



The Status Quo Illusion

Austria and Offensive Realism in the Era of Metternich

Ólafur Darri Björnsson

Lokaverkefni til BA-gráðu í stjórnmálafræði

Félagsvísindasvið

Október 2014



HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS

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Félagsvísindasvið Háskóla Íslands

Október 2014

Ritgerð þessi er lokaverkefni til BA-gráðu í stjórnmálafræði og er óheimilt að afrita ritgerðina á nokkurn hátt nema með leyfi réttihafa.

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210379-4449

Reykjavík, Ísland 2014

Abstract

This thesis examines Austria in the era of Metternich and the Concert of Europe. My aim is to test the theory of offensive realism and find out if Austria behaved according to the assumptions of that theory. The title of the thesis refers to both the theory of offensive realism and the status quo policies of conservatism that Austria and Metternich were emblematic of. In that context the potential impact of nationalism and liberalism on Austria and the overall balance of power is investigated. The theory is tested using process tracing and it is my conclusion that the theory of offensive realism has strong explanatory value for Austria in that era. This conclusion is to a certain extent dependant on the status of unobservable causal mechanisms.

Preface

This thesis is submitted as the final requirement for a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science at the University of Iceland. It comprises 12 ECTS units. My advisor was Dr. Maximilian Conrad and I would like to thank him for providing helpful advice during the writing of this thesis.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	6
Historical Background.....	8
Theoretical Foundation and Methodology.....	12
Statesman of the Enlightenment: Metternich and Political Philosophy.....	17
Between Scylla and Charybdis: Nationalism and Liberalism.....	20
The Congress of Vienna and the Balance of Power.....	24
The Carlsbad Decrees and the Crown of Germany.....	27
Revolution in the Danubian Principalities and Greece.....	30
Conclusion.....	32
Bibliography.....	33

Introduction

Following the Napoleonic Wars the great powers of Europe made peace in Vienna and the era that followed was characterized by the Concert of Europe. The peace made rested on a balance of power and in addition there was a common cause among the great powers against the revolutionary forces of nationalism and liberalism.¹ Austria and her chancellor, Metternich, became emblematic of the reaction against nationalism and liberalism. An element of caution entered Austrian and by implication European foreign policies. This might indicate that a status quo stance had been adopted by Austria but in reality the pursuit for relative power gains was never abandoned by Austria. Henry Kissinger described the situation as thus: “Aware of the increasingly dissonant currents of liberalism and nationalism which threatened its existence, Austria sought to spin a web of moral restraint to forestall tests of strength.”²

The historian A.J.P. Taