers; they believed that Austria on its own should solve the problem of Italy.

One day after the text was passed, Metternich reported in a half despairing, half ironic tone how it had come about: "If I must sit opposite to Capo d'Istria at the Conference table for hours on end and read his elaborations, which is worse than to hear him speak, I am so confused, and my thoughts wander so much that I am always uneasy lest I perpetrate some stupidity. In all the documents sent forth the thoughts are mine; but the drawing up is by Capo d'Istria, in consequence of which I very often do not recognise my own thoughts."²¹³ A few days later he added that he did not like the results of this enforced working as a group. As if he had anticipated the effect of the "Troppau protocol," he wrote: "I shall gain 85 percent of the victories, and with the rest he will deprive the world of its peace, reason of its good reputation, and common sense of its dignity. Capo d'Istria is not a bad man, but, honestly speaking, he is a complete and thorough fool; . . . He lives in a world to which our minds are sometimes transported by a bad nightmare."²¹⁴

Such a nightmare was apparently also caused by an official circular to the European courts sent from Troppau that was intended to justify the resolutions passed at the conference.²¹⁵ Castlereagh criticized the document, and it irked the lower house. Here, too, he has been misunderstood as condemning intervention as such. That was precisely not the case, because Britain sent to

Naples a frigate that brought King Ferdinand I to Trieste, from where he traveled to the next conference venue, Laibach (Ljubljana) in Slovenia. The British government would hardly have been prepared to do this if it had condemned intervention. In the course of long and intense conversations, Metternich had convinced the tsar that it was necessary to invite Ferdinand and seek his personal approval. After one of these conversations, Metternich told the emperor: "He was very firm and *very much in agreement with me*, and this is how I left him."²¹⁶ Between January 4 and May 21, the consultations continued in Laibach, where the Bourbon Ferdinand I provided legitimacy for the crushing of the uprising in Naples and for abolishing the Constitution, which he had previously amended: he did not swear the oath on it voluntarily, he said. On May 15, 1821, two weeks after the occupation of Naples by Austrian troops, Ferdinand returned to his kingdom. Metternich had equipped him with serious plans for reforming his country. It was Ferdinand who thwarted these promising, forward-looking initiatives.

During the meeting in Laibach, another revolution broke out, this time in neighboring Sardinia-Piedmont. Here it was not necessary to take the same circuitous route as in the case of Naples, because the government had immediately turned to the Austrians for help. The uprising collapsed when Austrian troops, supported by loyal troops from Piedmont, appeared at the gates of Turin.

The major powers also dedicated a conference to Spain, the trouble spot where the wave of revolutions had originated. Metternich was against an intervention, but this time constitutional France took the initiative and abolished its neighboring country's Constitution. The tsar had again offered to bring in his troops to support the operation. This case shows with particular clarity how the self-serving interests of the state could be dressed up in the rhetoric of freedom. The restorationist Bourbons saw Spain as belonging to their natural sphere of influence and were clearly following their own national interests.

For four and a half months Metternich had been occupied with international crisis management in Laibach. The uprising in Naples had been successfully put down, and King Ferdinand had returned to his throne. On May 26, 1821, Metternich was back in Vienna, where, to his great surprise, he found a letter addressed to him from the emperor himself. It was, as Metternich saw at once, composed in a warm and cordial tone that the reticent ruler rarely adopted. The letter evoked memories of July 1809, when Stadion had resigned from office after a lost war and the emperor had appointed Metternich as "state and conference minister," first provisionally on July 8 and then formally and definitively on July 31, so that he had the requisite status to negotiate the peace with Napoleon. With this low point in the history of the monarchy clearly in mind, the emperor wrote:

Dear Prince Metternich! The achievements, on behalf of both myself and the state, that you have earned during your twelve years as minister and in the course of your efforts at restoring general peace and consolidating the friendly ties between myself and the European powers, have multiplied further through the diligence with which, especially during the past two years, you have preserved, with prudence and courage, general tranquillity [*Ruhe*] and ensured the victory of right over the passionate machinations of the disturbers of the domestic and external peace of states.

At a moment which was so decisive for the future preservation of tranquillity [*Ruhe*], I consider it a duty to give you a public proof of My satisfaction and My trust in you.

I therefore appoint you to the position of My Court Chancellor and Chancellor of State, whose tasks you have already directed with such happy success and faithful loyalty.

Vienna, May 25, 1821,

Franz m[anu]. p[roprío].²¹⁷

Anyone familiar with the reserved and sober diction of the emperor would have been able to tell that this document expressed exuberant praise and overwhelming commitment to his minister. The rank of state chancellor allowed Metternich in effect to take on the role of a prime minister. But because the emperor continued to insist, anachronistically, on his personal rule, he also still reserved the right to play off his ministers and heads of court offices against each other as he wished. Nevertheless, the appointment increased Metternich's standing; he had always liked to see himself as a second Kaunitz, and now he had effectively been publicly acknowledged as such by the emperor. In private Metternich claimed that he was not interested in such distinctions: his only ambition was to do good, and if he could achieve that without titles and while dwelling in a mole hole, he would be just as happy and content. He further showed his modesty by saying: "But in my new position neither a wig nor an ermine mantle is necessary. That would indeed have been the worst of all miseries."²¹⁸ He did admit, however, that his new position brought an immeasurable extension of his sphere of action ("La sphere d'activité en est infiniment plus étendu").²¹⁹ After Emperor Franz's death, however, it became clear how little his impressive title meant in the absence of a strong monarch.

The Greek Question as the Catalyst for the Problem of the Century

The image of an Eastern bloc and a Western bloc is further discredited if we look at the way the three Eastern powers, which were allegedly operating as a monolithic, autocratic unity, became divided over the "Greek question." The

crisis threatened to destroy the Vienna System because in its context the other major powers wanted to sideline Austria and exclude it from their conferences. Apart from the Polish question, Metternich considered the "Hellenic question" the problem of the century because of the way it was inseparably bound up with the existence of the Ottoman Empire. At the Congress of Vienna, he had already failed to find an audience for his analysis of the dangers associated with the situation, because the major powers assembled there, except for Britain, refused to include the Ottoman Empire as a sixth imperial power in the Vienna order. Metternich and Castlereagh had unsuccessfully suggested its inclusion.

The Czech historian Miroslav Šedivý has sifted through the entire diplomatic correspondence between the major powers between 1820 and 1840 to see whether it contains anything that may shed light on the importance of the Ottoman Empire within the Concert of Europe. The results of this meticulous work were pathbreaking new insights into an under-researched period and its tensions that have transformed our understanding of the geography of European conflict at the time.²²⁰ With the exception of Paul Schroeder,²²¹ the scholarship traditionally looked mostly toward Europe's south and southwest (Naples-Sicily, Sardinia-Piedmont, Portugal and Spain) and considered the congresses of Troppau, Laibach, and Verona. It overlooked, or at least underplayed, the dramatic tension in Europe's southeast—namely, the explosiveness of the "Hellenic question." This question found expression, not in the form of conferences, but in the unusually dense diplomatic correspondence that Šedivý systematically examined. This correspondence reveals where the real focal point and catalyst for a major war in Europe was to be found, a war that had the potential to draw in all the major powers. As we know, Metternich worried about a new type of war that would, like a natural catastrophe, turn everything upside down. His prophetic declaration quoted above was made in 1824, the very year when the Vienna System's peacekeeping function began to falter.

It is important to appreciate just what a tinderbox this was—between 1568 and the Crimean War in 1853, there were ten wars between Russia and Turkey, with four of them occurring within Metternich's lifetime. The first European war after 1815 was between the Ottoman Empire and the allies Russia, France, and England, in 1828–1829. In 1840, it was again the eastern Mediterranean, beginning in Egypt, where conflict broke out, and with the Crimean War in 1853 the system threatened to become derailed for a third time. In the 1820s all of Metternich's initiatives to counter Russia's and France's expansionist tendencies in the Mediterranean failed. The manner in which the tsar systematically destabilized peace in the Near East, as well as the functioning of the alliance, with what Miroslav Šedivý called his initially "discrete imperialism,"

should serve to dispel whatever was left of the image of the benevolent Russian ruler.²²²

All the complications that make the conflicts in the southern Balkans so intractable, and make simple judgments about them impossible, were already present in 1822 and 1823. Not only did the Russian, Turkish, and Austrian spheres of interest overlap in Greece, Serbia, and the Habsburg duchies of Moldavia and Walachia; in the same regions there were also religious differences, between Christians and Muslims, and national differences. These differences developed an unpredictable dynamic of their own as the ensuing atrocities of war were registered across all of Europe, leading to misunderstandings, aversions, and irritations among the major powers. There were divisions even within particular courts, as is clear from the existence of the war faction at the court in Saint Petersburg, which was striving to break up the Ottoman Empire, although the tsar's inclination toward restoration initially made him susceptible to Metternich's influence and led him to support putting down the uprising in Greece in order to stabilize the sultanate. To put it bluntly: Russian imperialism lurked always in the background, and was active only sometimes. The political immobility of the "Sublime Porte" (as the Ottoman Empire was sometimes called), Russia's readiness to go to war, France's pro-Russian inclinations, British indifference, and Prussian passivity all paved the way for war.²²³ Metternich immediately saw through the duplicitous rhetoric of Russian politicians, who claimed not to have any expansionist or bellicose intentions but insisted on receiving compensation for Russia's military expenditure, and, as the sultan was not able to pay, would take hold of land instead—that is, temporarily occupy the duchies along the Danube. For the same reason, it was argued, Russia would have to extend its influence into Serbia.

This was a textbook case of two factions marching toward a war in a way that made it increasingly difficult for either to turn back, even though, after the war had broken out, each would insist that this was not their preferred outcome. Two of Metternich's traits can be highlighted as crucial in the context of this complicated conflict: his insistence on adherence to international law and his pragmatic willingness to deflate the conflict—even by recognizing an independent Greek state if necessary.

It is often claimed that Metternich was possessed by a "dogmatic" attitude in favor of "legitimacy" that meant that he took the rights of legitimate rulers to trump those of rebelling peoples. This was not Metternich's political logic or way of thinking at all. He explained what the principles of international law meant to him in the Greek crisis as follows: If the European powers did not want to act in accordance with international law, then they could intervene not only to support the Greek rebels, but also to support the Irish and Finnish

rebels. On what grounds could the British king or the Russian tsar oppose such support? The revolutionary power of the rebels would, in principle, be put on a par with the legitimacy of the state. Metternich asked whether the British government would be prepared to consider the next best rebellious Irish group as a power with rights equal to the British king, if that self-declared group proclaimed itself the government of Ireland.²²⁴

It was in line with Metternich's pragmatism that, as a result of the revolutionary uprising, he supported an independent Greek kingdom on the former territory of the Ottoman Empire. This actually contradicted the fundamental principles of the Vienna System of 1815. The restoration of a functional pentarchy—as opposed to the latest triple alliance excluding Austria (and with Prussia remaining inactive)—was more important to him than the repression of a revolutionary movement. In contrast to the image of a reactionary focused on legitimacy, Šedivý makes it clear that it was Metternich who pleaded for the independence of Greece (“sovereignty”), instead of its autonomy (“suzerainty”), and that he wanted to see it established as quickly as possible. The complete independence of a Greek state would more effectively block Russia's desire to expand than would autonomy under Ottoman suzerainty, because the latter would always provide grounds for Russian intervention. How little Metternich thought in rigidly doctrinal terms is also demonstrated by the fact that he argued in favor of taking the United States as a model for the creation of a new Greek state: that is, it could be created through collective international recognition rather than authorization by conference.

The Greek rebellion was preceded by the successful uprising of the Serbs, who had gained partial autonomy under Ottoman suzerainty in a struggle that lasted from 1804 until 1817. The Greek rebellion began in 1821, and their fight lasted almost a decade. It had a strong social revolutionary character; the poor mountain peasants felt disadvantaged by the Greek merchants and sailors. During that time the Turks were launching repeated military campaigns in the Peloponnese. The Greek question revealed, like no other, the power of an overarching European public, and it became a medium for utilizing political conflict for ideological purposes. In this instance, too, modern nationalism presented itself as a form of religious salvation and exploited a context of social and economic backwardness. The political and social unrest after 1815, it was claimed, was a continuation of what started in 1789—namely, supposedly “national revolutions,” which became a universally usable myth. Paradoxically, its sympathizers and propagandists became victims of the same warped perspective as their antirevolutionary ruling opponents. In the case of Greece, the regional fight of the mountain peasants for independence mutated into a religiously motivated struggle for independence from Ottoman suzerainty, with

its different religion, which was about to restrict the rights of the Greek Orthodox patriarchs of Constantinople. All of a sudden the premodern protest over “moral economy,” as E. P. Thompson put it, took on the dimensions of a national struggle for “freedom, equality, and fraternity.”

The modern agrarian Greeks, who had nothing in common with the Hellenes of antiquity, suddenly appeared to be the repressed descendants of the fathers of democracy and the inheritors of classical Greece, for which the Bavarian king Ludwig I, together with the Philhellenes, showed great enthusiasm. The English poet Lord Byron lamented the lot of the Greek people in lyrical poems; the Germans discovered their sympathy for the Greeks—as they later did for the Poles—because it allowed them to support another people's movement for national freedom and secretly dream of their own German movement at home. The “springtime of the peoples” was a universal utopia.

The common European policies of the alliance, which had worked between 1815 and 1823, were now obsolete. The real goal of these policies had been to put France in its place, were it to become a revolutionary country again. The Treaty of Adrianople of 1829 stipulated that the entire estuary region of the Danube, parts of Armenia, and the duchies at the Danube Moldavia and Walachia—the later Romania—was to come under Russian influence. With this, Russia became a power in the Balkans in competition with the Habsburg Monarchy. And this peace of Adrianople already guaranteed the autonomy of Greece. It was not clear at that point what concrete form this would take, but the conference in London in 1830 recognized the full sovereignty of the new nation-state. Metternich fought in its corner.

I2

THE ECONOMIST

Metternich as a Capitalist with a Social Conscience

MANAGING FINANCIAL CRISES

The Transformation of the Economic System: From Personal Ownership to a Capitalist Economy

Previous biographies of Metternich do not have a chapter on Metternich as an economist. Such an idea does not fit well with the cliché, spread by Srbik, of Metternich the hedonistic courtier, Metternich the idler who could barely organize his own life. Gentz, who, along with some others, spread such slander—and managed to lead Srbik astray—took himself far too seriously, was preoccupied with socializing with important individuals who admired his rhetorical skill, and hardly paid any attention to Metternich's everyday business outside of politics. But Metternich himself also contributed to the fact that this part of his activity remained hidden. When he compiled his personal posthumous papers in the form of the voluminous "Acta Clementina," he did not include any of the documents concerning his family's economic situation, leaving them instead as part of the general family archive.

The aforementioned misconceptions are connected to a further misunderstanding: that Metternich did not understand economics and had no insight into the lower social strata. The two claims are connected because in Metternich's times the social and the economic were still united under the concept of *gute Policey*, the good general order of the polity and domestic welfare. It is necessary to distinguish between the old estate-based social order and that of the newly emerging market capitalism. The aristocracy experienced this shift as a fundamental threat to be countered with a fight to "stay at the top."¹ In this

respect, Metternich was only one of many. One of his contemporaries, the Prussian landowner August Ludwig von der Marwitz (1777–1837), expressed the economic challenge of the emerging agrarian capitalism particularly well in a speech he gave to his peasants in 1818. He pointed out the disadvantages that resulted "when the ownership of land, like the merchants' commodities, is passed on perpetually from one hand to the next . . . and everyone is only interested in financial profit. The fortunate ones will prevail, the unfortunate ones will be on their own."² Marwitz had in mind the lot of "the poor and weak" when he lamented the social consequences of the market radicalism behind the so-called liberation of the peasants in Prussia and in other states. This liberation created favorable conditions for the "Bauernlegen"—the acquisition of smaller farms; it deprived these farmers of social protection and pushed them into the proletariat. Metternich's contemporaries thus witnessed the "pauperism" that proliferated in the run-up to 1848. Did all this really pass Metternich by?

The Metternich family's dominions, especially Winneburg and Beilstein, and the Bohemian entail Königswart, gave them the authority of lords. From 1803, the dominions on the left bank of the Rhine were replaced with Ochsenhausen, near Ulm, which was at that point turned into a principality. When the position of fee tail lord moved from father to son—as happened, for instance, in 1764 when Franz Georg became the head of the entail—the manager of the estate assembled the "subjects" to take the oath of obeisance [*Huldigungseid*]. When Clemens became fee tail lord in 1826, he no longer required that oaths be taken, but the way he was greeted by the population, in particular by the Jewish population, still resembled a tribute [*Huldigung*].

The transition from the estates-based social order, with its emphasis on sovereignty, to the capitalist agrarian economy was a slow process. In Prussia, for instance, this process was subject to more than forty regulatory edicts in the time before 1848. It is important to realize that capitalism and industrialization are not the same thing: this new capitalism took hold of the land itself, land that, under the estates-based order, had mostly been tied to personal ownership by sovereign rights and inheritance laws. The new idea was to render the land fully subject to the law of things, in the Roman law sense—that is, to turn it from property tied to social status into a commodity that could be divided, sold off, and turned into capital. In the case of the Habsburg Monarchy, this happened at a stroke when the Imperial Parliament in Vienna abolished the old property law with the famous *Kudlichgesetz*.³ But there were also manorial lords who, even under the estate-based order, had granted their "subjects" the right to "shed" their obligations and levies, as Metternich had done in the case of the vintners at Johannisberg.

In other words, an aristocratic landowner necessarily dealt with the so-called ordinary people and with social problems. In preindustrial times, the latter mainly had to do with agriculture. The peasants and their levies, services, rent, debts and legal disputes were part of an aristocratic landowner's daily life. And Metternich showed himself to be liberal in his dealings with his people, unlike some of his peers—the Bavarian Prince Karl von Öttingen-Wallerstein, for instance, invoked allegedly historical feudal rights in order to get even more levies out of his subjects.

It is also important to distinguish between the different economic roles Metternich had to play. He was always simultaneously active in four areas: as a vintner and wine producer who acted as a merchant; as a forester; as a lessor of large manorial estates—so-called *Meierhöfe*; and finally as a manufacturer, or more precisely, as an entrepreneur running an ironworks. He usually had capable administrators and advocates in all of the places concerned, but he always steered the business himself and regularly received reports on the economic situations of the estates and enterprises. Continuously dealing with these sorts of activities—at the same time as the power politics in Vienna—required diligence, energy, and strong organizational acumen. A more detailed look at these individual areas of activity reveals just how much this man had to manage simultaneously—and that he did so with seeming ease.

The Difficult Point of Departure

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the pall of permanent debt hovered over the House of Metternich. This debt had resulted from a combination of financial incompetence, the pressures of keeping up social appearances, and the dispossessions suffered through the revolutionary wars.

Metternich had to take over responsibility from his father early on, and he was faced with great financial difficulties from the very beginning. Debts were piling up, and they embroiled the fee tail lord in legal disputes with creditors who were desperately trying to collect their money. The permanent lack of money was not only the result of Franz Georg's luxurious lifestyle; Franz Georg had lost his father at the age of four, and the family fortune that was bound up in the entail was run down while he was under guardianship, before he took charge of the estates at the age of twenty-two, having been declared legally of age early by the emperor in 1764. His work for the emperor forced him to travel frequently, and this meant leading a particular kind of lifestyle as an imperial representative. In order to meet the high expectations, he often made contributions from his personal funds, whether to pay for accommodation, for oiling

the axles of his coaches, or for the special attire that had to be worn by someone of his social rank.⁴

The expulsion from the dominions on the left bank of the Rhine aggravated the situation even further. As in the case of the difficult negotiations concerning Clemens's marriage contract in 1795, the family constantly had to calculate the value of what had been lost. The situation appeared to become a little more relaxed when the family received the former Cistercian abbey Ochsenhausen, near Ulm, as compensation under the German mediatization in 1803. But this was an illusion: the debts kept rising until Franz Georg's disputes with his creditors ended at the Imperial Chamber Court, to which one of them had turned in desperation. The creditor was looking to collect two debts ("promissory notes"). On June 3, 1806, the court decided in favor of the plaintiff. Franz Georg was ordered to pay 7,000 guilders, along with default interest and fees.⁵ It was a bizarre situation because the judgment was made just before Emperor Franz ceased to be Holy Roman Emperor on August 6, 1806. It must have been one of the court's last judgments.

With this judgment, the financial situation of the Metternich family officially became public knowledge. But this was only the tip of the iceberg. While Clemens worked as an envoy in Dresden and then in Paris, exchanging anxious letters with his father, Franz Georg's continued spending was steering the family further toward the abyss. The situation became serious when the king of Württemberg confiscated Ochsenhausen in the course of the war of 1809. Responsibility lay more and more in Clemens's hands, and in 1810 he reluctantly presented his father with a balance sheet, suggesting that Franz Georg should make his son the fee tail lord early. It is clear that Metternich was torn between his love and admiration for his father and the need to assume responsibility for the family finances—which made public his father's failure.

The Spiral of Rising Debt

On December 23, 1810, Clemens von Metternich took the remarkable step of making a declaration addressed to the present and future members of the family.⁶ As the next fee tail lord and head of the family, he felt responsible "for the future well-being, even the existence, of my house." He therefore wanted to express as frankly and unreservedly as possible how he saw the family's financial situation. Such declarations, including the later one of 1814, are key moments in the crisis-ridden history of the Metternichs. The historian faced with meter-long rows of files, filled with the evidence of the continual disputes over outstanding bills, thick bundles of documents telling the story of the repeated

attempts to get out of the jungle of “liabilities,” is grateful for these summaries. They were always the initiative of Clemens Metternich, who was looking for ways to gain an overview of the situation and to stop the decline.

In this particular document, Metternich mentioned that previous fee tail lords had, over several generations, managed the entail rather poorly. His own father, as an orphan, lacked the support of his father during the long time he was under guardianship; he thus confronted the worst possible starting point. He owed his career, which saw him elevated to the highest ranks, solely to his own efforts, and in return he deserved to be held in the fondest memory by his descendants for this. He blazed the trail for future generations. Metternich himself, for his part, had the impression that he had not done enough to save the family, not even to save “its present head,” who was no longer in control of the situation, because he had wanted to avoid hurting his father.

In 1801, he wrote, he began dealing with the debts during a short stay in Königswart. In 1799 he had already taken some cautious steps in this direction. Since then, however, the debt had again risen sharply. He had accepted everything—as the successor and hypothecary creditor: he accepted that the appanage he was due to receive according to the marriage contract would be used as a security for the creditors’ mortgages. He let it come to pass that a third of the entail was encumbered in this way. In 1803 the family met in Dresden, while Metternich was an envoy there, and gave its approval for encumbering the second third with a mortgage. Metternich went along with this only because he hoped that the debts in Bohemia could be paid off in better times.

Metternich was present when his father took possession of Ochsenhausen in 1803. At that time Clemens began to calculate the total debt of the family across the whole empire. In 1804, as Clemens came across more and more uncertainty in the accounts, Franz Georg instructed the privy councillor of Württemberg, Weckbecker, to come to Ochsenhausen as an authorized commissary and establish the total debt. Weckbecker calculated a sum of 1,055,796 guilders. Weckbecker sold off two estates and Rhenish plots of land for 430,000, reducing the debt to 625,796 guilders.

But the situation did not improve. The commissary involved the Mühlens brothers in the transactions, and the bankers’ inept financial strategies with the Metternichs’ funds led the creditors to appeal to the imperial courts. Not knowing what to do, Franz Georg asked for an imperial commission to be established. Just when the family was on the way toward consolidating its finances, the whole process was threatened. In 1806 the commission called in all the creditors. The debt had risen by 284,501 guilders to 910,297 guilders.

In the war of 1809 the family once again lost their possessions in Germany. In 1810, after four years, the debts in the Rhenish areas had multiplied and the

Bohemian part of the entail had not been disburdened at all. For a second time, the Metternichs faced ruin. An extraordinary political situation—that is, Napoleon’s personal intervention—allowed Metternich to reverse the confiscations (“sequestrations”) in Württemberg. Given the situation, action was needed to pay off the debts and thus remove the burdens from the estates.

The debt now stood at, in Metternich’s own words, “the enormous sum” of 1,210,500 guilders. Compared to 1807, the debt had risen by 300,203 guilders. The sale of the Rhenish wetlands and of the silverware yielded 47,000 guilders. In less than seven years, debt had risen by 613,704 guilders. The only remaining solution was for Metternich’s father to hand over responsibility to his son. Clemens set up another commission in which he, as its commissary, would be able to overcome the deficiencies of his father’s administration once and for all. The only solution, he said, was to hand him complete responsibility for the administration. They could no longer count on good will and flexible creditors. The past seven years had shown that dealing with the debt was possible only if one adopted a unified approach, which meant all operations being in one person’s hands. Metternich was afraid that he would later be criticized, by his children and grandchildren, for not being assertive enough with his father. He added: “For my justification I demand that the present declaration will be part of the family archive for eternal times. In it, I shall always find consoling reasons for myself and reasons for my pardoning by the members of my family.”⁷

Metternich’s Determination to Deal with the Debt

Metternich had been compelled to act. He composed the “Consolidation of the Fortunes or rather the Creation of Fortunes,” which set out the common goal to be achieved by the family. All assets had to be brought together, including his wife’s possessions in Moravia. The family finances, including the repayment of debts, had to be centrally administered. He promised the following five points:

1. He would take on all the debts of the Metternich family, but might decide on his own how they were to be reduced—through negotiations, settlements, or other means.
2. He would guarantee the head of the family an adequate upkeep for life.
3. He would fulfill all existing obligations toward his mother and siblings, and would also pay the appanages for the latter.
4. He would make his personal assets part of the overall administration of the debts.
5. The newly formed assets were to become part of an entail and thus to be secured for the descendants.

This declaration of August 4, 1814, had no explicit addressee but could only have been written with his father in mind. Metternich expected him to agree to these proposals. The offer was a discreet way of urging the father to act.⁸ Honor and public reputation were important to Franz Georg, and for that reason his son could only persuade him to resign in stages. In a family contract of December 23, 1808, Franz Georg handed over the entail of Königswart and other estates, including all the debts and mortgages associated with them, to his son.⁹ In a further contract of January 3, 1815, Clemens became the owner, prematurely, of all the family's assets.¹⁰

After the handover contract had been signed, it was clear from the words he chose to justify himself that Metternich's father had been shaken by the whole process, but also that he trusted his eldest son completely. He recognized that Clemens had sacrificed himself in order to save the honor of the family—and, of course, to improve its creditworthiness. He declared that “in order to avoid all disadvantages in my private family matters and not to ruin my private assets even further, I fully agree to be legally declared incompetent to enter into further debts or any other obligations, and placed under the guardianship of my son.”¹¹

In the *Wiener Zeitung* of October 8, 1816, Metternich had made his father's financial ruin public. He was determined to restore order to the family assets and to Franz Georg's private finances. In order to bring these debts in order, he was prepared to use his private assets to establish a fund that would make payments to creditors and, where appropriate, agree to settlements.

In order to lend credibility to the procedure, the emperor, upon Metternich's request, had arranged a special commission at the court's Supreme Judicial Authority. The commission invited the creditors to register their demands and to agree to a timetable for repayment. The public declaration [*Kundmachung*] is dated September 27, 1816.¹² The commission presented the results of the negotiation of settlements on May 29, 1818, and at the same time provided an overview of all of the creditors who had lent to Franz Georg and still hoped to see their money paid back. Altogether, there were 106 of them. The debts fell into two categories. The first were the so-called *Chirographar* creditors—individuals who had lent Franz Georg minted coins against promissory notes signed by him. There were 36 of them, and the sums involved ranged from 61 to 15,333 guilders. The remaining 70 creditors presented bills that they expected to be settled with paper money. Here the sums ranged from 57,307 guilders to 18 guilders and 36 cruizers—owed to a locksmith, Jakob Prener. The impression one gets from the wide variety of demands is that there were creditors and unsettled bills from every sort of craft and trade in the Habsburg Empire. The demands of 106 creditors taken together came to 211,056 guilders; the final debt

after the settlement negotiations came to a total of 166,980 guilders.¹³ The commission noted with satisfaction that rarely had a settlement out of court been so successful.

Metternich had also inherited from his father an ongoing trial over the estates of Reichardstein, Poußneur, Weismes, and Wanne. The dispute with the Wachtendonck family over the inheritance of these estates reached back to the time of Johann I—the beginning of the fifteenth century. The trial was so complicated that the president of the Supreme Judicial Authority, Baron von Gärtner, wrote a “History of the Trial” for Metternich. It concluded that the Wachtendoncks, as the complainants, had little chance of success. The dispute only ended with a judgment passed by the Imperial Court at Leipzig on May 27, 1884, twenty-five years after Metternich's death. The fiefdoms were awarded to the Metternichs.¹⁴

From Ochsenhausen to Plaß: A Risk-Taker

Clemens von Metternich succeeded in turning his family's financial situation around. His success depended mainly on the decision to sell Ochsenhausen and invest the money in something that promised better returns. It was a stroke of luck that he moved the family's commercial center to Bohemia, where he bought a new dominion with the money from the Ochsenhausen sale.

That sale was carried out by the authorized representative of the king of Württemberg, the privy councillor and minister of finance von Weckherlin, and Baron Salomon von Rothschild, as Metternich's representative. The price was 1,200,000 imperial guilders. The library, furniture, and artworks were excluded from the sale; they were moved to Königswart. On January 27, 1825, the representatives signed the contract in Stuttgart, but it had already become effective on January 1. This was relevant when it came to the levies to be paid after that date, or the logging done. King Wilhelm sealed the contract on March 8 with his personal signature.¹⁵ The move also had the advantage of allowing Metternich to escape from the exasperating policies of the king of Württemberg, which did not favor the estates and had been a burden to Metternich for a number of years.

In 1826 Metternich bought the alodial dominion of Plaß, which in 1146 had been given to the Cistercian abbey located there by the Bohemian king Wladislaus II. During the Baroque era it developed so well that it came to be known as the “Bohemian Escorial,” reminiscent, in its splendor, of the glorious Spanish royal site and monastery El Escorial. In 1785 Emperor Joseph II's religious policies had led to the closure of the abbey, and the estates and possessions were put into a “religious fund” created for the purpose of improving the general

welfare. Metternich bought the dominion in 1826 after it had been publicly advertised for sale.

On February 5, 1826, the commission for the sale of state-owned property at the Imperial Court gave permission for the sale of the dominion of Plaß, including all estates belonging to it. The contract took effect retroactively on November 1, 1825—that is, from that moment Metternich had the right of use of the dominion. The purchase price was 1,100,050 guilders in conventional coins [*Konventionalmünze*].¹⁶

Because of the debt repayments that his father, by this time deceased, had agreed to with his creditors, Metternich could not use all of the money from the sale of Ochsenhausen for the purchase of Plaß. A year after the purchase had been made, there was still a considerable financial gap in the financing of it that needed to be closed. To that end, the director of the administration of his estates arranged a credit of over 500,000 guilders (in conventional coins) with Mayer Amschel Rothschild in Frankfurt.¹⁷ That money went to the Bohemian religious fund and the credit was repaid by Metternich in annual installments, at an interest rate of 4 percent, until it was finally repaid in full on December 31, 1858. The state chancellor certainly did not receive any preferable treatment in this matter as far as the financial terms were concerned. It was only thanks to the renown and importance of his political office, however, that he was able to get a credit of this magnitude at all. Around the same time, Friedrich Koenig, the entrepreneur and technological pioneer who invented the high-speed, steam-powered printing press, could not find anyone in Germany to lend him money to build a factory—he had to go to London and convince financiers there by presenting them with a prototype of his machine.¹⁸ Metternich, in contrast, received credit of over half a million guilders from the Rothschild banking house in Frankfurt for an ironworks project that carried at least as much risk.

METTERNICH AS AGRARIAN ECONOMIST: FARMER, VINTNER, FORESTER

Metternich as Landowner and Landlord

As opposed to Königswart, the dominion of Plaß was a so-called alodial dominion: it was freely possessed by its owner, who could use it as he saw fit, and there were no levies or other obligations associated with it, as was the case with fiefdoms. In other words: Metternich leased his lands to others, yet they remained his dominion.

The dominion of Plaß comprised a large amount of landed property. About two-thirds of the property was field, meadow, and pasture. Thanks to the quality of the soil (clay soil with some sand), the *Meierhöfe*, or large farms, pro-

duced good yields, and grew all kinds of grains, feed crops, and tubers. Fruit and hops also flourished. In addition, there was livestock: according to the figures from 1844, there were 4,620 cattle, 13,850 sheep, and 957 horses. Altogether, Metternich leased out sixteen *Meierhöfe*.¹⁹

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Meierhof Biela | 9. Meierhof Rohy |
| 2. Meierhof Bikow | 10. Meierhof Schlössel |
| 3. Meierhof Hubenow | 11. Meierhof Sechutitz |
| 4. Meierhof Katzerow | 12. Meierhof Tlutzna |
| 5. Meierhof Lednitz | 13. Meierhof Třemoschnitz |
| 6. Meierhof Lohmann | 14. Meierhof Wollschan |
| 7. Meierhof Mlatz | 15. Meierhof Wrtwa |
| 8. Meierhof Plaß | 16. Scattered communes |

As a minister in Vienna, Metternich employed a chief commissioner to administer Plaß, but he became personally involved whenever there was a change of tenant farmers. He would even get involved in matters of detail—for instance, whether a large meadow should be part of the lease, which levies and obligations the tenant farmer had to enter into, and whether a farmer's skill and reputation were such that he could be trusted with the property.

Leases were initially for a six-year period. Before the signing of the contract, an evaluation was carried out together with the future lessee. He had the opportunity to inspect the living quarters and farm buildings, and an inventory was drawn up. As a regular rental contract, the lease contained stipulations regarding the use and maintenance of the property. When an estate became available, Metternich advertised it in the classified section of the *Prager Zeitung*. In such cases, the Metternich's central administration [*Oberamt*] had to examine, for instance, whether two *Meierhöfe* were each productive enough or whether they should be leased out together.²⁰ The details of leases were fixed in so-called lease protocols, which were sent to Metternich in Vienna in order to be examined and confirmed by him.

Throughout the dominion of Plaß, Czech (in the terminology used in the sources: "Bohemian") was the language of everyday life. Many of the workers in the mines and ironworks also spoke German. We may observe, in this local context, how Metternich dealt with people of different nationalities. He treated them with respect and as equals, in a way that no longer seemed appropriate to those partisans of the emerging modern nationalism Metternich labeled *Teutomanie* [*Germanomania*].

Metternich's respect for the Czechs was particularly evident when it came to legal disputes, which he, as the local authority, ordered a legally trained bailiff in Plaß to deal with. If one of the parties in the dispute wanted to present

2549. Erb. 8. April.

Verpachtung

mehrerer Meierhöfe auf der Herrschaft Plas.

Vom Oberamte der hochfürstlich von Metternich-Winneburgschen Herrschaft Plas wird hiermit allgemein bekannt gemacht: Daß die bisher parzellenweise verpachtet gewesen obrigkeitl. Meierhöfe sammt Gebäuden, nämlich: Kagerow, Trzemeschnitz, Ledniz, Rohy, Biela, Wrtwa, Tlugna, Schöglhof und Mas, und zwar: Erstere zwei auf 12 und Letztere auf 15 nacheinander folgende Jahre vom 1. November 1835 angefangen, ohne tandem instructas, im Ganzen werden verpachtet werden.

Pachtlustige werden daher aufgefördert, ihre Pachtanträge mittelst Offerte längstens bis 20. Mai 1835 portofrei hieramts einzubringen, und es wird ihnen freigestellt, die Meierhöfsgründe sammt Gebäuden vorher zu besichtigen, und die dießfalls bestehenden Pachtbedingungen in der hiesigen Oberamtskanzlei einzusehen.

Plas den 5. April 1835. (1)

2649. Erb. 10. April.

Advertisement in the *Prager Zeitung* for the leasehold of Meierhöfe, belonging to the dominion of Plas, April 1835.

their case in the Czech language, this was permitted, and the protocol reflected this. Metternich's openness in dealing with different languages was clear from early on in his lordship at Plas, when he "brought home" the family's dead to be buried in the crypt underneath the St. Wenzel church, which he had designated as the family burial ground. On this occasion, "his subjects" also paid homage to him in German and Czech.

Jewish Communities

The "Jewish community of Neustadl"—*Judenschaft*, as they called themselves—had thought of a special way to greet Metternich upon his taking up the lordship at Plas. The parish of Neustadl (sometimes also called "Neustadtel" or "Unter-Biela"), with its sixty-four houses and a population of 511, belonged to the dominion of Plas, and was located close to Metternich's Meierhof Biela.²¹ Metternich held the legal patronage not only over the parish and its school but

19

Das Verpachtungsbuch bei dem am 15. Mai
1834. in der Landratskanzlei abgehaltenen
Plas am 15. September 1833 begonnenen
öffentlichen Verpachtung.

Verpachtungsbuch:

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öffentlichen Verpachtungsbuch
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Daß die bisher parzellenweise
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einzusehen.

Plas den 5. April 1835. (1)

Bilingual protocol in German and Czech of a hearing at the central administration of Plas; continuation, on May 15, 1834, of the trial begun on September 11, 1833.

also over the Jewish community. In 1838, fourteen Jewish families, 82 people altogether, lived there. One of them, who is not named in the sources, addressed the new ruler as if he were facing Moses. He opened his speech with a verse from the prophet Joshua and ended it with "Amen." The Joshua quote from the Tanakh was: "Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses."²² He praised

Metternich's work for the good of Europe. But, he said, the minister not only looked after the millions: for him, "it will not be too trifling a matter to give his attention to a much smaller number that is directly subservient to him," and he, who "like [Moses], knew how to meld the interests of so many nations into one," would also "tie the well-being of his Israelite subjects to that of his other subjects."

There were other Jewish communities in Metternich's Bohemian dominions. In Königswart there were 74 families, in the village of Amonsgrün 16 families, and in the parish of Miltigau 6 families.²³ Metternich's reputation as a patron of the members of the Jewish faith, which was noted at the Congress of Vienna,²⁴ had also reached these provincial regions, where he was warmly welcomed with a poem praising him and thanking him for his support for the Jews.

Metternich also revealed himself to be a patriarch with a social conscience in general. He had bread baked for his rural subjects and sold it at reduced prices; he arranged support for widows and orphans. Where a family, through no fault of its own, such as the death of the family father, was unable to pay the levies, he did not insist on them; instead, he thought of ways to alleviate their hardship. His administrator kept him informed about such cases and, from Vienna, Metternich attended to each and every one of them. He also set up a fund for the establishment of a poorhouse. Before it was completed, Metternich and his wife supported the poor with donations that, annually, came to more than 1,100 guilders.²⁵ It is therefore utterly false that Metternich had no sense of or feeling for the lives of ordinary people.

The Vintner, Wine Merchant, and Publican at Johannisberg

As already mentioned, Emperor Franz gave the lucrative vineyards and Baroque castle in Johannisberg, situated in the Rheingau near Koblenz, to his invaluable aide as a thank you—although with certain conditions attached. As he later did in Königswart, Metternich here carried out restoration work on the buildings. What Schinkel was for Prussia and Klenze for Bavaria, the court architect and master builder Georg Moller was for the Grand Duchy of Hesse, and it was Moller who redesigned the Baroque castle in the classical style. That work was also made possible by a credit from Mayer Amschel Rothschild in Frankfurt: on November 19, 1819, he provided Metternich with 18,000 guilders for the purpose. Metternich wanted to repay the credit within four years from the yields of the vineyards.²⁶ The restructuring work not only corresponded to Metternich's taste; it also was commercially useful, because the modernized castle with its public house became a popular destination for visitors at a time when the Rhine was turning into a tourist attraction. Metternich, the passionate

gardener, created a park with Mediterranean plants, in which visitors to the present day can enjoy walks under the pergolas.

The founder of the Bädcker publishing house, Karl Bädcker, was among those who advertised the castle, praising it for the splendid views from the oriel, which the hospitable prince even opened to members of the public.²⁷ Visitors could take a break on the large terrace, enjoy the Johannisberg, but were also able to see the rooms. The travel guide listed the place as a rewarding destination.²⁸

From "Feudal Lord" to Economist

Metternich retained the Benedictine friar Karl Arnd as his administrator. Together with Arnd, and from 1826 with his successor, Metternich introduced a modern way of selling the wine. Instead of putting the annual production up for auction by the barrel, which was how it was typically done at the time, he had it bottled and sold it only to selected buyers, mainly monarchs. This increased turnover considerably. Metternich rearranged the accounting, even determined and controlled the payment of the wages for the peasants working in the vineyards, the chimney sweepers, and sextons, as well as arranging the improvements to the country road leading up to the castle.²⁹ In these dealings Metternich employed a modern marketing sense: he advised against labeling the different types of vine simply with numbers—1, 2, 3, and so on—because the buyer would think only number 1 made really good wine. Instead, the wine was to be marked by differently colored seals on the top of the bottles, making the wine recognizable only according to the type of grape, but not according to quality. In 1830 he even ordered that the administrator and cellar master had to sign the label of each bottle, to guarantee to the buyer the high quality the wine.

It is particularly surprising to observe the business acumen Metternich brought to winegrowing, and to the overall administration. In 1836 he introduced a so-called cultivation plan [*Cultur-Plan*] and a tree-felling plan [*Holz-fällungsplan*].³⁰ The administrator had to present an annual report listing the strengths and weaknesses of the yields and forms of cultivation in two separate columns, thus providing an evaluation of the previous business year. As a rule, Metternich used the wine merchant Leyden in Cologne to organize the distribution. Leyden was his "agent" in questions of trade, and he was in constant correspondence with him, including during the revolutionary years 1848–1849, when Leyden sent to him in London all the pamphlets he could lay his hands on from revolutionary Cologne.

Due to a legal particularity, Johannisberg was to become the reason for an enduring dispute between Metternich and the government of Nassau. Although



Original label of 1819, sent by Metternich from Vienna to the office of the administrator at Johannisberg (March 2, 1819).

the Holy Roman Empire was gone, Metternich had received his “domain” under the old legal form, which stipulated that he was—as in the case of Königswart—the ruling sovereign. But the emperor defined the estate using the category “lordship” [*Obereigentum*], which was a category of feudal law. The right of the feudal lord was opposed to the “tributary possession” [*Untereigentum*], which gave the right of use to whoever took the fiefdom. This was more than just hair-splitting: it meant that Metternich was not allowed to sell the estate, and if there were no heirs it would become the property of the emperor again. As it counted as the “sovereign property” of the emperor, the emperor retained a territorial enclave in Germany even after the demise of the Holy Roman Empire. As Metternich interpreted it, with the bestowal of the estate the sovereign right had also passed to him. He possessed the *iura regalia*, the sovereign rights to exercise civil and criminal jurisdiction. To begin with, he was still an aristocratic landlord and not a capitalist owner of an estate.

The parish council of Johannisberg used the opportunity of Metternich's presence in September 1841 in order to propose the abolition of the tithe on fruit. The same day, September 20, he replied that this would be possible only if the tithe on wine were also abolished—in that case, he would, in the name of the Austrian emperor as the “supreme feudal lord” of Johannisberg, be prepared to accept the proposal. He had the relevant contracts drawn up,³¹ but it took some time—until July 1843—for Metternich's administrator to complete and send out the documents for the Rheingau parishes of Johannisberg,

Rüdesheim, and Eibingen. The redemption payment was financed by the Duke of Nassau's bank. With this move, Metternich proved himself to be ahead of his time. He paved the way for his “subjects” to become free owners, and thus renounced his position as “feudal lord”—before others were compelled to do so under the threat of violence in 1848. Metternich nevertheless continued to see himself as the authority; he performed the rights of patronage—that is, he took care of the priests and the parish churches, which he also equipped financially with foundations.

Metternich's Battle for Johannisberg during the Revolutionary Year 1848

An intractable dispute between Metternich and the government in Wiesbaden developed over the legal status and the taxation of Johannisberg. The government considered the estate to belong to a subject of the Duchy of Nassau—namely, Metternich—and, as such, demanded he pay his taxes. In this conflict, two legal worlds collided. For understandable reasons, Metternich adhered to the older of the two and refused to pay. His exemption from taxation rested on an ancient contract between the Archdiocese of Mainz and the Prince-Bishopric of Fulda. It had been bought for the price of 2,000 guilders. The population did not know that, but they did know about the outstanding taxes to be paid. During the revolution in March 1848, popular anger grew, and followers of Jahn from Mainz and Frankfurt prepared to storm Johannisberg Castle. On March 31, at eleven o'clock at night, a civil guard of nineteen men from Johannisberg and the surrounding villages, supported by the bailiff of Nassau in Rüdesheim, took preemptive action. The bailiff ordered that the castle's cellars be sealed and arranged for the entrance to the castle and the wine cellars to be blocked.³² Two flags were raised, one at each of the castle's wings: one was the colors of Nassau, the other the colors of Germany. Metternich's coat of arms was painted over with the colors of the House of Nassau, as it was too heavy to be removed quickly. Up to that point, the corners of the castle had been painted in black and yellow as a sign of Austria's supreme rule. Johannisberg was temporarily confiscated—“subject to sequestration” was the term used.

The legal claim regarding the unpaid tax was taken up again, and the matter was discussed at the assembly of the estates in Wiesbaden. The assembly set up a “commission for the investigation of the legal situation of Johannisberg Castle regarding state law.” The resulting report is dated March 15 and was presented to the assembly on May 28, 1849. It was still imbued with the emotion of those days of the previous March, and invoked the “new transition in all things,” and the long-suppressed anger of the people, especially those of the

Rheingau, that had been vented at all the “old injustices.” The report calculated a sum of 55,353 guilders in unpaid state tax, and of 17,738 guilders in unpaid communal tax. The communities even demanded payment for war contributions reaching back to 1792.³³ It would have been altogether impossible for Metternich—at that point in exile in London—to pay the overall sum: about 73,000 guilders.

After the revolutionary period, the dispute could finally be settled at the highest level. The words of the Austrian prime minister, Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg, backed by the young emperor Franz Joseph, were enough to persuade the small state of Nassau to accept a settlement. On December 20, 1850, a contract was signed between the Austrian emperor and the Duke of Nassau that clarified the legal position of the domain Johannisberg. In January of the same year, Metternich signaled his acceptance from Brussels. The contract included the payment of outstanding taxes from 1818 onward, which were put at 7,000 guilders. That was no trifling matter either, given that the overall annual profit of the Johannisberg estate was 15,000 to 18,000 guilders. From his exile, Metternich could not, of course, raise this amount of money himself—especially as his Bohemian estates had been confiscated in 1848. Metternich was able to pay the sum only because he received more credit from the M. A. von Rothschild and Sons banking house in Frankfurt.

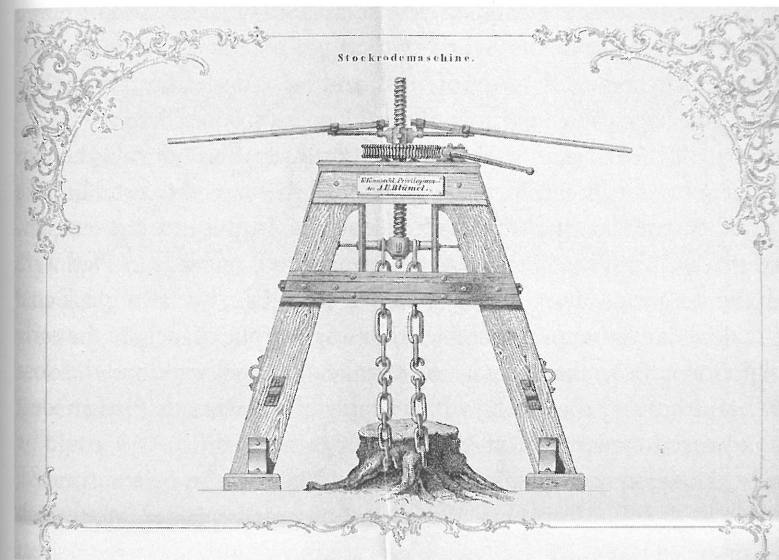
On February 3, 1851, the emperor and the duke ratified the contract.³⁴ The emperor forfeited the sovereign rights over the domain of Johannisberg, which had been guaranteed in article 51 of the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna. But he retained the “lordship” [*Obereigentum*] under feudal law, which entitled him to pass on the property, over which the Metternich family had the right of use (*dominium utile*), if the family line became extinct. The “canon,” the annual proportion of wine to be delivered to the emperor in Vienna, remained in place. Under the terms of the settlement, the emperor and Metternich forfeited the right to be exempted from taxation, and Metternich, additionally, agreed to forgive the repayment of the 2,000 guilders originally paid for this right. From now on, the domain of Johannisberg was fully subject to the laws of taxation “like any other possession under the sovereignty of His Highness the Duke of Nassau.” Modern times had finally reached the winegrowing estate, and Metternich had saved this treasure for himself and his descendants.

The Forester

Metternich’s Bohemian estates not only provided him with a handsome income from the local commercial enterprises, but also included large forests that his forestry officials cultivated according to the newest methods and principles.

Johann Nußbaumer, the prince’s forester in Plaß, made a name for himself by increasing the yield of wood using new methods of planting and cultivating. Metternich’s competent management involved giving his administrators and civil servants a degree of discretion in their actions and decisions. This encouraged the director of mining and metallurgy, for instance, to invent a technical instrument for pulling the trunks of felled trees out of the soil. The invention was officially recognized with an imperial patent.

In his forward-thinking policies for the development of his lands, Metternich made use of new methods in economics, technology, and engineering. This becomes apparent not only to the historian; open-minded and unprejudiced contemporaries of Metternich also remarked on the effects of these policies when they traveled through Bohemia. It is astonishing that a report like that of the American Peter Evan Turnbull, who recognized Metternich as a “great and influential landowner,” could have been so easily forgotten: “On his Bohemian estates, which have of late years been augmented by very extensive purchases, he has established experimental farms. He has introduced from other lands a better system of agriculture and of rural economy. He has erected villages; established schools; and, exerting the powers of his wealth, his influence, and his intellect, for the improvement primarily of his own land and of



Stockrodemaschine [machine for clearing tree trunks], k. k. exclusive privilege of the director of mining and metallurgy of the Metternich estate, Josef Em. Blümel (patent dated October 9, 1858).

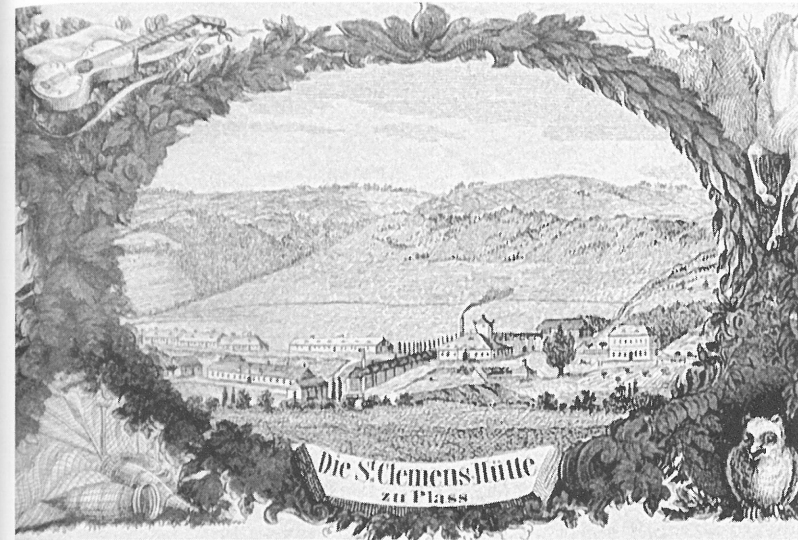
the cultivators on it, he is contributing secondarily, but most importantly, to the benefit of the kingdom at large." Turnbull observed with astonishment "the facility with which his mind can discriminate the smallest details, while grasping the mightiest objects," and he noted, correctly, that "from the cabinet of state at Vienna he can give directions for the management of his farmyard in Bohemia."³⁵

FACTORY OWNER AND INDUSTRIAL ENTREPRENEUR

The Ironworks at Plaß

The Bohemian dominion of Plaß also attracted Metternich's attention because he hoped to find mineral resources there that would allow him to erect a new ironworks near the abbey. He used elaborate methods to search for natural resources, and the search succeeded. It is telling how, in this case, he dealt with the central administration in Plaß, which was subordinate to him. He had intelligent civil servants there who were capable of thinking for themselves. They suspected there were iron ore deposits in the dominion, and they secured mining rights. They had sent samples of ore findings to Metternich and asked whether they should undertake test drillings at the dominion's expense. Metternich weighed the potential commercial advantages against the costs involved in taking the necessary systematic approach, necessary "because in mining everything depends on conviction, and one cannot rely on what nature accidentally happens to present in terms of hints, and I also understand the necessity to try all that is possible to give the forests a greater value."³⁶

Metternich left the decision to the central administration but told them to treat the initiative as a "preliminary investigation" that aimed to establish the location, quality, and extent of the existing iron ore. In the end, the expectations of Metternich in Vienna and his subordinate civil servants in Plaß were exceeded: the dominion had not only layers of ironstone, but also black coal deposits, making it even more profitable. That was a stroke of luck: in the early industrial period in Bohemia, there was not yet a railway network, and the close proximity of the ore and coal, along with a supply of wood, made Plaß an ideal place for industrial exploitation in the form of an ironworks. As it could be used locally, the wood was more valuable and did not have to be transported, at vast expense, to other locations. We know how open-minded Metternich was toward new commercial and technological innovations, and what a great pupil of English engineering he had been, ever since his first trip to London in 1794. In this way he was able to take up the role of an early German industrial pioneer and entrepreneur.



The St. Clemens ironworks at Plaß in 1844.

The ironworks gradually developed into a substantial enterprise. We have precise figures relating to its equipment for the year 1844. At that point in time, it consisted of a blast furnace and a so-called cupola furnace coupled with a steam engine. This type of furnace, invented by the Englishman John Wilkinson in 1794, allowed it to melt the iron at a lower temperature than a blast furnace, and thus it was more economical. It turned raw iron into cast iron. The name relates to the dome-shaped top from which the long furnace shaft emerges. The steam engine drove various hammers that transformed rough bar iron into so-called *Zaineisen*, semi-finished iron products that were then turned into nails or spoons in smithies. All this was produced by the prince's ironworks itself. To that end, it also had a foundry and a mechanical workshop with three machines for turning and drilling and six machines for planing, screw cutting, and pressing. The coal for the ironworks came from two coal mines, the ore from sixteen iron-ore mines. The enterprise had a commercially structured workforce: there were more than 124 miners, 26 laborers at the ironworks, 75 casters and grinders, 45 blacksmiths, 46 locksmiths, turners, and carpenters (pattern-makers), and 32 charcoal makers. The total workforce came to 348 employees, and they annually processed 80,000 centner of iron ore into 18,000 centner of raw iron, 8,000 centner of cast iron products, and 7,800 centner of bar and higher-grade *Zeugeisen*.³⁷ The annual turnover for 1842 was 280,000 guilders.³⁸

The Range of Products

A price list from 1856 details the broad range of available products, which corresponded to the modern needs of an economy about to enter the age of industrialization in earnest.

The cast iron section produced rails, axles, and wheels for railways; ploughshares and ploughshare wheels for farmers; and barrel hoops for coopers. The cast iron products, in contrast, aimed at the domestic economy and included ovens, pots, weights, kettles, pestles and mortars, hot plates, fire grids, pavement slabs, water pipes, lattice fences, nails, and garden chairs with side arms and canopies. For an extra fee, the ironworks would make products to order, if corresponding drawings and models were provided. Often these special commissions were machine parts. Even highly unusual products could be made, such as the funeral monument Metternich ordered for the deceased clergymen of the former abbey. It still stands today.

The impressive cast iron fountain in the inner courtyard at Königswart Castle, which catches the eye of every visitor, was also made by the ironworks of Plaß. Its products were distributed across the Bohemian region. The main storage site for all products was the warehouse of the Saaz-based merchant Adolf Mendl, who delivered goods to all of Bohemia. Metternich did not lease the ironworks to someone else but operated it himself, through the leadership of his director. The income thus went straight into his own account.

The Industrial Patriarch with a Social Conscience

When Metternich returned from exile in 1851, he continued to maintain his estates with the same prudence and diligence as before, even up until the last weeks of his life. He paid special attention to the ironworks, and on the occasion of its expansion the workers collectively thanked him in a letter presented to him at the celebration.

In 1854 the flourishing ironworks acquired a steamroller. Upon its inauguration, the choir of the workforce sang a "Bohemian hymn" in honor of Metternich. The chaplain of Plaß, Father Wenzl Pokorny, had composed and translated it into German for him. The cover page of the sheet music that was handed out bore the title—translated from the Czech—"Song performed by the schoolchildren during the inauguration of the steamroller at Plaß in honor of His Serene Highness, the noble Clemens Wenzel Lothar Prince Metternich of Winneburg."³⁹

Like later early industrialists—such as the Krupps—Metternich felt obliged to his workers, and, following his paternalistic instincts, he took care of them.

PREIS-COURANT

der hochfürstlich von Metternichschen
BERG & HÜTTEN-DIREKTION IN PLaß

Ohne Verbindlichkeit per comptant. loco Prag. 1856
In Wiener Gewicht.

Schmiedeeisen		Conv. Mün.			Conv. Mün.			Conv. Mün.
1000 Raderisen 2 1/2 in Dicken à 10 1/2 R. Fl.	10	5	1000 Caserolle	11	7	1000 Rindschule	11	5 50
do 3 1/2 " do do do	9	50	Balkenboche glatte	5	50	Reindeln von 1 1/2 R pr. Stk.	6	50
Bahnisen 3 1/2 " do do do	9	55	do do mit Gröbeln.	6		do über 10 R.	6	50
do 3 9/16 " do do do	9	50	Drillings für Mühlen.	7		Schlägel kleine	5	10
Hufstaab 3 6/8 " do do do	9	55	Feuerboche	5	10	Trottoirplatten	5	20
Gitter 1 7/8 " do do do	9	55	Phosphaten	5	10	Wasserröhren von 1 1/2 "	6	
do 1 3/4 " do do do	9	55	do do mit Löchern	6		do do 2 1/2 "	5	50
Schienen 4 8/8 " do do do	9	55	Gewichte von 1/2 - 1 1/2	6		Wellenzapfen	6	50
Achsenboche 2 5/8 " do do do	9	55	do do 2 1/2 "	6		Zapfenlager	6	
Pflastersteinen do do do	10	10	do do 10 - 100	5	50	Maschinenbestandtheile		
Achsenboche 2 5/8 " do do do	10	10	Keuzel in Sand bis 100 R.	5	50	Gegen eingetragene Modelle nach		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	do do von 100 - 500 R.	5	50	Beauftragten von Pl. 8 bis zu		15
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	do do von 600 R. überwärts	5	50	verschiedenen Preisen werden auch		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	do do in Lehm	6		Bestellungen auf Maschinenbe-		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Kochtöpfe von 1 bis 100 pr. Stk.	7		standtheile gegen Zeichnungen		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	do do über 10 R.	6		angegenommen die Metallkosten		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Mürser 8 Stück von 1 - 10 R.	6		dafür aber separat berechnet		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	do do über 10 R.	6		1 Stk. Gitterstab mit Aufsatz		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Ofen mit runder	6		do glatt einfach		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Ofentöpfe	6		Gitterstule mit Aufsatz nach 4		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Herdgrübel	5	50	Flügelarmstützen		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Herdplatten	5	50	Cartonstuel mit Seitenhaken		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Feuerpötte	5	50	do do rund berliner		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Feuerkruste	5	50	Canapé		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Canalgitter	5	50	Mageur		
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Schneidformen	5	50			
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Reislinde	5	50			
Zahnrad 8 Gitter do do do	10	10	Hochthalen	5	50			

Gusswaren

Anhülle für Frischtraar	5	10
do do Schmelze	5	20
Bratpfannen	6	
Böcheren zu Wagenrädern	6	50

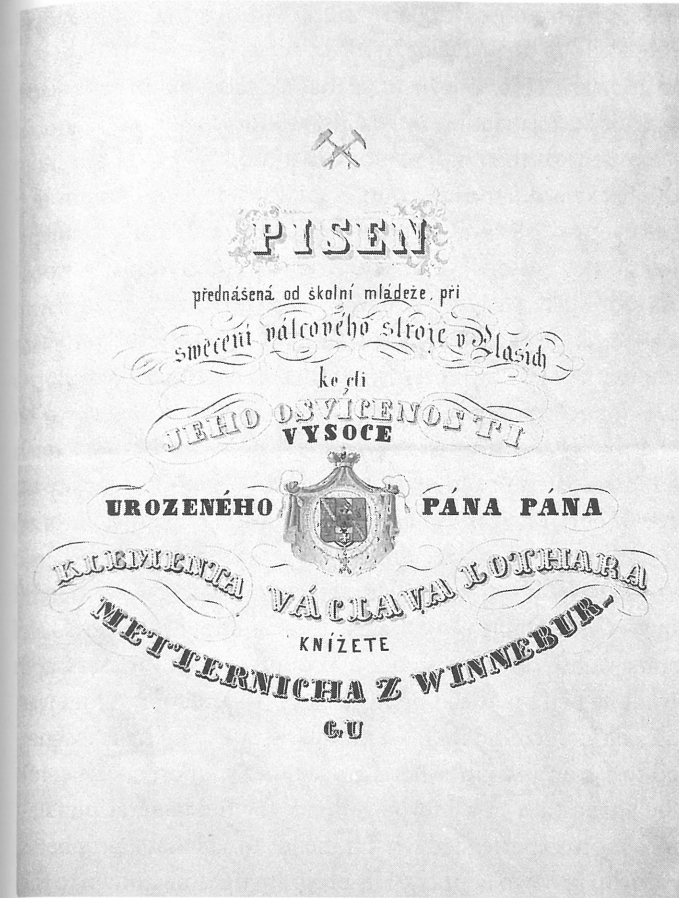
Price list for the goods offered by Metternich's ironworks at Plaß in 1856.

In Metternich's case the century-old family tradition also played a role: he conceived of himself as a ruling prince who, on the basis of a feudal relationship, was responsible for his "subjects," for his "people." In the context of the new age of capitalism, this attitude prevented him from becoming exclusively focused on profits in the style of Manchester capitalism. For the entrepreneurs of the latter kind, Zwanziger, Metternich's contemporary, became infamous in 1844 because of his treatment of the weavers of the Silesian cottage industry. (In Gerhart Hauptmann's play "The Weavers," he is called "Dreißiger"). As a patriarch with a social conscience, Metternich anticipated the principles that



Memorial for the deceased monks of the monastery, St. Wenzel cemetery in Plaß. The figure of the angel was produced at the ironworks ("IN MEMORIAM COENOBII PLASSENSIS DEFUNCTORUM CISTERCIENSIVM").

would later undergird the modern welfare state; in Plaß, for instance, he built single-story homes near the ironworks for his workers. One row of these houses is still inhabited today; a part of the ironworks is a museum. Individual examples of the products of the lucrative ironworks—from lattice fencing to ovens and sculptures—are also on display at the museum.



Thank-you document for Metternich on the occasion of the celebration to mark the expansion of the St. Clemens ironworks in Plaß in 1854.

An Industrial Pioneer with One Eye on the Monarchy

It did not fall under Metternich's competency as minister to intervene in the commercial development of the Habsburg Monarchy. He nevertheless drew on his experiences as an entrepreneur in order to do so, and he helped to foster an early industrial spirit even beyond his own dominions. Metternich knew what the new iron industry was capable of doing if energy sources and iron ore could be combined in profitable ways. He was aware of the coal deposits in Istria and suggested the creation of a joint-stock company with the aim of establishing a coal-mining enterprise. He also helped this enterprise overcome

some early setbacks. Our wise observer Turnbull called this the path toward "increasing opulence."⁴⁰

A memorandum Metternich wrote in 1844 that sketches Hungary's path toward prosperity and industrialization shows how seriously Metternich took the economic development of the empire.⁴¹ To his mind, there was too little "urban sense" in the backward agrarian country: "Cities develop only in the context of a progressive civilization," and this for him meant development through "the stimulation of national industry." The memorandum described a five-point program for such a stimulus that would have made any finance minister of the pre-1848 era proud: (1) the liberalization of landed property (in strict contrast to von der Marwitz's position); (2) the establishment of a mortgage bank to provide financial support and thus investment in the estates—he supported, he wrote, moves toward making property independent of feudal ownership; (3) the increased use of the labor force and a higher intensity of work; (4) the improvement of "means of communication" and "inner lines of communication," meaning more roads, railways, and river navigation, creating infrastructure to allow for sustainable growth; and finally (5) a program of "industrialization"—the capital should be used for building factories.⁴² He described these points, rightly, as the path out of economic backwardness, and they were exactly what he had practiced on his estates. The memorandum was discussed at the state conference and then—a popular strategy in the Habsburg Monarchy—handed to a commission, where it was quietly ignored. The commission rejected the suggestion of a mortgage bank for the general population. Metternich once more experienced what it means to say that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. His program became known to the public only in 1850 through a series of articles, and Metternich registered from his exile, not without some amusement, how people could not believe it came from him.⁴³

In 1844, just as he was making his proposals for Hungary, Metternich also pushed ahead with plans for his ironworks that aimed to bring about what the policies of large-scale agrarians pursuing their shortsighted interests and—until 1835—an overly anxious monarch could not. Metternich was not the only one among the Bohemian aristocrats who had adapted to modern economic changes and left behind agrarian feudalism for the sphere of industrial production, but he was the only one of them who was also a state minister. In this context, his interest in modern machinery and industrial forms of production, which was evident as early as his first visit to England, bore rich fruit at home and also had an impact at the highest political levels. Metternich vigorously promoted the expansion of the railway system, and he also promoted the industrial development of Austria more generally. In his 1844 memorandum on

Hungary, he declared that the country—like all other backward regions—had to be transformed from an agrarian society into an industrial one. "Industrial development," he wrote, "is the natural result of civilization, whose edifice must be built from the ground up."⁴⁴ Metternich described the steps along the path toward this "civilization" in his five conditions for infrastructural improvements, discussed above.

While in exile in Brussels, Metternich wrote more about his little-known ideas on economic policy. He was looking back at the pre-1848 period and commenting, with approval, on a submission made by Friedrich List, who had made the same suggestions regarding Hungary—namely, that before any industrialization, it was necessary to build the appropriate infrastructure: roads, river navigation, canals, and railways. According to List, what mattered was "the stimulation of means and paths of communication."⁴⁵ If Metternich was prepared to count even Friedrich List as a kindred spirit in economic matters, then quite some revision will be necessary to the picture of Metternich as a man of the "restoration." From his roots in the estate-based society of the Holy Roman Empire, he went through a change of mind and mentality that only a few who lived through the transition from *ancien régime* to the beginning of modernity managed to achieve.

THE SPRING OF NATIONS AMID POVERTY, 1830–1847

THE JULY REVOLUTION IN 1830 AND METTERNICH'S INTERNATIONAL
CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The July Revolution in Paris: The Initial Situation

As far as Metternich was concerned, the summer of 1830 was no different from any other. On May 28, a bit earlier than usual, he set off from Vienna to Johannisberg, where the first worrying news from Paris reached him. He was particularly concerned by the news because the French political conflict yet again linked foreign with domestic matters. On April 20, 1830, King Charles X had declared war on the Dey of Algiers—the governor of the Sultan—for trivial reasons. Publicly, he claimed that the military was going to end pirate raids in the Mediterranean—and the pirates were operating from Algerian soil. In fact, the move was just the first step toward an imperialist policy in North Africa, where France occupied Algeria as a colony from 1830 onward.

The king's decision was motivated by the desire to sideline his domestic political opponents, who were opposing his plans in the Chamber of Deputies. The war would allow him to limit voting rights and curtail freedom of the press using "ordinances"—emergency decrees. As in the case of the later "Rhine crisis" in 1840, victories on the international level were intended to increase the ruler's prestige at home—"with the idea of saving the Royal government," as Metternich put it.¹ The plan to change voting rights was bound to fail and lead to the most dangerous complications, Metternich wrote to his envoy in Paris on June 5. He added, almost prophetically, that the king would be toppled: "Everything in France is at stake—everything is in a state of acute crisis. I have long had a pre-

sentiment of the existence of danger, and seen it gradually increasing; for a long time, too, I have thought it my duty to call the serious attention of the principal Courts to this subject."² In other words, he was thinking of an international conference within the framework of the Concert of Europe.

On July 7, Metternich was back in Vienna briefly before heading to Königswart on July 22 for his usual August vacation. He traveled via Prague to Teplitz, where he paid the Prussian king a courtesy call. On July 29, three days after the outbreak of the July Revolution, he arrived at his summer residence. The very next day he read an edition of the *Moniteur* that ran articles about the ordinances passed on July 25 and the rebellion of July 26. Further news allayed his fears temporarily: the Count of Orleans had "put himself at the head of the revolt." We shall see shortly why this would have reassured Metternich. In any case, King Charles was "still with the army."³ The situation was severe enough for Metternich to consider ways and means "by which a basis of union between the Great Powers, and especially the old Quadruple Alliance, might be found."⁴ This required a restoration of the old conference system, which by this time lay in ruins. Metternich nevertheless did not consider the situation in Paris to be as serious as in 1815 or 1789, because he recognized in it the "stamp of the English Revolution of 1688."⁵ And the "Glorious Revolution" had happened without bloodshed, with only the ruler being substituted.

Analyzing the Danger for Europe

Metternich saw the sea battle of Navarino in 1827, in which a united Russian, British, and French fleet was fighting against Turkish and Egyptian forces, as a turning point. The allies forced the Ottoman Empire to recognize Greece as an independent state. From Metternich's perspective, this situation, from which Austria was excluded, marked a nadir for the system that the major powers had held in place together from 1813 to 1815. What kind of state was to be created on Greek soil? What did the July Revolution in Paris mean for Europe? These questions could be dealt with only on the basis of the ailing European Concert, which had to be resuscitated immediately. In this highly impenetrable global situation, Emperor Franz once again asked Metternich to analyze the crisis and calculate the extent to which the European state order was indeed threatened by events in Paris. Metternich responded with one of his trademark presentations, setting out the fundamentals of the situation for the emperor.⁶

Metternich thought that Italy and Galicia would be danger zones in the case of an interventionist war. After the Treaty of Paris of 1814, the system of communication between the monarchs had guaranteed a stable order for many years. Looking back, the years 1824–1825 seemed to have been a "transitional

period," characterized by the self-serving policies of Canning; in addition, there had been the increasing weakness of the French government and the death of Alexander. The earlier "great alliance offering general protection" was shaken to the core, and with it any remaining confidence Austria had in it. Austria's political security could no longer be guaranteed exclusively by the alliance. Russia had been seriously weakened by the losses suffered in 1828–1829 and needed several years of peace in order to recover. France was so divided domestically that the monarchy might even be threatened. The relationship between the Prussian and Austrian cabinets was the "most intimate." Austria thus only needed to take defensive measures. Metternich assumed that the peace would last for several more years. The triple alliance, without Austria, he saw as no more than a sad interregnum. England and Austria now enjoyed an understanding that was as "intimate" as the relationship during Canning's time had been estranged. The courts of England and France treated each other considerately. There was no longer a dangerous connection between France and Russia "for the promotion of isolated ends." Russia and Austria had shared interests in the preservation of the monarchical principle in France and the continued existence of the Ottoman Empire. Prussia would always genuinely support these interests.

Since the Congress of Vienna, Austria had had one coherent political body, in contrast to the times of the old German empire. Sardinia and the German Confederation protected them toward the west. Toward the east, the monarchy was vulnerable. The Ottoman Empire had become weak, making the duchies along the Danube—Moldavia, Walachia, and Serbia—part of the Russian zone of influence. Austria's military situation had significantly improved because of the unity established at the Congress of Vienna. Metternich saw Tyrol and the Alps, as well as Bohemia and Transylvania, as a bulwark; the Danube valley, Galicia, and Lombardy were weak points. His overall analysis of the geostrategic situation was not likely to reawaken the old fears of a revolution. There was no reason to follow the emphatic advice given to Metternich by Field Marshall Wrede and march straight into France as they had in 1792 or 1814.⁷

Should the Concert of Europe Intervene? Metternich the Appeaser

In this unpredictable European crisis, everything spoke in favor of reviving the conference system. The most difficult problem was to find a way for Austria to resume friendlier relations with Russia, which had suspended cooperation with Austria over the Greek question. A happy coincidence came to Metternich's rescue: when Metternich ended his stay in Königswart early, on August 5, in

order to travel to Vienna via Carlsbad, Foreign Minister Nesselrode, by coincidence, was in Carlsbad to take the waters.

At a memorable meeting on August 6, Metternich succeeded in reestablishing relations with the Russian court. This was the basis for revitalizing the Concert. They discussed the revolution in Paris, and Metternich's Russian colleague was surprised "about the extreme moderation of [Metternich's view]."⁸ The conference system, moreover, would have had to discuss the conditions and aims of an intervention because there was already a conflict requiring action—namely, the revolution in France. Metternich was fully aware of the contradiction between his wish to reactivate the Concert and his intention to prevent an intervention. There was a similar contradiction, though, in the conduct of Louis Philippe, who owed his throne to a revolution, yet insisted that he wanted to respect the conservative—preserving—principles on which the alliance had been based.⁹

How could Metternich be sure that, this time, there was no danger to Europe emanating from France? The answer—which has not been revealed before—is that he had a bargaining chip to use against Louis Philippe that gave him unconditional control over him. Only he and the French king knew about it, which is why this document was filed under "Acta Secreta" in the state Chancellery, rather than with the diplomatic correspondence.¹⁰ It is a letter of August 3, 1805, written by the Duke of Orleans and sent from his exile in London to the Austrian general Mack. In this letter he sought permission to join "the strongest army in Europe" and reminded Mack that he had offered his services to the emperor before, in 1801. (Nothing had come of it back then, because of the Treaty of Lunéville.) The prince had thus been prepared to join the Third Coalition, which had been agreed to in Berlin while Metternich was the Austrian envoy there.

Metternich had personally handed a copy of the letter, rolled up and kept in a container separate from other documents, to Count Anton Apponyi, the Austrian ambassador in Paris, adding a coded letter with instructions that began: "You will find enclosed an extremely interesting piece of writing; simply reading it will prove to you that it contains an enormous means for compromising Louis Philippe [*un moyen de compromission immense*]." He ordered the envoy to ask Louis Philippe for an audience if the French showed any intention of planning to attack "us" materially—that is, militarily. The envoy was to show the king the letter and warn him that, should he take military action against Austria, it would be published and that, in addition, Austria had several other equally sensitive items at their disposal. In the case of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, Metternich, incidentally, possessed a similarly embarrassing document—a

Twickenham près Londres
 ce 3 Aout 1805.
 Monsieur le Baron,
 Je vous envoie avec confiance d'intérieur
 que vous m'avez communiqué. Je m'ignore &
 que j'ai toujours apprécié comme je le
 devais, m'engageant à faire cette demande
 envers vous, & me donne l'assurance que
 vous voudriez bien me guider par vos
 conseils, & m'assister de tout ce que vous
 pouvez. Votre grande réputation militaire
 & la confiance de votre auguste souverain.
 Vous ne sauriez être surpris que j'éprouve
 une vive impatience de mettre au jour
 à la première occasion dans laquelle je
 languis depuis si longtemps. Quand on est
 1805

jusqu'à obtenir du service dans l'armée la
 plus militaire de l'Europe, je m'en rends
 donc entièrement à vous, & je suis avec
 empressement cette occasion de vous assurer,
 Monsieur le Baron de la haute estime
 & de la parfaite considération de votre affluant
 Louis Philippe

Lettre autographe du Louis Philippe d'Orléans au Général Mack, en date de Twickenham
 près Londres ce 3 Aout 1805 [Handwritten letter from Louis Philippe d'Orléans to General
 Mack, dated August 3, 1805, Twickenham near London], note by Metternich (shown are
 the first and last page of the letter).

whole dossier—on Lola Montez. But he would not be forced to make use of
 the dossier—or of the Duke of Orleans's letter.¹¹

Amid all these details, we should not forget the wider context. It was only
 because of Metternich that the institution of the conferences between the five
 major powers became functional again. As soon as he had built bridges with
 Russia, he made contact with Great Britain. And he kept in communication
 with the Prussian king as well, following their meeting in Teplitz. The first piece
 of evidence of the results of Metternich's initiative is a small piece of paper on
 which he had noted down details of the agreement reached with Nesselrode:
 "To adopt for the general basis of our conduct not in any way to interfere in
 the internal disputes of France, but, on the other hand, to permit no violation
 on the part of the French Government either of the material interests of Eu-
 rope, as established and guaranteed by general transactions, or of the internal
 peace of the various States composing it."¹² This unassuming but important
 note was diplomatically christened the "chiffon de Carlsbad."

Thus, the plan to recognize the July monarchy did not come from Britain,
 and nor did Austria quickly follow suit because of its parlous financial situa-
 tion, as some have thought.¹³ In fact, Metternich's actual role was that he sent
 the decisive signal to Russia, where events in Paris were being closely moni-
 tored and the mood was by no means averse to a possible intervention.

Metternich used the alliance between the five major powers to prevent an
 intervention, despite the fact that there was a case for one under the contrac-
 tual rules. He decided against it in the interests of securing peace in Europe.
 This contradicts the traditional view of Metternich as one of the most promi-
 nent representatives of the "Holy Alliance for the defense of the rights of legi-
 timate rulers against their rebellious peoples."¹⁴ Metternich had despised the
 legitimate Bourbon king, Charles X, since in his youth, when he witnessed how
 the ultraroyalist—then the Count of Artois—initiated the fateful declaration
 of Pillnitz, which was instrumental in further fueling the war of the First Co-
 alition. Back then Metternich had already distanced himself from this kind of
 ultraroyalism; and in 1830 he did not hold back in his criticisms of the king,
 whose foolish government measures, he said, had sealed his own fate. It served
 Metternich well in this instance that, ever since the battle at the Belgian Je-
 mappes, he had followed the career of the Duke of Orleans, who was his age,
 and formed a picture of his character.¹⁵

Metternich's central role in the international response to the July Revolu-
 tion is clear from the fact that, at the end of August, Louis Philippe sent Gen-
 eral Augustin Daniel Belliard (1769–1832) to Vienna. The general had already
 fought under Dumouriez, but now supported the new king. In three intense
 conversations with Metternich and at an audience with the emperor, Belliard
 tried to convince them that the ruler who had ascended the throne through a
 revolution would entirely abide by the Vienna contracts and ensure that the
 revolutionary movement would not spread beyond France. He also had a letter
 from the king in which the king praised himself as a pillar of order compared
 to Charles X. The emperor promised in return that he would not under any
 circumstances intervene in the internal problems of France. In addition, Met-
 ternich sent a dispatch to all Austrian embassies telling them that the emperor
 recognized the new French government and would entertain diplomatic rela-
 tions with it.¹⁶

A REVOLUTION IN COMMUNICATION, THE SPRING OF NATIONS, STATE SECURITY

Europe as a Public Space

There were fundamental differences between the situation in 1830 and the fight
 against the first French Revolution and Napoleon. In the intervening fifteen
 years, the gradual dissolution of the old order of estates had progressed fur-
 ther. After the famine and inflation of 1816, there occurred in 1830 another dual
 crisis which created a common ground for social protest across Europe. In

Germany, too, even in the absence of coordinated actions, social unrest spread rapidly, like a conflagration, and chaotically. In Aachen, craftsmen and workers stormed the grounds of a factory owner. In Leipzig, apprentices and journeymen attacked the universally unpopular police and cheered the July Revolution.¹⁷ In Dresden, demonstrators stormed city hall and burned records. Finally, the peasants also expressed their indignation, as did the weavers of the cottage industry in the Oberlausitz. In Brunswick, even the castle was burned down; in Kassel the poor stormed the bakeries after the price of bread was raised. In Hanover, the students rebelled. These were all signs of the emerging poverty caused by preindustrial crises in food provision and inflation, which sparked protests because they violated the “moral economy.”

The new revolution in communication provided welcome services: events happening in different places could be perceived almost simultaneously and linked up in the discourses associated with them. The number of daily publications shot up; there was an explosion of critique and satire. As early as 1853 the Heidelberg historian Georg Gottfried Gervinus recognized the deeper causes behind the symptoms of modernization: “The changes in property, the equal right of inheritance, educational institutions open to all, facility of intercourse, everything tends to the approximation of classes; the most opposite qualities and inclinations combine to assist in the elevation of the lower classes.”¹⁸ And then he added the sentence that would see him tried for high treason: “The emancipation of all the oppressed and suffering is the vocation of the century, and the force of this idea has been victorious over mighty interests and deeply rooted institutions, which may be perceived in the abolition of serfdom and villeinage in Europe, and in the liberation of the slaves in the West Indies.”¹⁹ In contrast to his successors Heinrich von Sybel and Heinrich von Treitschke, Gervinus still thought in European and even global terms and, as he put it, “as a citizen of the world.”²⁰ This enabled him to recognize how the space for action and communication within Europe had broadened after 1789—for a first time in 1820, then in 1830, and for a final time in 1848. With the revolution of 1848, the cycle of bottom-up, European-wide social movements ended. Contrary to the opening statement of the *Communist Manifesto*, no “specter” haunted Europe after that date, and the “world revolution” took place only in the texts of socialist and communist theoreticians: Europe as a whole was consumed by the wars that built nations—just as Metternich had predicted. Despite sharing a common European perspective, Metternich did not share Gervinus’s optimism that Europe would progress inevitably toward the realm of freedom. To Nesselrode, Metternich intimated what the July Revolution had triggered in him: “But, after all, the thought I secretly cherish is that ancient Europe is at the beginning of the end. My determination being to perish with

it, I shall know how to do my duty; nor is this my motto only—it is that of the Emperor too. New Europe, on the other hand, has not as yet even begun its existence, and between the end and the beginning there will be a chaos.”²¹ He expected this chaos to arise in two spheres: within society and between states. Here, too, he thought in European terms.

The signal from Paris released patriotic energies in the rest of Europe of the kind that had last been seen between 1813 and 1815 in Poland, Spain, Germany, and Italy. Back then Napoleon had offered himself as the symbol to be fought against or admired. Since the July Revolution, a front opened up within public discourse: on one side stood the spokesmen who in their publications styled themselves as freedom fighters; on the other side stood, as Gervinus put it, “fortresses of the principle of conservation,” “despotism,” and the “monarchical politics of conservation.” Good and evil were neatly and clearly divided.

The “Spring of Nations” as “Time Bomb”

From 1830 onward, the principle of nationality served as both fuel and social cement. With sincere conviction, Giuseppe Mazzini, the advocate for the poor, preached about the “spring of nations” that would lead to the peoples living in peace and harmony. He invoked the “Young Europe,” “Young Italy,” “Young Germany,” and so forth. At the same time, he beat the drum for revolutionary war against the “Metternich system.” Once again it was confirmed that the principle of nationality succeeded wherever the desolation of the present required something that instilled hope in people. That hope was now placed on the romantic utopia of an “awakening of the people” and on “national rebirth.” It is impossible to overestimate the naïveté of those enthusiasts who believed that their nationality, which they experienced in cultural and political terms, would be considered peaceful by their neighbors once it was organized as a state. The spiritual, religious, social, and economic crises and uncertainty led to a flourishing of nationalism everywhere. To that extent, the term *Vormärz* is a fitting name for the time leading up to March 1848, during which European societies became dynamic and involuntarily moved toward an even greater European revolution.

Helmut Rumpler rightly talks of a “Pandora’s box” in his exceptionally dense and revealing survey of the colorful plurality of vociferous nationalisms that proliferated in the Habsburg Monarchy during that period. In the end, the painful realization was that “national self-determination implied national separation.” This was the “time bomb.” The optimistic national narratives were blind to the overall picture—namely, that within the political reality in which they operated, war could be avoided only if individual nationalities and their

movements “made concessions in their demands.”²² And why make concessions when there was something to conquer and gain? They looked first to their own interests. That provided the energy and desired confidence, and in that respect all nationalities were the same. According to Rumpler, the spring of nations developed centrifugal force in the form of an “oppositional or secessionist nationalism.” Rumpler’s discussion reads like an account of Metternich’s worst nightmare. “Poland is not yet lost”—the line, which today appears in the Polish national anthem, called for a Polish national state, and it was like an axe coming down on the Vienna System as a whole. The Poles found themselves faced with the cultural awakening in Galicia. The Magyars, who only wanted to allow the Hungarian language to be spoken in the Imperial Assembly at Pressburg, experienced problems with the Transylvanian Saxons, Szekler, Croats, and Serbs, while Czech nationalism moved away from the bilingual foundation in a common “Bohemian nation,” which could live with regional patriotism but not with ethnic nationalism, and it also found new opponents in the Slovaks, who also wanted to “find” themselves. The Croats were still looking for their proper place within the great monarchy, while their Slavonic brothers in the south began to develop a pan-Serbian program, which was, in turn, resisted by an emerging “Illyrianism.” And the “awakened” Illyrians themselves had to deal with their Italian neighbors, who were celebrating their own “rebirth” (*Risorgimento*).

Only now is historical research slowly beginning to look deeper into the Habsburg Monarchy’s agrarian, legal, and institutional plurality. The empire’s regions were as diverse as its different nationalities. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the agrarian conditions in the German and Bohemian crown lands were relatively good, and hence there was little cause for social protest.²³ In these regions, Joseph II’s reforms were already having positive effects, whereas Prussian reforms were only just beginning to be implemented. The emperor and Metternich had in mind these regions of relative social peace [*Ruhe*] when they reacted with incomprehension to the social unrest in the German Confederation. But the Habsburg Monarchy also had backward regions, such as the Ruthenian and Slovenian East, which can still be detected in an east–west gap in the imperial statistics of 1910.²⁴ The monarchy was socially and economically divided, and for Metternich this meant the need for targeted support for particular regions. For Illyria, and northern Italy generally, he had developed ideas for how this could be achieved, and later he developed plans for Hungary, even though this was not within his purview. The precise details of when and where particular nationalisms were mobilized are even more difficult to determine for the pre-1848 period than for the post-1848 era.

The Germans were ignorant of all of this, because, like everyone else, they looked only at themselves—their philhellenism and their friendship with

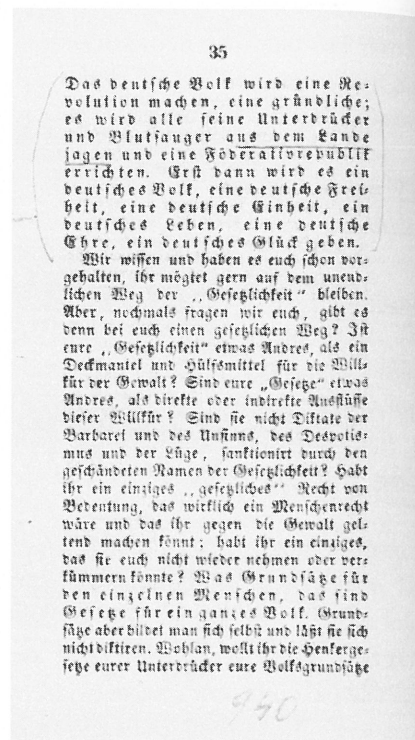
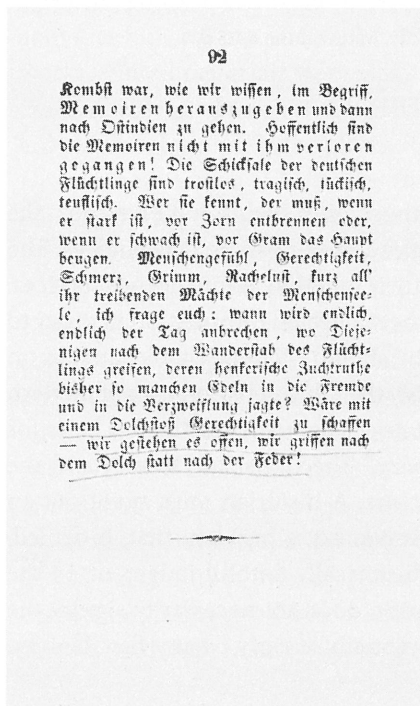
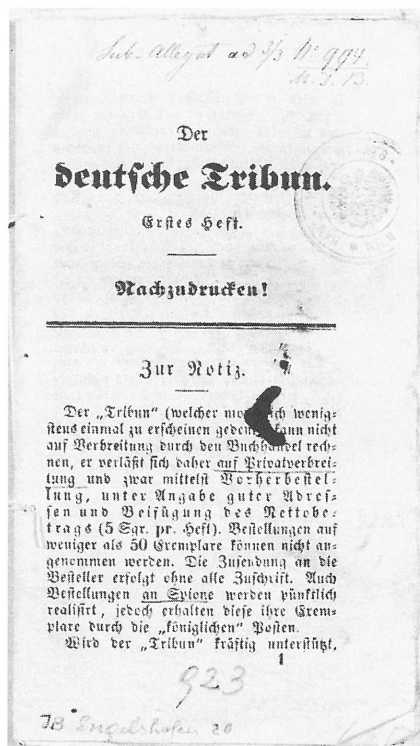
Poland were mainly mirrors in which they could see their own nationalism reflected. These Germans celebrated their dreams of unity as a state—in 1817 on the Wartburg; in 1832 at the festival at Hambach Castle; in songs on Schleswig-Holstein; in gymnastics clubs; in fraternities; and in German Catholic communities. For them, the German Austrians naturally belonged to their state, and they did not understand that they themselves were only one voice in the chorus of nationalities whose volume was increasing across the European Continent.

It is important to imagine the growth of this plurality of nationalities as vividly as possible if we are to understand aright Metternich’s political calculations, presentiments, and concerns. He never thought in terms of individual nationalities, but always in terms of complex connections. He had two ways of dealing with national movements: they needed to be culturally supported and politically tamed—that is, domestic policies had to put up barriers and dams, and then one might hope that, with increasing prosperity, tranquillity [*Ruhe*] would return.

Tightening of the Federal Domestic Laws

Metternich knew where to apply political pressure in order to get things done. In this case, as in the case of the Carlsbad Decrees, we must remember that he had the backing of the overwhelming majority of German princes. The work they had begun in Carlsbad they now perfected in the context of the July Revolution, with further decrees at the Federal Assembly. These dealt with the issue of too much public reporting on the discussions in the regional parliaments (1830) and with public political activities—associations, parties, meetings, and national festivals (1832). Metternich interpreted the attempted attack on the Federal Assembly in Frankfurt (April 3, 1833) according to his idea of interrelated terrorist activities, with which we are already familiar. This attack actually had more supporters than is suggested by Wehler’s remark—that it was an “attack by a few idealists and radical hotheads.”²⁵ It afforded the governments the opportunity to establish a second national investigative institution: the Central Investigative Office in Frankfurt, the successor to the Central Investigative Commission in Mainz. At the ministerial conferences in Vienna (1834), Metternich made another attempt, by way of further federal resolutions, at improving the domestic security policies that had been agreed on at Carlsbad.

Independently of the federal policies, Metternich established his own secret service, the Mainz Central Police [*Mainzer Zentralpolizei*], as it was called in the files of the state Chancellery. In other official documentation, it was also sometimes called the Mainz Intelligence Agency [*Mainzer Informationsbüro (MIB)*], a term that appears more modern and sheds the association with



the expression “police state” is loaded with associations: the “Gestapo,” the “Stasi,” the “Gulag,” the “concentration camp,” secret arrests and executions. But these associations do not fit either with the heterogeneous Habsburg Monarchy, which was not really centralized before 1848, or with the German Confederation. The emperors Franz and Ferdinand enjoyed broad popularity among the wider population, something that was regularly confirmed—particularly in the case of Franz—at weekly audiences with “the people.” Their rule can be called a benevolent patriarchal dictatorship; they spoke of *Policey* and *Policeystaat*²⁸—the different spelling alone suggests that this must have been quite a different phenomenon from later police states. In the older language of state administration, *policey* referred to the totality of the domestic administration, and accordingly there was a *Medicinal-Policey* that was responsible for medical policies, and a *Wohlfahrts-Policey* dealing with welfare policies. If we wanted to find modern equivalents to the activities performed by the police during the pre-1848 period, we would need to think of the work of “secret intelligence services” and of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution [*Verfassungsschutz*]. The interception of mail and the screening of state and private correspondence was part of this work. This was called *Perlustrieren* (literally: to shine a light into something) and *Interzeperieren* (“confiscation,” “withdrawal”). The latter referred to the secret interception and disposal of a letter before delivery. An *Interzept* was a copy of a letter that had been secretly opened. All of this required a lot of expertise, and Metternich had a special office at his state Chancellery for that purpose called the *Ziffernkabinett*. It was responsible for the interception, opening, and copying of letters and their discreet return into the postal system. It also had to decipher encoded letters from foreign diplomats, and from time to time it translated arriving correspondence that was written in unusual languages.

If we understand the Habsburg “police state” in this way, parallels with modern security measures become obvious, and the question of how far a state may go in order to defend itself arises. As in the case of the control of communication, the problem is not surveillance as such, but surveillance without independent judicial oversight. This shortcoming relates to our description of the Habsburg Monarchy as a benevolent patriarchal dictatorship: states of this kind tend to reject independent judicial control. The Habsburg Monarchy, however, was similar in this regard to all the other German states during the pre-1848 era—and most certainly to Prussia. With regard to Metternich, another little-known factor must be taken into account: within the Austrian administration, censorship and police were part of the Ministry of the Interior’s brief, and this ministry was, from 1826 onward, headed by the Bohemian count Kolowrat, who was also the finance minister. Emperor Franz thwarted any

Pamphlet *The German Tribune* with three passages marked; accompanying letter “from Lake Constance, November 23rd, 1846.”

attempt at establishing a council of ministers, headed by a prime minister, as an independent governmental body, and reserved the right for himself to treat every minister individually as the holder of a so-called *Hofstelle*, a court office. The holder had direct—"immediater"—access to the emperor and wrote his own presentations for him, while the emperor was always able to play his ministers off against each other, an ability he frequently made use of.

As someone who thought and planned for the long term, Metternich must have been close to desperation when the emperor rejected his suggestions, as he did in 1816–1817 when Metternich proposed federal reorganization and rationalization of the monarchy. The concrete example of the "police" showed us that Metternich was by no means the all-powerful figure within the political system of the Habsburg Monarchy. We shall have occasion to revisit this point in more detail later.

TOLERATED REVOLUTIONS AFTER 1830

King Leopold of Belgium: A Second Revolutionary Prince Legitimized

The rebellion in Brussels on September 28, 1830, came in the wake of the July Revolution. It fit with Metternich's predictions of ensuing chaos. How should one deal with the emergence of a new state? A part of the Kingdom of the United Netherlands, which had been established and legitimized at the Congress of Vienna, tried its hand at rebellion. This was a repetition of the same pattern, typical for the nineteenth century, which Metternich considered a core evil: claims of nationality aiming at establishing a separate territory. The situation was paradoxical: the national principle was invoked to legitimize a future nation-state, while undermining the existing state from within.

The governments of Russia, England, and Austria seriously considered a military intervention.²⁹ Metternich, however, took the overall geopolitical distribution of military power into account: If Austrian troops were engaged in Brussels, they would no longer be available in Italy, where he also expected uprisings to occur—and, as it turned out, he was right—and the Habsburg Monarchy would also lose its capacity to respond to the situation in Germany. Metternich also expected unrest in the Polish regions. He calculated like a chess player (an image he himself used): If one moved pieces to one side, this created a vacuum of power on the other side. Because of all the interconnections between the potential conflict areas, the states paused, despite their readiness to intervene. This ultimately made possible the formation of a sovereign Kingdom of Belgium, which was then legitimized by a conference of the five major powers in London on November 15, 1831. The Concert of Europe diplo-

macy still worked, even if the kind of conference politics familiar from the 1820s was no longer practiced. Leopold von Saxony-Coburg-Gotha—a compromise candidate to avoid a Bourbon king—seized the opportunity (a rare one for the prince of a small German state) to become the ruler of a kingdom. He would later be one of the most reliable supporters of Metternich during his time in exile after 1848.

The Drive toward Constitutionalism in Germany

In the German states the July Revolution drove forward constitutionalism, which had begun to gain ground in 1814. By 1848 there were only four states that still had no written Constitution: Austria, Prussia, Mecklenburg, and Hesse-Homburg. But in the pre-1848 period, Prussia and Austria were, because of their provincial estates, no longer absolutist states—contrary to what one usually understands from school textbooks. Prussia's domestic policies suffered from an enduring problem. Still with the Napoleonic wars in mind, the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm III, had issued a written promise in 1815 that the country would receive a (modern) written Constitution. Metternich saw this as potentially explosive; he considered Prussia, like the Habsburg Monarchy, to be a heterogeneous, composite state that would be blown apart by central parliamentary representation. After the succession of Wilhelm IV in 1840, he repeatedly told the new king that he should under no circumstances grant the country a Constitution with central representation. All the same, in 1847 what Metternich had consistently warned against came to pass. The king called a meeting of the "united parliaments" for the purpose of discussing the financing of the railroad to Eastern Prussia. This parliament, based on the model of the French estates general of 1789 and thus old-fashioned in its form, could then no longer be diverted from its aim of becoming the "national" Parliament of Prussia.

In Austria, too, the regional parliaments were trailblazers in the fight for more political participation. And here, again, there had been no central representative body before 1848; the one established by the revolution was only short-lived, and the monarchy took the path toward a central parliament only after Metternich's death—namely, after 1861 and, in particular, after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. Metternich rightly expected that in the multinational Habsburg state, central representation would unleash destructive centrifugal forces, but the German states, and in particular the Napoleonic kingdoms of Bavaria and Württemberg, expected the result to be a new and integrating confidence in the state. A new constitutional patriotism was to unite the diverse new regions and diverse parts of the population. Some nevertheless

used the generic adjective “German”—as did the Bavarian king, Ludwig I, when he built the grand national monument of the “Walhalla” at the Danube. But this national consciousness was supposed to be cultural and historical, not political, because apart from the much-invoked “German fatherland,” there were also Prussian, Bavarian, Württembergian, and Hessian “nations” in the contemporary consciousness. It is not often remembered today that the original purpose of the much-discussed “national festival of the Germans” in Hambach in May 1832 had been to celebrate the anniversary of the Bavarian Constitution, something that, in the end, it did not do.

Metternich also interpreted the disturbances in the German states within the overall European context. The attack on the main police station [*Hauptwache*] in Frankfurt on April 3, 1833, was directed at the Federal Assembly. Although the attack failed miserably, it had to be seen as an attempt at a revolution, because the plan had been to take the members of the Assembly hostage. And there were many hints that suggested connections with Polish and Italian activists, even though the Frankfurt bourgeoisie very efficiently covered up the most important of these.

A Revolution in Poland?

All the European uprisings that followed were interconnected. The whole Continent felt the movement. A parallel was drawn between the bombardment of Antwerp during the uprising in the Belgian Netherlands and the uprising in Warsaw. The commentators in the press saw the Poles, like the Greeks in the 1820s, as an *Aufstandsnation*—a nation that was rising up. All rebellious activities targeted state power, and in the extreme case the monarch himself. The Russian crown prince, Konstantin, who was in Warsaw as the representative of the tsar, fled the danger to the safety of the Russian troops that were stationed there—about 15,000 of them. Metternich reacted logically and ordered 10,000 troops to be moved to the border with Galicia in order to be prepared for any attack. The Prussians did the same. After the rebellion had been put down, Metternich tolerated Polish fighters who had fled to the Austrian part of Galicia. They were disarmed and their equipment handed over to the Russians. There was a kind of informal agreement between the major powers of the pentarchy not to take any action, as it was in all of their interests not to change the status quo—to ensure that, unlike what happened in Belgium, an independent Polish state was prevented. At the same time, Metternich reflected on the situation in the Habsburg countries. The population, especially the peasants in Galicia, showed no signs of planning a rebellion, and so he concluded that there were no sympathies for a revolution or unrest in the Slavonic coun-

tries. He interpreted this as being due to the success of his policies. The uprisings that emanated from Warsaw certainly posed a problem for the Vienna System of 1815; the Poles tried to cast off the yoke of Russian supremacy and restore their own kingdom. This would have implied changing the three Polish divisions and would have challenged the territorial claims of three of the major powers—Austria, Prussia, and Russia.

FROM THE ORIENT TO THE RHINE: THE CONCERT OF THE MAJOR POWERS AS A CHALLENGE

Because of the general tumult in Europe after the July Revolution, Metternich wanted to see the old system of regular conferences restored—even if that meant long and tiring coach journeys across Europe for all the participants. Such journeys involved a good deal of physical stress: traveling for weeks on the road in coaches that did not have much in the way of suspension. Metternich complained about this in his letters, but he continued to advocate for the conferences. At the beginning, he only managed to bring the Eastern powers together. In September 1833 they met in Münchengrätz (Czech Mnichovo Hradiště) to the northeast of Prague; Tsar Nikolaus rushed to the meeting from Warsaw. Prussia (represented by the crown prince), Austria, and Russia agreed to a joint convention that apparently intended to restore the original system of 1815, which had been created to deal with France. With this alliance, Russia adopted a policy of preserving the Ottoman Empire as long as Russia would be able to extend its sphere of influence into the Balkans and the straits at the Black Sea. That was the reason Russia joined the convention. The powers mutually guaranteed their respective Polish possessions, and they agreed to come to each other's aid in the case of another Polish independence movement. Mutual assurances of aid in the common battle against rebellious “liberalism” were also given, for the powers feared that “the revolution” would continue. Police reports on “terrorism” were to be exchanged, and, were the revolution to extend into the German Confederation, the Habsburg Monarchy, or Prussia, the allies agreed to intervene if called upon for help. This happened in 1849 when Russian troops came to the aid of Austria; without their help, the revolutions could not have been quelled. This antirevolutionary league was also designed to secure the monarchical system generally; in Münchengrätz in 1833, Tsar Nikolaus guaranteed, for instance, that the crown prince and future emperor, Ferdinand, would succeed to the throne—despite his physical and mental disabilities and legal incapacity. Overall, these policies stabilized the Vienna System of 1815; they did not serve any particular interests. The three powers supported these coordinated policies up until 1841.

Superficially, however, it did look like a resuscitation of the conservative league of Russia, Austria, and Prussia. But this view is incorrect. Münchengrätz was another attempt to secure the European system of 1815, whose continued existence depended on the preservation of the Ottoman Empire. This was unambiguously Metternich's achievement. Shortly before Münchengrätz, a contract between Russia and the Ottoman Empire (Hunkiar Iskelessi) had made the old enemies into partners in a defensive alliance. In this contract, the tsar guaranteed the existence of the Ottoman Empire, and in a "secret supplementary article" he agreed to a blockade of the Bosphorus strait for warships of third countries.

Metternich knew about this secret article. It constituted an affront to France and especially to Great Britain, which saw in it a threat to its interests as a naval power. The bilateral contract between Russia and the Ottoman Empire was, in fact, an expression of a Russian imperialism that was independent of the Vienna System and was gradually moving further and further west. Metternich did not see a problem with this because the Bosphorus strait did not immediately concern the Habsburg Monarchy, while the support for the Ottoman Empire and the secret article convinced him that the mutual understanding between France and tsarist Russia that he had feared was no longer possible. Metternich's long-term aim was still a peaceful understanding between the powers of the pentarchy on the basis of the consensus achieved in Vienna. If this solidarity was temporarily unachievable, the major powers were at least to adhere to rational policies to secure peace in Europe.

During the period 1839–1841, Metternich's policies were successful. A thorough examination of all embassy archives has recently shown how instrumental Metternich was in controlling the European crisis by deflating the conflicts that arose from problems within the Ottoman Empire.³⁰ Because of the one-sided policies pursued by the French foreign ministry, this conflict threatened to grow into a great European war. The possibility of a dangerous expansion of the conflict, which began as a regional conflict in Syria and Algeria, became clear when the major powers—apart from France—guaranteed the continued existence of the Ottoman Empire in the Convention of London of 1840, thus demonstrating to the Egyptian viceroy the limits of his power. In a mixture of prestige-seeking and nostalgia for the great Napoleon (whose mortal remains had just been transferred from Saint Helena to Paris), the public opinion in France's daily press scorned this agreement of the Quadruple Alliance. The convention was seen as a national humiliation because it seemed as though the old allies were conspiring against France again, as they had done during the period 1813 to 1815. That stirred thoughts of revenge, and an overheated press called for the recapture of the left bank of the Rhine and northern Italy. There

was a wave of national passion in the German press, and German songs were sung ("They shall not have it/the free German Rhine"); on both sides there was talk of a war for the fatherland.

In 1840, plans for troop mobilization became more concrete in both France and the German Confederation. In something of a master stroke, Metternich succeeded in ending France's diplomatic isolation and bringing about an agreement between the powers of the pentarchy and the sultan in the second London Convention of 1841, which prohibited warships from entering the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus during peacetime. Early on, Metternich understood that excluding France from the agreements of the major European states risked war—even if, in truth, France had excluded itself.

This international conflict showed that Metternich considered the German Confederation an important military element in the Rhine crisis. He did not view the public nationalist fervor during the crisis as "revolutionary"; he explicitly welcomed it as something that strengthened the German Confederation. Austria's renewed dominance within the Austro-Prussian relationship also became clear. Metternich, however, was becoming aware of the limits of the system he had helped to create in 1815. The status quo could no longer be maintained: the independence of Greece and Belgium, the division of Luxembourg, and the revolution in Paris could not be prevented. Stability, the status quo, could not be maintained.

METTERNICH AND CUSTOMS POLICIES

The peculiar order of the German Confederation—which was in part Metternich's work—meant that the Habsburg Monarchy could enter into a quasi-national relationship with the other German states and form something like a state, an entity that was called "Germany," without having to sacrifice its own independence. We have seen how this created spheres of influence and areas of competency that sometimes overlapped. In principle, the Austrian emperor stood in the same relation to the German Confederation as the kings of England, Prussia, Denmark, or the Netherlands did. Each German ruler only had one foot in the German Confederation. But the market cannot stand such barriers for long. Trade requires the free exchange of goods and the removal of obstacles to it—such as customs borders. Prussia had removed such obstacles with the trade, customs, and excise law of May 26, 1818, which created a uniform internal market in the Prussian provinces. The Habsburg Monarchy was far from having such a market: the inequalities between Bregenz at Lake Constance and Chernivtsi in the Bukovina were so vast that trade and agriculture still required protection and called for customs barriers—not to mention the customs

border that separated Hungary from the rest of the empire. From 1816 onward, there had been a *Kommerz-Hofkommission*, an imperial commission for commerce at the court in Vienna, but it had not yet succeeded in creating a standardized economic area for the monarchy as a whole.³¹

As a consequence of the rules agreed upon at the Congress of Vienna, Prussia "had grown far into Germany," but it was territorially split between its eastern and western parts, and therefore it sought regulations that could be applied across all of its states.³² The idea of a free trade area created through a customs union seemed to be a way of achieving this. Other German states were attracted by the potential income that could be generated by the external borders of a customs union. Metternich observed this trend with great concern. We shall not go into the subtleties of the financial policies involved, but instead shall concentrate on two questions: What was Metternich's attitude toward the emerging free trade area? And to what extent did he see the development fostered by Prussia as a problem for the "Germany" he had designed—that is, for the "federal nation" with multiple identities?

In conversation with the American Ticknor, Metternich expressed his interest in the systematic promotion of trade and industry.³³ He talked very fondly of the Polytechnic Institute—"its *élèves* were already at the head of the principal manufactories in the empire." The factories were improving, and there was "an increasing demand for improved factories, so that the manufacturers are now constantly urging the reduction of the tariff, on the ground that they can better enter into competition with foreign nations than with smugglers." The Austrian government maintained a tariff, "not at all as a fiscal measure, but merely to protect and encourage manufactures." The system, Metternich said, had been introduced in the time of Joseph II, but "if he had been minister at the time he should have advised against it," even though it could "not to be denied that it has effected its purpose and made Austria a manufacturing country." He added that the government had "already abolished that part of the laws which excludes entirely any article whatever."³⁴

As the idea of the German Customs Union began to pick up steam, Metternich alerted Emperor Franz to this development in one of his presentations, dated June 24, 1833.³⁵ Demonstrating a remarkable grasp of economic policy, he set out, without prejudice, the reasons Prussia was pursuing these policies. Metternich sat up and took notice when "two Southern German states, Bavaria and Württemberg, who usually guard their independence with such jealousy," signaled that they were prepared to enter into an association with Prussia "as satellite states" and accept losing the sovereign right to set their own tariffs. Metternich recognized the financial attraction of the Customs Union for states that were in financially difficult situations. For the German Confederation generally, and for Austria, however, he considered the "minor German" Customs

Union to be highly disadvantageous—even potentially disastrous. If imperial Austria were excluded from the trade arrangements, he expected them to hinder Austrian industry. Even more worrying to him than the commercial consequences were the political ones: The increasing power of one state, he said, undermined the federation. The federation's stability depended on its internal equilibrium, which he thought was threatened by Prussia's increasing economic influence. A new relation between patron and client, between protector and protected, was emerging. Because ten of its seventeen members were part of the Customs Union, the power relations within the Central Council [*Engerer Rat*] of the Federal Assembly had already begun to shift. Prussia, Metternich said, was seeking to weaken Austria's influence in Germany, adding, prophetically, that Prussia wanted the German states to "direct their view in fear as in hope only toward Berlin, and to see Austria at long last for what it actually in commercial terms already is to all these states, and as what the fashionable Prussian writers are again and again eager to present it, namely as a foreign country." Metternich's view went even further: the relationships between the German federal states and Austria would, in the long term, fray more and more, until finally a rift with Prussia would open up.

Metternich saw himself and Austria as fighting for "Germany." But there were clearly two types of Germany. Plausible arguments have been put forward in historical research—especially against Heinrich von Treitschke—for the view that there was no straightforward or irreversible development from the Prussian finance minister Friedrich von Motz to the "founder of the Reich," Otto von Bismarck. There are countless examples, so the argument goes, that show that an economic unity does not necessarily lead to political unity. But listening to Metternich and Motz casts doubt on this argument. Why do both speak of "Germany" when they talk about tariffs, trade, and the economy? Metternich was thinking about ways of "dealing the Prussian customs system a most devastating blow." Motz, in contrast, hoped that through the Customs Union "a genuinely united, internally and externally truly free, Germany, under the protection and umbrella of Prussia, would develop and be happy."³⁶

The fundamental question was how to organize the state: as a composite empire or as a centralized institutional state [*Anstaltsstaat*]. Paradoxically, Prussia at the time conformed to the latter form more in idea than in reality; the monarch was still fearful of the aristocratic owners of the feudal estates, and in Ostelbien the police, the judiciary, and village schools were still under the authority of the manorial lord or the aristocratic commissioner of the regional council.

Metternich's presentation for the emperor was a revealing political confession regarding the way he envisaged the ideal functioning of the German Confederation. He was aware of how unpopular the German Confederation was

among the people—as, indeed, was the Federal Assembly, which had “too often received the thankless task of having to take repressive and disciplinary measures due to the restless mood of the times.” Metternich was appealing to the confederation’s true nature: to serve the welfare of the nation. He responded to Prussia’s trajectory, which led it away from the confederation, by arguing that the German Confederation should become the center of trade, and he reminded the emperor of the task set out in article 19 of the Federal Act: “to enter into negotiations . . . regarding trade and commerce between the different federal states.”³⁷ This task still remained unfulfilled.

In an alternative to the Customs Union, Metternich put forward the goal of free trade and commerce between the federal states, and equal treatment for natural and artificial products that originated from German federal states rather than from “outside the confederation.” These were the sort of “benevolent measures” that were required to promote “public well-being in Germany.”

With regard to Austria, Metternich recommended changing the existing customs system and bringing it into line with the other states of the German Confederation. Austria might even have to be prepared to make sacrifices, he said, in order “to prevent a larger evil which might eventually affect the well-being and influence of the monarchy at the roots.” We saw how inventive Metternich was in promoting the economy, wealth, and infrastructure of his own estates, and how he used the latest technological and agricultural methods in farming, forestry, and winegrowing, and at his ironworks. It is plausible to assume that he also had the capacity to create a similar vision for the state as a whole. Unfortunately, though, he was only the foreign minister, and he found himself in a situation in which all possible actions would turn out to be wrong, no matter what one chose to do. If Metternich had chosen to push through Austrian membership of the custom union, which he actually considered to be the right move, he would have fallen out with the political elite at home and failed in the face of their resistance. If he had decided in favor of a customs union internal to the Habsburg Monarchy, as his great opponent Kolowrat wanted, Austria would have lost its ties with “Germany” (in Metternich’s sense) and become a foreign country.

Metternich, the reformer, had suggested more than enough measures for economic improvement. He distanced himself from his adviser, Adam Müller, who was generally hostile to industry and advocated a conservative agrarian economic order. Müller railed against the “dreadful large factories” and declared his support for the family-based crafts. Metternich had also entered into negotiations with the liberal Friedrich List in Vienna to try to accommodate the economic interests of the middle-sized and smaller federal states. And finally he tried to secure the free trade of foodstuffs.

Metternich failed because of opposition from the emperor, who said that his “monarchy, notwithstanding the fact that it joined the German Confederation, must always remain an independent body.”³⁸ Metternich also came up against the isolationist and conservative tendencies within the monarchy. The emperor himself represented these tendencies, and he was the only one who could have brought about a fundamentally different approach. And, keeping in mind the fate of Joseph II, even that seems questionable. Metternich also underestimated the power and influence of his aristocratic peers. The crucial point, it turned out, was the tariff on sugar. It would have been necessary to lower this tariff for imports to Bohemia, but the Bohemian owners of the large sugar-producing estates stubbornly resisted this in order to protect themselves from unwelcome competition. In Kolowrat, they had a voice who had the ear of the emperor. The fate of Metternich’s memorandum can easily be deduced by simply looking at the original: it lacks the usual “decision of His Majesty” [*Allerhöchste Entschlieβung*], which the conscientious Emperor Franz never withheld without good reason. When he did withhold it, and the initiative had come from Metternich, it was the emperor’s habit simply to pass over the presentation without making any comments. That was enough for Metternich to understand. One can only agree with Heinrich Lutz: “Metternich wanted a different outcome.”³⁹

I 4

THE ORGANIZATION OF RULE

Power Centers, Networks, Interests, Intrigues

THE MASTER OF THE STATE CHANCELLERY

The Networks of Power and Political Rule

At first glance we might think that what we have witnessed so far has been merely the continual advance of a political career, an advance that has seen our subject, in 1821, appointed to the position of state chancellor of the Habsburg Empire. We now come to the threshold of the revolution of 1848. At the end of October 1847, a young diplomat from Saxony visiting Vienna found the then seventy-four-year-old Metternich to still be an impressive figure, with a sturdy posture (like the “iron” Wellington), fresh, exuding a youthful friendliness—in short, an exceptional personality of the sort the present times, in the diplomat’s view, rarely produced.¹ But Metternich was also seen as the embodiment of his eponymous “system.” The contemporary author Ferdinand Kürnberger wrote that at the heart of those “times of intellectual slavery” were the “tyrants Sedlnitzky and Metternich.”² Despite these opposed views, both sides saw him as the all-powerful ruler over the European states. Keeping in mind the battles he fought and the policies he pursued up to this point, it is therefore necessary to take a closer look at the networks and centers of power within the Habsburg Monarchy that formed the background conditions within which Metternich acted. In his career as a civil servant, Metternich experienced both extremes on the spectrum of monarchical rule: from the personal rule of Emperor Franz, who, in his manic need to control everything, wanted to make every single decision himself, to the rule of his successor, Ferdinand, who had no

talent for rule at all. As a result, Metternich had the experience of working under completely different sets of conditions. Emperor Franz—whose will immortalized Metternich as his “friend”—built a wall around his minister that protected and supported him, especially from the rest of the imperial family, the majority of whom were not well disposed toward Metternich. This wall protected him against Empress Ludovika, for instance, who could not comprehend Metternich’s plans for a tactical appeasement of Napoleon, and against Archduke Johann, who thought he could single-handedly start a revolutionary war against Napoleon. The wall also protected him from dismissal when this was demanded by someone inside the imperial family or by the powerful tsar. Metternich was therefore not dependent on allies, and as long as he was in agreement with his ruler, he was largely able to operate autonomously.

Ferdinand’s reign created precisely the opposite situation. Metternich was no longer shielded by a protective wall, and he needed allies. He found himself faced with powerful opposition from the imperial family and from his main opponent in domestic politics, Franz Anton Count Kolowrat-Liebsteinsky, a Bohemian aristocrat and former Prague burgrave, who possessed large estates in Bohemia. Emperor Franz had appointed him as a state and conference minister in Vienna on September 26, 1826. As an expert in financial matters, he knew how to make himself indispensable to the emperor, who was always worried about the state’s finances.³

We therefore need to shed light on the roles Metternich played under both a strong emperor and a weak one, the complex system of conferences, ministries, and court offices, and the influence of the estates, especially of their economic interests. As a rule, these factors are ignored in biographies of Metternich and other literature on the “statesman of Europe,” especially in publications from outside of Austria, but understanding these aspects will enable us to answer central questions regarding Metternich’s scope of action.

Initial Impressions of the Administrative Jungle

By the time of his appointment as ambassador to Dresden in 1801, Metternich had already gained sufficient insight into the machinery at the top of the state, under Thugut, to be repelled by the intrigues, rivalries, and self-importance on display; he even questioned whether he should actually embark on a career in the civil service. It was only when the supportive Colloredo took up his post that Metternich changed his mind. After the emperor appointed him state minister in 1809, he also had regular personal contact with the emperor, gaining an even deeper insight into the political process.

The influence of the provincial aristocratic estates cannot be overestimated—especially when it came to issues of taxation. The provincial states successfully resisted a strengthening of the central state. Metternich came to recognize this ever more clearly in the course of his career, until finally, in the 1840s, he resigned himself to the resulting paralysis; or, to put it differently: he was sidetracked and no longer had any say in domestic matters.

When he entered his ministry in 1809, he still believed in the possibility of reforming the “disorganized state administration.”⁵ Metternich saw himself as a modernizer, and from the very beginning he had to fight against the disorganization of the administration, as we know from the unpublished part of his memoirs.⁶ He noticed that the government was not organized into the separate ministries that had become increasingly common since the French Revolution. The business of government was conducted between colleagues, and each area was headed by a president, who sometimes carried the title of chancellor of whichever court chancellery he was in charge of. There were chancelleries for Hungary, Bohemia, Transylvania, Italy, and the Netherlands. As the governing minister in Brussels, Metternich’s father had had to settle quite a few disputes with the chancellery for the Netherlands. The most prominent chancellery was the Chancellery of Court and State [*Haus-, Hof- und Staatskanzlei*]. Throughout his whole time in office, Metternich was trying to work his way up to the superior position of prime minister, and thus beyond the competition between the various court chancelleries. Emperor Franz prevented that.

The Reorganization of the State Chancellery

Metternich got his first taste of the sorts of problems that lay in store for him when he was appointed state chancellor, and found that the Chancellery had been left in a pretty chaotic condition by Stadion.⁷ At the beginning of 1809, Stadion had followed the army headquarters to Upper Austria without appointing anyone to head the Chancellery, reserving the right to direct it even in his absence. The work ended up being carried out by three court councillors who stayed behind and divided up between themselves the responsibility for correspondence with other courts and embassies. Each of them submitted his reports independently and directly to the minister and received his instructions from him; but none of them knew what the others were doing, and there was no central directorate in charge of personnel at the Chancellery. Nothing was known about the registry or the files that were archived there, except that the registrar and expeditor held the keys. Years before they had been told to organize the files, but they had not done it because they were always busy dealing with the daily business. And to make matters worse, in 1805, during

the war, all the files had been sent to safety in Pressburg, which meant they became even more disorganized. There was no inventory. Because of this, no one knew where any particular file could be found.

As Napoleon marched toward Vienna in 1809, court councillor Hudelist made a vital intervention. Stadion had not countenanced the possibility of military defeat, and so he had not considered the possibility that the archive would have to be brought to safety. He thought it was an “altogether excessive worry,” something one should not mention because it might undermine the will to victory. When the danger nevertheless became imminent, he passed all responsibility to Hudelist, who ordered that the files be packed into sixty-one boxes (weighing at least six centner each), which, along with twenty-six boxes of documents from the chancelleries of the Netherlands and Italy and the treasury of the state Chancellery, were, in a matter of days, loaded onto a rented ship that, with two civil servants, sailed from Vienna to Pressburg, setting off on May 4 and arriving in Temesvar on May 10.

Returning with the exiled court from the Hungarian Totis, Metternich learned that the parsimonious emperor would quibble over the hiring of the lowliest office messenger. The emperor’s comments on such occasions were often so detailed that they were as long as the request they were a response to. Metternich wanted to hire more personnel, but post after post was declined because, as Metternich read: “the financial situation makes it indispensable to implement every further saving that can be done without the services having to be discontinued.”⁸

Metternich nevertheless still hoped that he might have the state Chancellery at the Ballhausplatz renovated before returning to Vienna. Two basement vaults, the ground floor, and three further floors formed Metternich’s universe, the location from which his policies reached all of Europe. The wine from Johannisberg was stored in the cellar. The ground floor was taken up with the kitchen (including a confectioner’s), the stables and coach house, and accommodations for the house officer, household servant, cook, and coachman. The civil servants worked on the first floor, which also housed the registry, the *Ziffernkabinett* (the office where letters were read and encoded or decoded), the Chancellery’s library, and a meeting room. The second floor housed the state rooms (which also were the venue for the Congress of Vienna), a reception room, an audience room, a dining hall, a private library, and bedrooms for Metternich and his wife. The third floor, finally, was the home of the children, the chamberlain, the master of the stables and the servants; in addition, Metternich’s private chancellery for his estates and the domicile of his brother Joseph, an eccentric character known to all of Vienna, was also situated on the third floor.⁹

Metternich continued to employ the fifty-year-old court councillor Josef von Hudelist, who had worked at the embassies in Florence, Rome, Naples, Berlin, and Saint Petersburg, and had been court councillor at the state Chancellery since 1803. In 1813 Metternich promoted him to state and conference councillor. In this position, immediately below Metternich, he stood in as head of the Chancellery when Metternich was away. Every document Metternich received was also seen by Hudelist. When Hudelist was criticized for the condition of the Chancellery's archive, he justified himself by saying that "in sacrificing my health and every pleasure in life I have only caused the envy of my colleagues."

Metternich rationalized the state Chancellery and ordered a new inventory for the archive to be drawn up. A court councillor was given sole responsibility for this task. Metternich also made sure that clear structures and areas of responsibility for the five sections were introduced. The Chancellery's sections were divided up as follows: (1) correspondence with the major powers; (2) correspondence with the Rhenish Confederation; (3) correspondence with the Ottoman Empire; (4) correspondence with domestic authorities; (5) mail department and registry.¹⁰

After 1815 Metternich had to adapt this basic structure to new needs; the empire had become bigger again, having reacquired old embassies that had been lost under Napoleon, and more diplomatic personnel were required. Every pay raise and every new post had to be justified and argued for in minute detail, before the emperor would be prepared to make an exception to his general rule of parsimony.

Metternich presented the emperor with his sketch for the reorganization of the state Chancellery, including the elevations in rank and substantial increases in salary associated with it, during the Italian journey in the first half of 1816 when the emperor was inspecting his kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia. Metternich argued that "during the years of French predominance" Austria had maintained correspondence in only four areas: France (including the princes of the Rhenish Confederation), Russia, Prussia, and the "Sublime Porte" (the Ottoman Empire). Now the state Chancellery was in correspondence with thirty courts. There had usually been about thirty staff, reduced to twenty-three before 1815. The vacant posts needed to be refilled. As the minister in charge, Metternich defended his Chancellery and praised his employees as loyal and diligent workers who "showed the most dutiful devotion to their monarch"; they deserved a "well-earned encouragement."

In response to requests during the Napoleonic era, the emperor said the salaries should be such that "the civil servants do not have to starve." Now he wrote that he "approved all the posts and salaries suggested here," although adding, of course, the condition "that you will seek to reduce this numerous

Table 14.1. Personnel and salaries at the Privy Chancellery of Court and State (1816)

Name	Rank	Old Salary (florins)	New Salary (florins)
Section for Foreign Affairs			
Graf Mercy	Court Councillor	4,000	4,000
Hr. v. Wacken	Court Councillor	4,000	4,000
Freiherr v. Spiegel	Court Councillor		4,000
Baron Kruft	Councillor	2,000	2,500
Hr. v. Hoppé	Director of the Chancellery	2,500	3,000
Baron de Pont	Court Secretary		2,000
Hr. v. Schweiger	Court Secretary	1,500	2,000
Hr. v. Mekarski	Scrivener	1,000	1,200
Hr. v. Stradiot	Scrivener	800	1,000
Hr. v. Dilg	Official	400	800
Hr. Raimond	Official		800
Section for Domestic Affairs			
Hr. v. Hudelist	State and Conference Councillor	10,000	10,000
Hr. v. Perin	Court Councillor	2,500	4,000
Hr. v. Brenner	Court Councillor	2,500	4,000
Hr. v. Lebzelttern	Councillor	1,800	2,500
Baron Bretfeld	Councillor	1,600	2,500
Baron Ottenfels	Court Secretary	1,500	2,000
Hr. v. Kesaer	Court Secretary	1,200	1,600
Hr. Spengler	Scrivener	1,000	1,200
Hr. Casaqui	Scrivener	1,000	1,200
Hr. v. Swietczki	Court Councillor and Director of Chancellery	2,500	4,000
Hr. Obermayer	Expeditior	1,800	2,000
Hr. Augé	Adjunct Expeditior	800	1,000
Hr. de Hoze	Official	800	800
Hr. v. Sieber	Official		800
Hr. v. Kesaer, Joseph	Official		800
Registry			
Hr. Anton v. Kesaer	Councillor and Registrar	2,500	2,500
Hr. Böhm	Registry Adjunct	1,000	1,200
Old Registry			
Hr. v. Lefevre	Court Secretary	3,000	2,000
Hr. Springer	Scrivener	1,000	1,000
Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv [archive of the court as well as the emperor's family]			
Hr. v. Rademacher	Archive Director	5,000	5,000
Hr. Knechtl	Councillor and Privy Archivist	2,000	2,500
Baron Reinhard	Privy Archivist	1,000	1,500
Hr. Delitsch	Official	800	800
Hr. Rosner	Official	700	700

Source: Metternich, Presentation, dated May 19, 1816, HHStA Wien StK Krt. 202, Fol. 96-119.

personnel as soon as the circumstances allow for it."¹¹ Metternich produced a unique survey in support of his request (Table 14.1). It reveals, like an X-ray, the internal structure of the state's most important authority, how much it had grown in 1816 at the beginning of the era of the new empire, and what the overall costs were. The structure and division of the sections and areas of competence reflected Metternich's rational and efficient approach to leading the Chancellery.

At subsequent annual budget consultations, Metternich would always end up clashing with the Court Chamber and the finance minister, especially beginning in 1826 when Kolowrat, the former Prague burgrave, was appointed to the court and made responsible for the state finances. Kolowrat became Metternich's opponent, and he knew how to form an internal front against the seemingly all-powerful state chancellor. As a result, the monarchy was thrown into a systemic crisis that, in the end, made it the victim of revolution. Metternich's ongoing conflict with Kolowrat is a chapter in Metternich's biography that is often not examined enough.

CONSTRAINED BY EMPEROR FRANZ'S "PERSONAL REGIME"

First Attempts at Reforming the Empire

In 1811 Metternich made a first attempt at reforming the upper echelons of the empire. This was an overly daring plan that took him well beyond his purview; it contradicted the principles of the emperor's "personal regime," and therefore did not make it past the draft stage. Metternich suggested an imperial council and a committee made up of all the state councillors, who at that time were working separately from one another. He wanted "to give the central power more central sense of purpose [*Zentralsinn*]" and to unite the heads of the court offices in one body at the top.¹² He repeatedly pointed to the example of France. What Metternich wanted amounted to a governing ministerial council, with separate areas of responsibility for ministers, headed by a prime minister. But he avoided calling this arrangement by its name. One sentence, nevertheless, must have provoked the emperor: "The monarch deposits a part of his executive power in the hands of a minister, chief of a department, and that minister must therefore be free, very free indeed. . . . Lastly, there lies in the existence of a well-organized council, filled with able men, ready to advise the monarch on every occasion with enlightened and impartial counsel, so high a degree of security for the whole body politic that this feeling will soon become general, and secure to the government strength and repose in equal measure."¹³ It was altogether inconceivable to Franz that he might relinquish any power.

Metternich was not yet disheartened. In the autumn of 1817 he presented the emperor with an even more detailed and substantial design. He proposed a federal structure, taking into account the individual nationalities, for the monarchy as a whole, complemented by a further centralization of the administration at the top. This plan, too, was left to gather dust among the emperor's papers; it did not receive "Supreme Approval." Yet again, Metternich was condemned to remain the visionary whom reality—the emperor—refused to follow, not least because Metternich's ideas ran counter to the familial interests of the emperor's dynasty.

The Emperor's Personality

We lack a competent modern biography of Emperor Franz, this important if rather uninventive monarch.¹⁴ It must be acknowledged as a substantial achievement that he was able to hold his large and complex empire together and safely guide it, over a reign of more than forty-two years (1792–1835), from the ancien régime through the Napoleonic wars and into the nineteenth century. As Metternich found out at the start of his career, under Thugut, the emperor was an idiosyncratic, yet easily influenced, character.

It was only with Metternich that the emperor's foreign policies became more purposeful and acquired an internal logic. Metternich defined his special relationship with his ruler in a oft-quoted aphorism: "The emperor always does what I want him to do; but I never want him to do anything else but what he has to do."¹⁵ If the emperor was not, as is sometimes claimed, a mere marionette operated by Metternich's hands, then he must also have known what "he had to do."

It is complicated to explain this, because the emperor was not so much someone following specific ideas and plans. He rather knew what he did not want. But it is possible to draw conclusions from all the things he did not want, as they become apparent in the thousands of "supreme resolutions"—the *Signate*—he appended to the ministerial presentations. We may construct a picture of what he wanted as the mirror image of all these unwanted things. He was filled with an almost pathological fear of any change or risk. We have seen how in August 1813 Metternich could persuade him to take the epoch-making decision of declaring war against Napoleon only by apparently leaving the door open to negotiations at all times. The emperor's character was steadfast, loyal, predictable, and principled, but even with those very few people he was warm toward he still maintained a distance. His caring side showed in his genuinely felt sympathy for Metternich upon the deaths of his children and wives. Metternich, who sometimes had conversations with the emperor almost daily, interpreted his few gestures and dry comments correctly. Metternich was

reliable, always kept an appropriate distance, and was open with the emperor, and in this way he gained his master's trust.

Given the emperor's character, Metternich was the best thing that could have happened to him. As we have seen, Metternich was always able to explain complex situations to his scrupulous, insecure, and therefore suspicious ruler by presenting him with the available options and their consequences. This enabled the monarch to make decisions and then carry them out with resolve.

We should not take Emperor's Franz's reserve, and his often monosyllabic responses, to suggest an uninterested, semi-educated, or small-minded dilettante. This is how German nationalist historians tend to present him. There are sides to him that are little known.¹⁶ He was an acute observer of the times, studied nature closely, and was a connoisseur of Italian art. He was possessed of a photographic memory, and he was interested in business and in social and medical institutions. He personally drew sketches of important matters. He was able to digest documents thoroughly and remember them well for future use. Metternich knew all of this. His admiration for his "chief," as he sometimes called him, was genuine, not just a superficial adulation.

EMPEROR FRANZ'S LEGACY: A SYSTEM "HEADED BY A HALF-WIT WHO REPRESENTS THE CROWN"

With the death of Emperor Franz on March 2, 1835, in Vienna, the Habsburg Monarchy faced the worst-case scenario. The monarch had strictly adhered to the normal line of succession, making his firstborn son—Archduke Ferdinand, who was unfit for rule—his successor. In a confidential letter to all embassies of the Habsburg Empire, Metternich officially announced the death of the emperor. The people who revered him honored him as a "father," a title he truly deserved. In order to allay any suspicions, Metternich described the night of February 27–28 in detail. The monarch partly dictated his last will (and subsequently edited it), partly wrote it himself. In a separate letter to his son, the emperor formulated some brief instructions for legislation under the new government. The central passage said: "Disturb nothing in the foundations of the edifice of the State. Govern, and change nothing. . . . Honor the properly acquired rights . . . Maintain harmony in the family, and look upon it as one of the highest blessings."¹⁷ Emperor Franz set out three unambiguous principles for Ferdinand to follow; they defined the future structure of rule:

1. Regarding Archduke Ludwig: "Place complete trust in my brother, Archduke Ludwig, who always assisted me in so many important matters of government with his advice. Take from now on his counsel in important domestic affairs."

2. Regarding Archduke Franz Karl: "Keep the friendliest relations with your brother, and also keep him informed of all business."
3. Regarding Metternich: "Repose in Prince Metternich, my truest servant and friend, that confidence which I have bestowed upon him through the course of so many years. Decide no question relating to public affairs or to persons, without first hearing what he has to say. And I call upon him, in his turn, to act towards you with the same rectitude and devotion which he has always exhibited to myself."¹⁸

According to the emperor's will, a governmental body was to be created—a state conference—in which a triumvirate took on the role of a regent for the formally appointed Emperor Ferdinand. As Metternich's opinion had to be heard on all questions—whether pertaining to domestic or foreign affairs, or to persons—he took on the role of a prime minister with the authority to set policy guidelines. On the basis of his seniority, Ludwig represented the dynasty as a blood relation from the father's side (*Agnat*), but as the superior over Franz Karl, who was informally involved.

This well-considered construction was designed to help overcome the weakness of the successor to the throne. There was no question that Ferdinand had to be considered a problematic case. He suffered from several physical ailments: epilepsy, rickets, and hydrocephalus. He was, however, not at all the feeble-minded ruler the older literature portrays him to be. He spoke five languages, among them Hungarian, played the piano, and dedicated himself to botany.¹⁹ His father had prepared for him to be his successor by, for instance, having him crowned king of Hungary in 1830 at the Diet in Pressburg. The family archive holds moving letters that Ferdinand sent to his sister Marie Louise; they are warmhearted and truly brotherly.²⁰ During the revolution of 1848, he kept a diary in which he tried to reflect on the events. He also liked to keep diaries during his travels—for instance, in Pressburg, Innsbruck, and Olmütz.²¹ Metternich knew him well because he had given him lectures, such as "On Diplomacy" (in 1825), with the crown prince taking notes.²² We have even more detailed knowledge of Emperor Ferdinand through his principal chamberlain, Count August Ségur-Cabanac, who described him as selfless, dutiful, friendly, and kindhearted, even toward his inferiors. All this, however, did not make him any more fit to govern.²³

Ferdinand had to formally comment on all governmental acts that required the emperor's supreme resolution. One of his ministers, Metternich or Kolowrat, formulated these for him, and he signed them. He was nevertheless capable of developing a will of his own, as on the question of which among a group of Italian prisoners who had been sentenced for political crimes should be granted amnesty.²⁴ But he was incapable of governing independently in the

to the problem of his successor. He felt it was necessary to act preemptively to “create a government machinery with the help of which Your successor to the throne will be called upon to rule.”²⁶ This did not necessarily rule out Ferdinand as the successor; it instead meant creating an institutional framework that would compensate for his potential inability to govern. It is important to emphasize this point, because Metternich is sometimes accused of wanting simply to impose a will on the dying emperor. Franz himself had previously been unable to bring himself to create one. He also had refused to consider his younger son, Archduke Franz Karl (1802–1878), as his successor.

The will did not mention Kolowrat at all. He was deeply hurt, for he thought he had had a particularly intimate relationship with the monarch—many personal notes to him from the emperor seemed to suggest so.²⁷ He was therefore the first of many to insinuate that the self-seeking, devious Metternich had persuaded an almost completely passive emperor, on his deathbed, to write his will and make him a kind of substitute emperor.

This view overestimates Metternich’s influence on the emperor and underestimates the emperor’s strong-mindedness. He had the full capacity to act. Although there is a draft of the testament written in Metternich’s hand, it deviates so markedly from the final version that it actually confirms that the emperor must, at that point, still have been fully capable of making up his own mind.²⁸ Metternich only formulated general principles; he did not mention any names (e.g., “He [i.e., the successor, whoever it would be] should trust only tried and tested righteous men”). And unlike Franz’s version, his considers the possibility that changes would be suggested (“always examine whether what is suggested to him as an improvement does not threaten this fundamental pillar of the state”). Metternich provided a formula that intentionally left out the name of the person in whom confidence was to be placed: “As the man I recommend to My son as a faithful advisor worthy of his full trust, I name. . . .” He would have had himself in mind, but Archduke Ludwig would have been another candidate for filling this space. Someone needed to perform this role, but Metternich did not necessarily think it should be him. And, as it turned out, the result was very different and far more detailed, involving a state conference of three individuals who advised Ferdinand.

In order to understand the emphasis the will placed on Metternich, it is necessary to keep in mind the emperor’s personality and the experiences he had had with Metternich over more than four decades. Ever since their first meeting in Belgium during the war in 1794, the emperor had gradually become familiar with Metternich’s political principles, and had judged them to be the right ones. He had learned that Metternich always managed to find a solution, even in times of great crisis, even amid defeat, and that he always had the unity of the

monarchy as a whole in mind. He had observed how he was able to hold his own when facing a Napoleon or a Tsar Alexander. He could be sure that Metternich would not seek to change the “foundations of the edifice of the state.” He was wrong, however, when he thought that Metternich would not promote the development of the empire through evolutionary change. About that issue, Metternich had too many ideas, and he knew too much about the many social and economic problems facing the empire.

By invoking the idea of loyalty to the dynasty, the emperor revealed that he expected problems in this area. The arrangements for the succession to the throne were indeed highly controversial within the family. As a result, Metternich faced such powerful opposition that the system was from then on administered on an ad hoc basis rather than governed with a plan in mind. Archduchess Sophie, in particular, harbored an abiding grudge against Metternich, and held him responsible for the emperor’s will. The effects of this could be felt as late as 1851. On September 24 of that year, Metternich and his wife returned from exile to Vienna. Sophie invited Melanie for a meeting at the Hofburg on October 6. In the course of a long conversation, they also spoke about Metternich’s involvement in the succession to the throne. Clearly unaware of what actually happened, Sophie said: “What I accuse your husband of is that he wanted something impossible, namely to lead a monarchy without an emperor and with a half-wit embodying the throne.”²⁹ When asked who should have replaced Ferdinand, Sophie responded that it should have been someone who was born with the qualities that were required for ruling. No doubt she had in mind the emperor’s younger son, Archduke Franz Karl, her husband and the father of the later emperor, Franz Joseph I. However, the *Posthumous Papers* document this meeting in line with their overall tendency of protecting the imperial house from criticism, and thus the archduchess’s reproach is redacted. Instead, they invent a passage that does not exist in the original diary and that ends by saying that they parted “in the friendliest mood.”³⁰

The disabilities of the legal successor to the throne were clearly visible. His simple mind could not be hidden in public. Then there were his epileptic fits, which were often misinterpreted by the outside world. He was unable to present himself well in public or to perform representational duties. The best he could do was simply to appear in his full imperial regalia and let the people hail him, because he had a knack for looking gracefully at people that earned him the epithet “Ferdinand the benevolent.” But conversations with him were filled with embarrassing moments. The wife of Tsar Nikolaus I, Tsarina Charlotte of Prussia (Alexandra Feodorovna)—the sister of the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm IV—met Ferdinand in 1835 in Teplitz, and afterward noted in her diary: “Good Lord, I had heard a lot about him, about his short, ugly,

pour chercher à éviter ce danger en ce qui est
 alors de ce qui est reproché à doter d'un
 d'avis voulu avec chose inévitables qui était adé
 de mener la monarchie dans ce sens... et avec
 un Projet représentant de la couronne... d'avis d'un
 qui était dans le jour employé celui-ci. — Il
 était bien savoir depuis les dernières années, si on
 peut en être plus fort. — Mais de manière la longue
 et répondit... on le reproche qu'il y a à faire c'est
 que celui qui était un... avec des qualités suffisantes
 pour régler ce qui est par lui... adé et qu'on
 a besoin en disposition pour l'ensemble

Section of a redacted passage from the diary of Princess Melanie relating to October 6, 1851: "... with a half-wit representing the throne."

stunted figure and his large head without any expression but that of dim-wittedness, but the reality exceeded all descriptions."³¹

CRISIS INSTEAD OF REFORM: METTERNICH VERSUS KOLOWRAT

Metternich's Reforms of the State Conference (October 31, 1836): A "Prime Minister"?

There can be no doubt that, after the emperor's death, Metternich sought—on the basis of the emperor's will—to use his position at the state conference in order to reform the monarchy and take control of the internal administration. In the autumn of 1836, he developed a plan for his reforms. Srbik's account of these plans for redesigning the government draws on the sources in Vienna, and even those in Pläß, in unusual depth, and he reaches a very positive image of Metternich that contrasts starkly with the one he previously had painted on the basis of a rich array of various published memoirs, attesting to the "important statesmanlike substance," clarity, and rationality of the reforms.³² Metternich does not appear here as the superficial, unimaginative, doctrinaire character that Srbik describes elsewhere.

Metternich wanted to reconstruct the system under which the heads of court offices communicated with top government officials through uncoordinated written submissions. In the case of competing projects, this system always led to "intrigues," as Metternich put it. These he wanted to eradicate. There were

special circumstances that confirmed him in his intentions.³³ Kolowrat increasingly complained about health problems that were hindering him in his work, and in September 1836 he decided to retreat to his Bohemian estates for six months. On this occasion, as on many others, Metternich noticed how governmental processes stagnated. For several months, the most important man when it came to finance, censorship, police, and internal affairs could do only limited work, or sometimes could not work at all, and it was impossible to predict when normal conditions would resume. Metternich was looking for a solution that would take pressure off Kolowrat and at the same time introduce more rational and efficient processes at the top. He was not seeking to sideline or outmaneuver his colleague. Kolowrat, for his part, explicitly declared that he did not want to be involved in reform and that "given the circumstances" of how the work was distributed at the state conference, was happy to leave everything to the state chancellor and Archduke Ludwig.

On September 30, 1836, Metternich presented a memorandum in which he explained his plans for reform.³⁴ He then called two conferences to discuss it. On October 6 and October 28, the conference ministers, section heads, and Metternich gathered for meetings, chaired by Archduke Ludwig. Metternich opened proceedings with a survey that took in the history of how the administration had been organized at the top since Kaunitz. Metternich's model, with some minor modifications, was welcomed by all and passed into law with a "personal resolution" from Emperor Ferdinand on October 31, 1836.

The reform aimed at creating a strict separation of administration and government, and it introduced a central body for each. The governmental body was to be the *State Conference*. It would have to make decisions in response to requests from ministers and the presidents of court chancelleries, and whenever a dispute arose between different court offices. The major innovation was that Metternich would be installed as the "chief of the State Conference" and that its members would all be ministers or civil service administrators (section heads). Careful examination of the plans reveals that no members of the royal family are mentioned. The governmental body would therefore be a pure civil service institution, independent of dynastic influence and interests. The members of the imperial household were to be relegated to the second tier, so to speak; they were, however, happy with that. The construction would have given Metternich influence in *all* political questions, whether domestic or international; he would have had to have been consulted on all of them. At the State Conference, he would have had the final say, much as Emperor Franz had signed off on all proposals.

Metternich had a very good justification for having all matters come together in one person in this way. Before Franz's death, that person had been the

monarch himself. Metternich was not driven by personal ambition; rather, he saw this construction as necessary because of the peculiarity of the Habsburg Monarchy, which set it apart from other European states, especially from the French “centralization system,” as he called it. This peculiarity was the Habsburg Monarchy’s “composite nature, made up of elements that differ with regard to language, customs, Constitutions, and historical origins.” Unity in such an empire could emerge only through “the confluence of these parts in the person of the regent.”³⁵

Because Emperor Franz’s will did not mention Kolowrat, Metternich was in the superior position. After Kolowrat protested, however, the triumvirate of Metternich, Ludwig, and Franz Karl had originally agreed to accept him as a fourth member of the executive body. Metternich’s reform proposals went back on this decision. This was not a plot against Kolowrat; instead, Metternich thought he was accommodating Kolowrat’s wishes—Kolowrat had, after all, declared himself to be only partially able to work.

The State Conference was complemented by a separate *State Council* in charge of administration. This council was to be made up of the state and conference ministers and their section heads, among them Kolowrat, who thus did not have to attend the regular meetings of the State Conference. Metternich was also the president of the council, and so, had Kolowrat been a part of the council, he would have been his subordinate in two different capacities—in his role at conference and at council. In contrast to the executive State Conference, which had the authority to set guidelines, the State Council was meant to have only advisory powers. In sum, these reforms would have seen Metternich outmaneuver his opponents in the domestic context and deprive of power a troublesome opponent, an opponent who had consistently resisted his demands for such things as more money for the army or economic sacrifices in the interests of liberal economic development.

After Emperor Ferdinand had formally approved the proposals, Metternich even took the step of making the planned reorganization, and his new position in government, public knowledge in order to further consolidate the resolution. The news was officially published across the German Confederation: “The Austrian Monarchy exists under conditions that make it difficult to distinguish between domestic and foreign politics. It is necessary for a master to direct the whole machinery in accordance with the council of the monarch, and Prince Metternich has proved at all times that he, and no one else, possesses the true skills of such a master.”³⁶

The opposition between the two “alpha males” seemed to come to a head in the form of a conflict over finances: Kolowrat wanted to make savings in order to eliminate the deficit in the state budget. For this to happen, spending on the

army would have to be reduced. The year of the July Revolution, 1830, was the first year in which he had achieved a balanced budget, albeit on the basis of some imaginative accounting.³⁷ The emperor was ecstatic, and Kolowrat rose in his estimation accordingly. But military interventions and troop movements were expensive, and reducing military expenditure at a time of international crisis would have significantly weakened Metternich’s influence in Europe. Although Metternich was not inclined toward war, he needed Austria to have military strength if it was to be a major player in the Concert of the main powers.

Kolowrat’s Minor Coup (December 12, 1836): Metternich’s Disempowerment

When Kolowrat saw the plans for the new political order, he immediately recognized that for him they meant a demotion. His change of mind is nevertheless difficult to understand. He quickly returned to Vienna. What happened next may be regarded as a minor coup. The interior and finance minister used all the means at his disposal to destroy the core of the administrative reforms, which had been agreed upon in the legally correct form. He did not shy away from indulging in defamation, and an unprecedented battle of wills ensued. Crucial for a proper understanding of the shifts in the distribution of political power is the fact that Kolowrat succeeded in turning Archduke Johann and, through him, a large part of the imperial family against Metternich.

Archduke Johann initiated the series of events. Their background has been meticulously laid out by Srbik. Because of his use of quotations from Johann’s diaries, some of which—especially the parts covering the years around 1836—were destroyed during the Second World War, his account has status of a genuine source. Without Srbik’s work, we would be unable to reconstruct the background dynamic of the conflict between Metternich and Kolowrat. For various reasons, it is important to understand the front that was coalescing against Metternich: it explains the subsequent paralysis of the system and shows Metternich’s role in a new light. Kolowrat’s threat of resignation once again did its work—he knew that it would have been considered a scandal by the public and would have made the crisis public.

Kolowrat provided Johann with one-sided information.³⁸ A situation emerged that was to be repeated many times under the “Ferdinand system” and explains why the monarchy became paralyzed. Kolowrat succeeded in gaining the trust of the emperor’s brother, Archduke Johann, who had returned to Styria from the exile into which Metternich had sent him. Kolowrat played a duplicitous game, abusing the archduke’s trust in order to traduce Metternich. Johann was all too eager to believe the opinions Kolowrat fed him and pass them on. Johann, of course, knew Metternich as the man who had

undermined his unquestionably noble intentions in 1813 by sidelining him. Johann accused Metternich of being supported by the “Rothschild Jewish factions.”³⁹ In everything he did, Kolowrat systematically presented Metternich as reactionary and himself as liberal.

Metternich’s plan to lift the prohibition on the Jesuit order, for instance, was motivated by his wish to establish an agreement with the Catholic Church. It was the result, not of a piousness suddenly brought on by old age, but instead of a recognition that unity between throne and altar conducted to domestic peace. He wanted to keep the monarchy free from the kinds of cultural-political battles Friedrich Wilhelm III would soon (in 1837) be provoking in Prussia by taking a side in the “dispute over mixed marriages”—that is, interfaith marriages—in opposition to the bishops. Kolowrat denounced Metternich—who had a generally liberal worldview and was rather indifferent when it came to matters of faith—as a supporter of the clergy with ultramontane convictions. Whenever Metternich suggested reforms, as in the 1840s in connection with Hungary, regarding questions of free trade or infrastructural developments, Kolowrat blocked them using his authority over domestic policies, and then accused Metternich of being inflexible in his policies. He stoked resentment against Metternich in Johann and among the somewhat intellectually limited and mostly indecisive archdukes.

In this way he built a majority against Metternich. Johann became the vociferous spokesperson for the imperial family. He fought against the “ministerial government”—against Metternich’s supreme governance of the state—and against the male members of the imperial family being pushed aside.⁴⁰ In his diary he wrote: “We do not want a major domus”—*major domus* being the term used for the chief civil servant in the Merovingian Empire. In his eyes, the idea that Metternich, rather than a member of the imperial family, was the head of the State Conference was an insult to the honor of the dynasty. Srbik traces the networks within which Johann moved. He consulted with the archdukes Ludwig and Franz Karl, with the latter’s wife, Sophie, with the emperor’s mother, with Clam-Martinitz, and finally—as the climax, as it were—with the state chancellor.

Johann reprimanded him for the “colossal blunder of wanting to become president, so to speak.” Metternich, he said, “wanted to bring back the time of the Merovingians and be like Pipin.” He put Metternich under so much pressure that he gave in and, despite being indignant at the accusations, declared his willingness to rewrite the reform plans in accordance with Kolowrat’s wishes. Kolowrat thus succeeded in foiling the plan for a major internal reorganization of the top-level administration—a plan that was actually legally binding, having been signed off on by Archduke Ludwig, as the head of the

State Conference, and by Emperor Ferdinand. Feeling the pressure from Kolowrat and the court, Ludwig blinked and withdrew his signature.

In place of Metternich’s reform there was the revision of December 12, 1836. On that day, Ferdinand passed an “imperial resolution” that Kolowrat had dictated to him. It ordered Archduke Ludwig to redesign the State Conference in line with Emperor Ferdinand’s words, which had the force of law (“As it is my will . . .”). This constituted a new statute.⁴¹ The conference was henceforth to be chaired by the emperor himself. The archdukes Ludwig and Karl Franz were made members of the State Conference again, alongside Metternich and Kolowrat. State and conference ministers, section heads, state councillors, and the presidents of court offices could be invited to join it on a case-by-case basis.

This statute was accompanied by another “imperial resolution,” of the same day, that was concerned especially with Kolowrat. This note was the real scandal—the minor coup.⁴² On Metternich’s plan, Metternich would have been the chair of both bodies and he would have been consulted on all matters—domestic as well as foreign. Now it was stipulated that all matters pertaining to finance, domestic policies, and the secret state police [*Hohe Polizei*] would be shown only to Kolowrat, who would then decide whether they needed to be discussed at the State Conference, in which case they would be handed directly to the chair, Archduke Ludwig—without being seen by Metternich. Kolowrat now had the opportunity to give his opinion and decide on all matters; Metternich’s influence was limited to foreign affairs. Kolowrat had betrayed the emperor’s last will.

It makes little sense to speak of a “Metternich system” before December 1836, but to speak of one after would simply amount to a caricature of reality. Metternich’s intended reforms had involved plans to move away from written communication and to introduce weekly meetings. He wanted immediate communication within a single body, so as to speed up decision making and to make unilateral actions, rivalry, and secretive operations impossible. Now there was to be no talk of regular conferences or oral consultations; what mattered was whatever the erratic Kolowrat judged mattered. No one knew when he would leave for Bohemia again and stop his work. Under the new design, Kolowrat could delay any item, or even paralyze the State Conference at will. That was the key factor in the indisputable paralysis of Habsburg government from then on. The deeper reason for this stagnation we still have to identify.

Metternich soon felt the consequences of all this. He was no longer given any documents on domestic questions, and he complained about this to Kolowrat. Kolowrat brushed off his complaints, dryly responding that he was no longer the president of the State Conference and had himself agreed to entrust Archduke Ludwig with that function. He would therefore now send all papers

to the latter, and the president then had to decide which of them the conference would discuss.

Because it had already been publicly announced that Metternich would preside over the State Conference, Kolowrat's coup was a snub and humiliation for Metternich, and this was noted at the courts of Europe. In France, for instance, it was reported that Kolowrat's return to the cabinet in Vienna was bought at the price of his increased influence and elevation in status in comparison to Metternich.⁴³ The conflict between the two ministers is usually treated as an internal power struggle, but this is far too narrow a view. Within Europe, the shift in the distribution of power that Kolowrat had achieved with his coup was interpreted as an epochal shift in Austrian politics. The *Journal du Commerce* of Paris wrote: "In these days, all the world can see that the energy and activity of Mr. Metternich is paralyzed [*étaient paralysées*]. Rumors are spreading that he might even hand over his position to Prince [*sic*] Kolowrat."⁴⁴ At the end of December, these rumors stopped; nevertheless, the impression remained that Metternich's position had been fundamentally weakened.⁴⁵ The paper also reported, though, that Metternich was extremely irritated about the fact that secrets from the innermost circles of the cabinet had been made public, and spoke of a Slavonic "parti Kollowrat." The events were also interpreted in the context of Austria moving closer to (Kolowrat) or further away from (Metternich) Russia, which gave the dispute an international dimension.

The most intelligent mind of the Habsburg ruling elite on matters of commerce and trade, Karl Friedrich von Kübeck, quickly understood what the coup had achieved for Kolowrat. Kübeck, who later became the president of the court chamber, wrote of Kolowrat: "The effect is that he is the supreme head of the State Council, master over the power of money and all appointments and the fate of all civil servants (through the police), master of the camarilla and due to this position the decisive voice at the State Conference."⁴⁶ Clam-Martinitz even spoke of an "absolutist ministerial cabinet."⁴⁷ Kübeck's concise summary of Kolowrat's power in domestic affairs was no exaggeration.

The claims about Metternich's all-powerfulness overlook the fact that, after his appointment in 1826, Kolowrat was responsible for police, censorship, the economy, and finances (including the state budget), and that he also had a say whenever posts had to be filled—his voice was heard on all matters that involved money. An additional office boy to carry files between the various buildings for Metternich had to be justified just as much as did an additional accommodation allowance for Gentz so that he could afford to reside in expensive Vienna.

Those who complain about censorship in the Habsburg Monarchy—at least after 1826—are wrong to pick on Metternich: Kolowrat and Sedlnitzky were chiefly responsible. Franz Grillparzer, who was personally affected by censorship, noticed the difference. In 1848 he wrote: "Prince Metternich, pleasant and witty by character, but in the first phase of his life careless, and all his life determined by his desires (in the better sense of the word), was the most decided critic of those suffocating measures of his masters during the reign of Emperor Franz. He joked with those he trusted about the small-mindedness of the Austrian state, and his enthusiasm for Lord Byron and similar spirits clearly showed how much all humiliations of human nature were alien to his original nature."⁴⁸

Kübeck's statement gives us more insight into what Kolowrat's unassailable position rested on: the influence of the Bohemian nobility as a lobby that infiltrated the whole monarchy, and the power of the imperial dynasty.

LOBBYISM, THE POWER POLITICS OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY, THE ESTATES

Bohemian Lobbyism Blocks the System

It is altogether misguided to reduce the domestic crisis of 1836 to a merely personal conflict between two men. The role of lobbying in the economic and social history of the pre-1848 era in the Habsburg Empire has not been researched enough. There were obviously very significant material interests being promoted, as is already clear from our look at the time of Emperor Franz's rule. At the time when Prussia was pursuing the idea of a free trade area through the German Customs Union—before 1833—Metternich was observing, with great concern, that the long-term alignment of tariffs would, indeed, produce a free trade zone. We already touched upon the inhibitive role played in this context by the Bohemian large-scale landowners.⁴⁹

Kolowrat openly and unscrupulously used his ministry to support Bohemian interests.⁵⁰ As the minister responsible for new appointments, he granted his fellow Bohemians preferential treatment when new posts had to be filled in the monarchy (unless they were in Hungary and Italy). That was so well known that people joked about it. An applicant, it was said, did not need to argue for his position; it was enough for him to say: "I am Bohemian and my name is Wenzel."⁵¹ Kolowrat had also developed a system for smuggling Bohemian aristocrats into the civil service. They were first appointed without salary (as so-called supernumeraries)—they could always support themselves independently in these first years. During that time, they were gradually promoted

until, after three or four years, they had reached the rank of a district commissioner, at which point they received regular salaries. By contrast, a non-aristocratic intern usually still remained an intern after twelve or sixteen years. Within only a few years, Kolowrat had also succeeded in increasing the influence of the aristocracy on the legislature. In 1843 his successor in Prague, High Burgrave Count Carl Chotek, was forced out of his position in disgrace because he was too interested in enforcing in Bohemia the legal regulations coming from Vienna.

Kolowrat's Bohemian peers must have been shocked when they learned that he intended to leave the civil service. Metternich's close confidant, Count Clam-Martinitz, predicted "that the party which needs his firm [the Ministry] for their plans and his power for their interests will want him back. This party has expressed its dismay in the first days."⁵² This group encouraged their man in Vienna to become "an unrestricted directorial minister for domestic affairs and finances." "The party" had already announced Kolowrat's return, and with this return, Clam-Martinitz prophesied, the "patronage regarding posts, salaries, and emoluments"—in other words, nepotism—would also return. Metternich expressed the same suspicion personally to Archduke Ludwig. He asked him how it was possible that Kolowrat could have recently declared the civil service "insufferable," yet now apparently wanted to return to it. This contradiction, Metternich said, was easily explained: "First, it was Kolowrat who spoke, now others are speaking through him who think their power can only be maintained cloaked in fog; and they are right about that."⁵³

Clam-Martinitz urged Metternich to prevent his opponent from returning or else to organize government business so as to reduce his influence.⁵⁴ He also had to watch out for Kolowrat's allies in the central administration in Vienna—"Eichhof's liberal faction." With this he referred to the *éminence grise* who was the president of the Court Chamber, Joseph Eichhof; the use of the term "liberal" was an ironic comment on the fact that Eichhof had used his position for risky speculations on the stock market, investing in shares in the Milan-Venice railway, even implicating Archduke Franz Karl in his dealings.⁵⁵

Kolowrat's lobbying on behalf of Bohemia must be seen within an even broader context. Metternich and Clam-Martinitz thought that the constant complaints about the financial distress of the state, which supposedly made spending cuts compulsory, were in part ideological, a pretext for making certain things impossible from the outset. Emperor Franz had a long-term aim of carrying out economic and financial reforms: more precisely, to create new foundations on which the land tax—the main source of income for the state—could be calculated more accurately. To that end, he had begun a program in 1817 under the title "Franzian Land Registry" [*Franzsisches Kataster*]. Helmut

Rumpler was the first to draw attention to this important initiative and to its consequences.⁵⁶ The emperor sent civil servants to all parts of the monarchy in order to collect statistical, economic, geographical, and demographic information. This information was to be used for the creation of a land registry. It is not hard to see why this idea was highly unpopular with the owners of large estates. The large-scale aristocratic landowners expected—correctly—that the results would show that they were paying far too little in tax. They tried to sabotage the information-gathering process using every trick in the book—they were even prepared to deploy, if necessary, armed hunters to chase the civil servants away.

His alliance with these interests meant that Kolowrat used his position as the head of the internal administration to make sure that all of Metternich's ideas, after Franz's death, for progressive changes to the monarchy would fail. It was no accident that the *Hanauer Zeitung* hoped that Metternich's original reform plans would have stimulated Austria's commerce and trade with the other federal states.

Eichhof's Downfall: A New Start with Kübeck as President of the Court Chamber

Metternich did not yet admit defeat. He was encouraged by Emperor Ferdinand's adjutant general, Clam-Martinitz. Clam-Martinitz suggested to Metternich a strategy for beating Kolowrat: namely, by hounding the narrow-minded president of the court chamber, Eichhof, out of office. Eichhof was a heavyweight in the financial administration because he was responsible for the annual budgets. This conversation between Metternich and Clam-Martinitz was strictly confidential and top secret. Thanks to a lucky coincidence, however, we know what it was about. Clam-Martinitz had prepared a written account of the situation for Metternich, which he read out at their meeting. Afterward he had wanted to destroy the text because "it probably belongs to the category of confessions whose main points remain lively enough in the imagination to make the not altogether risk-free preservation of their written traces obsolete."⁵⁷ Metternich considered what he heard to be important enough to ask Clam-Martinitz for a fair copy. Clam-Martinitz trusted him unreservedly—he spoke of "our important matters."

In the posthumous papers, Metternich's son Richard was only prepared to publish an abridged version of the text, which did not mention the author; the critical remarks on Archduke Ludwig were omitted.⁵⁸ That version does not convey that the overall aim was to topple Eichhof. Their secret conspiracy was absolutely necessary; both thought that their task was the "most difficult and

complicated." Metternich appreciated outspoken friends who told him everything, and Clam-Martinitz was one of only a few of them. Clam-Martinitz told him that "daily the divergence and heterogeneity between the views and tendencies of the two most senior ministers [was becoming] more and more an open secret." The consequences, in Clam's view, were a lack of direction; delays, because the government's intentions were not clear; a lack of determination; uncertainty in the higher state offices; and information being held back or incomplete. At the highest level of the state's administration, core questions regarding finances and appointments were left unresolved. The result was an absolutism that "rested not on a decisive preponderance of intelligence and will-power but on cleverness and the spirit of intrigue." The small-minded vanities and selfish plans of schemers and egoists won the day. It would not have come to this, Clam-Martinitz thought, if Archduke Ludwig—the head of the State Conference—had not been deceived about Kolowrat and did not have exaggerated ideas about the latter's intellectual abilities: Ludwig did not recognize Kolowrat's "moral worthlessness as a statesman." Clam-Martinitz also included his judgment of Metternich: he wanted "to reform the ills" of the empire; he did not lack perseverance or willpower, but he was not prepared to use the means employed by Kolowrat—duplicity, lies, or shameless defamation. Kolowrat called Metternich's views on church, state, and legislation timid, retrograde, and Jesuitical. According to him, Metternich sacrificed his own country for other countries, and he sacrificed finances for the state Chancellery. He who was prepared to use whatever means he had at his disposal, Clam-Martinitz wrote, would win out. It would be impossible to achieve anything as long as the power of Metternich's opponent, who shied away from all formal organization and procedures ensuring accountability, had not been undermined. It was necessary to demonstrate to Archduke Ludwig Eichhof's lack of moral worth, for it was Eichhof who served as "a head and base for the whole Kolowrat faction." It was also necessary to "prove the bad use or abuse of power." Without Eichhof, Kolowrat would lack support; he would be helpless. In order to undermine Eichhof, they had to look into how he conducted his business, even at the risk of toppling Kolowrat.

The conversation between Metternich and Clam-Martinitz took place in January 1838. Over the following year, Melanie watched her husband become increasingly desperate and dispirited, and in her diary she noted: "Lethargy, apathy, and carelessness are getting worse every day. The conferences are abhorred because everyone knows that after them the proposals of my husband must be accepted, which Count Kolowrat dislikes. Thus, our beautiful monarchy disintegrates into rubble, that is, it begins to molder, because there are only destructive elements in it, and none of preservation."⁵⁹ With Clam's death on January 29, 1840, Metternich lost his strongest ally at the court. At that time

he was in such poor health that Melanie began to expect the worst: "He feels too old to fight; he does not think he has enough strength left to continue the battle, and does not know how to lead the petty war that would be needed."⁶⁰

Ultimately Metternich succeeded in pushing Eichhof out and installing Kübeck. Metternich then again attempted to bring the Habsburg Monarchy closer to the Customs Union. It was Metternich—the same Metternich Kolowrat accused of not understanding economics—who, toward the end of 1841, developed an impressive economic program that highlighted Austria's commercial strengths and weaknesses. A program for domestic development, he said, might make Austria more attractive to the Customs Union, "if, that is, we are able to organize a system of internal connections which offers shorter and more convenient lines of communication with Italy to the states of the Customs Union."⁶¹ The Rhine crisis of 1839–1840 stirred up patriotic emotions in all of Germany. Metternich wanted to exploit this moment; it seemed to him the last opportunity to foster "the development of German trade and thus provide a decisive impulse for the future trade of Germany as well as Austria." This opportunity, he thought, was not to be wasted. He also thought it essential to link up the railway systems. And he repeated something he had said in 1833: he wanted to prevent anything that might make "Austria look excluded and treated as a foreign country." On November 17, 1841, a secret ministerial conference took place. Metternich encountered unwavering resistance, and his initiative came to nothing—or, more precisely, it resulted in the establishment of a commission to produce a survey of Austria's commercial situation. That meant, in effect, indefinite postponement.⁶²

Metternich's failure teaches us several things: When looking at Germany, he adopted a national perspective; he was prepared to reform the confederation, something that was also desired by other German states in the 1840s; he thought intensely about economic questions and had an expert knowledge in questions concerning the economy, trade, and customs; and again, foreign and domestic policies were inextricably linked. Because the two spheres were divided at the state conference, he depended on Kolowrat's approval of his domestic policy. And Kolowrat again showed how the system could grind to a halt, in this instance because he and his Bohemian peers had no interest in adopting free trade policies. Metternich told Kübeck how seriously he took these matters, and he urged him to be assertive: "These Bohemian stories are symptoms and must be quashed. The means for that is to make people *walk away*. Eichhof was a bad wound; today he is no more than scab. He will fall off! Stamp your foot down and we shall achieve the best possible result."⁶³

In January 1850, while in exile in Brussels, Metternich told a confidant of many years, Count Franz von Hartig, that he had recommended fundamental reforms of the empire to the emperor as early as 1816. These early plans for

reform would have served the purpose of, among other things, dealing with the “unrest [*Unfrieden*] in the social field.” The emperor had simply filed the proposal away, and ten years later, when faced with his life-threatening illness, he confessed to Metternich that his inaction had been “a sin.” In 1835 the emperor reproached his earlier self: “Today, deliberate lying and ignorance burden me with those things I was not even able to set in motion.”⁶⁴

The good, however, did not happen; the emperor did not prepare the way for reforms. The diplomat Alexander von Hübner, who was present during Metternich’s final hours, reported conversations in which Metternich retrospectively evaluated his position within the political system after the death of Emperor Franz in 1835. “His initiatives failed due to the resistance coming from a powerful clique which held the strings of the administration in its hands. Their head was seen as a champion of liberal ideas, while he was actually nothing but the head, guided by others, of an ossified bureaucracy. Prince Metternich, still apparently powerful, felt, and actually was, paralyzed.”⁶⁵ Indeed, Metternich went even further, judging that the rebellion of 1848 could have been avoided had it not been for this political paralysis—or, to put it differently, the paralysis abetted the revolution by frustrating Metternich’s reform plans. His failure on the matter of the Customs Union is a particularly convincing piece of evidence for this view.

Imperial Power Politics: The Empire as the Patrimony of the Habsburg Family

Kolowrat would never have had as much power as he did if the majority of the imperial family had not backed him. In the background, interwoven dynastic interests were exerting their influence, and in the absence of the strong Emperor Franz, that influence had grown. Metternich now had to resist more influential opponents—including most of the archdukes—without the backing of the emperor. In 1835, five of the emperor’s brothers were still alive: Carl, Joseph, Rainer, Ludwig, and Johann. Next to them stood the emperor’s sons: the successor to the throne, Ferdinand, ruled until 1848, and then abdicated when the emperor’s nephew, Franz Joseph, came of age, and Archduke Franz Karl, who could have laid claim to the throne in 1848 but renounced his claim in favor of his son, Franz Joseph. Franz Joseph was therefore the great hope for the future, and he came of age in 1848. His mother, Archduchess Sophie, remained in contact with Metternich over all those years—years during which almost all of the archdukes were opposed to him. She also entrusted him with the education of the young prince, who as an adolescent received daily lessons in politics from Metternich.

When political power has been wielded by the same hands over decades, it is not surprising for there to be feelings of hurt, sensitivity, and even enmities so hostile as to make understanding or civil relations impossible. *Archduke Carl*, who won the battle of Aspern and was the president of the court’s war council, was also the first one to have inflicted a defeat on Napoleon. He was an exceptional military talent and an internationally acknowledged figure. But Metternich refused to accommodate his wish to be supreme commander, generalissimo over the military of the Habsburg Monarchy as a whole. That would have been an extraordinary move that would have affected the overall distribution of power within the monarchy. Metternich thwarted Carl’s plans and in the process made himself an enemy (until Carl’s death in 1847), because he hoped to be able to use the weakness of the system after the emperor’s death to his own advantage. Metternich created another grievance when he prevented the marriage of one of Carl’s daughters to the French crown prince, the son of Louis Philippe.

We have already mentioned Archduke Johann’s deep-seated reservations about Metternich. Emperor Franz’s brother *Archduke Ludwig*, who received special mention in Franz’s will and presided over the state conference, was indecisive, had no particular talent for politics, and was therefore easily influenced—a fact on which the overall weakness of the system was based. He also lacked the formal sovereignty that was invested in Ferdinand, who was susceptible to all sorts of subtle cajolery. *Archduke Joseph*, the emperor’s representative in Hungary (the so-called Palatin), always maintained good relations with Metternich. This had something to do with Metternich’s wife, Melanie, whom Metternich had married in 1831. She was born Countess Zichy, and Metternich thus married into one of Hungary’s most important families from the high nobility. *Archduke Rainer* was delegate to the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia as viceroy, but played only a very minor role in Milanese politics. Franz Karl, finally, was important because he was the father of the future emperor, but he had no political profile and was easily influenced despite being a member of the state conference. The emperor’s widow, *Karoline Auguste*, was also part of the anti-Metternich opposition.

At this point one might have the impression that historical analysis has completely given way to the reporting of merely personal jealousies and court intrigue. But the dynastic clan was at the center of the system, and it contributed to its dysfunctionality. Politics rarely pursued the interests of the overall state anymore, revealing the weakness of a system whose roots reached back to the times of Emperor Franz. Recall how the case of Marie Louise revealed that Franz also considered the empire the patrimony of the dynastic family. But amid the power vacuum that followed his death, the preponderance of the power of the

dynasty over the well-being of the state was revealed dramatically. To put it bluntly, the fate of the Habsburg Monarchy in the nineteenth century was determined by the fertility of two emperors: Emperor Leopold II, who produced sixteen children, including twelve sons, of whom nine were archdukes. Once they were old enough, they all took up positions within the monarchy: Ferdinand III (Grand Duke of Tuscany, died 1824), Carl (president of the court's war council, died 1847), Joseph ("Palatin" of Hungary, died 1847), Anton (*Hoch- und Deutschmeister*, Grandmaster of the German Order in Austria, died 1835), Johann (imperial regent 1848–1849, died 1859), Rainer (viceroys of Lombardy-Venetia, died 1853), Ludwig (head of the state conference until 1848, died 1864), and Rudolf (cardinal and princely archbishop of Olmütz, died 1831). The son of Leopold II, Emperor Franz II (from 1806: Franz I), had thirteen children, among them four sons. Only the successor to the throne, Ferdinand and Archduke Franz Karl, however, survived. Franz Karl was a member of the state conference until 1848 and died in 1878.

This system treated the empire as a large ancestral estate and used the state to provide for the members of the dynasty. The empire served the purpose of a gigantic family entail. Given this fact, any attempt at rational integration or the introduction of federal principles would clearly run up against the self-interest of the numerous members of the imperial dynasty. Metternich had already failed to overcome this obstacle in 1817. Any ideas of a representational system or more rights for the individual nationalities would have been considered a disturbance to this status quo. This is why there was no impetus for reform from the top of the monarchy, despite the fact that Metternich had already urged Emperor Franz to make changes. And unlike Prussia or Bavaria, the bureaucracy did not develop into a motor of modernization after the dynastic leadership had failed in its task. This was prevented by the "Ferdinand system."⁶⁶

Political Participation, Constitutions, the Estates in the Run-Up to Revolution

The prospect of revolution was already casting its shadow, and in some German states in 1830 there were again calls for parliamentary representatives elected by the "people" to supplement the Federal Assembly. Metternich took note of all this. He had always insisted that he was not an absolutist; he took seriously the existence of the provincial estates of the Habsburg Monarchy. They also formed part of the question of how to organize power. As former parts of the Holy Roman Empire, estates were elements of the political cosmos in which Metternich too had his own fixed place: the College of Imperial Counts. In his

archive he kept the imperial register that had been established and maintained by the Imperial Chamber Court. It listed all imperial estates falling under the empire's legitimate sphere of interest, for the purpose of collecting the *Zieler*, the imperial tax in support of the Imperial Chamber Court.⁶⁷ Even after the demise of the Holy Roman Empire, Metternich retained the political right to rule over his estates and remained a regular member of the Bohemian estates. He felt committed to them and regularly received the protocols from the sittings of the provincial diet.

In October 1847, he pleaded for the establishment of a commission to deal with matters arising from the provincial diets. He once more convinced himself that the Habsburg Monarchy needed the representation of the estates, and he was decidedly against any form of absolutism, including the form of "neo-absolutism" pursued by the minister of the interior, Alexander Bach, from 1852 onward. (Bach was ennobled in 1854 and became von Bach.) But for Metternich the kind of representation that was needed depended on the individual country. In Austria's case, the decisive point for him was its character as "an aggregate of parts with representation of the estates."⁶⁸

In England, France, Bavaria, and Baden, the body of the estates covered the whole state. In Austria, Prussia, Sweden (including Norway), Denmark (including Jutland and Holstein), and the Netherlands (including Luxembourg), "the bodies of the estate only represent parts of the whole, while the governments comprise the whole." For Austria, the unity of the empire rested on contracts that made the monarch the center of the overall edifice. But Metternich saw this as peculiar to the Habsburg Monarchy, and something that did not exclude the possibility of different solutions for other states.

Particularly interesting in this connection are the revealing statements Metternich made about matters of political principle during conversations with intelligent foreigners. On those occasions, he proved that the horizons of his political thought were far broader than the day-to-day business of imperial politics. In June 1836, for instance, in a conversation with the American George Ticknor, from Boston, he made some fundamental statements about political systems and denied being "a great absolutist."⁶⁹ He said that he did not like democracy because it was always "a dissolving, decomposing principle; it tends to separate men, it loosens society. This does not suit my character. I am by character and habit constructive [Je suis par caractère et par habitude constructeur]."⁷⁰ These remarks hinted at the fact that democracy leads to competition and the formation of antagonistic factions.

This is why monarchy, he said, "is the only government fitted to my mind. . . . Monarchy alone tends to bring men together, to unite them into compact and effective masses; to render them capable, by their combined

efforts, of the highest degrees of culture and civilization."⁷¹ This makes monarchical rule the functional countermodel to the nation-state. We may conclude that, in his view, while a monarchy also developed a potential for integration, a nation-state developed a significantly more powerful potential because it tended toward homogeneity.

The American countered by saying that in a republic, individuals are bound to act much more on the basis of their own intelligence and responsibility, whereas in monarchies everything is done for them. Metternich's response makes clear his context-specific approach to these sorts of judgments. He was aware that the United States had been able to make such significant progress in so short a time only because of their democratic system. Democracy, he said, "separates men, creates rivalries of all kinds, and carries them forward very fast by competition among themselves." Americans, compared to the French "or our old Austria,—*notre vieille Autriche*, as he constantly called it," had "more marked and characteristic individualities." They were "more curious, too, more distinct, more interesting—even, perhaps, more efficient—as individuals; but they will not constitute so efficient a mass, nor one so likely to make permanent progress." For Ticknor, Metternich continued, democracy was "a reality—*une vérité*—in America. In Europe it is a falsehood, and I hate all falsehood,—*En Europe c'est un mensonge*." Metternich had always been "of the opinion expressed by Tocqueville, that democracy, so far from being the oldest and simplest form of government, as has been so often said, is the latest invented form of all, and the most complicated." It seemed to Metternich that in America democracy was a permanent tour de force [*un tour de force perpétuel*], and he told Ticknor: "You are, therefore, often in dangerous positions." Ticknor suggested to him that a young Constitution might easily brush off ills that would destroy an older one, to which Metternich responded: "True, true, . . . you will go on much further in democracy; you will become much more democratic. I do not know where it will end, nor how it will end; but it cannot end in a quiet, ripe old age."⁷² If he were an American, he would be "of that old party of which Washington was originally the head. It was a sort of conservative party, and I should be conservative almost everywhere, certainly in England and America."⁷³

France appeared to Metternich "like a man who has just passed thoroughly through a severe disease. He is not so likely to take it [i.e., a return of the illness] as if he had never had it." He called Louis Philippe the "ablest statesman they have had for a great while," but France was in "such a want of stability." During his time in the civil service, Metternich had "had dealings with twenty-eight Ministers of Foreign Affairs in France. I counted them up the day I had been here twenty-five years, and there had been just twenty-five; but in the last

two years there have been three."⁷⁴ To Ticknor he confessed: "I do not like my business—*Je n'aime pas mon métier*. If I liked it, I should not be able to preserve the quietness of spirit—*le calme*—necessary to it."⁷⁵ At the age of just twenty-five, he "foresaw nothing but change and trouble" for Europe, and was considering going "to America, or somewhere else."⁷⁶ He labored "chiefly, almost entirely, to prevent troubles, to prevent evil."⁷⁷

And on the theme of the past and the future, his words were clearly not those of a partisan of "restoration": "I care nothing about the past, except as a warning for the future. The present day has no value for me, except as the eve of to-morrow,—*Le jour qui court n'a aucune valeur pour moi, excepté comme la veille du lendemain*. I labor for to-morrow. I do not venture even to think much of the day following, but to-morrow, it is with to-morrow that my spirit wrestles,—*mon esprit lutte*."⁷⁸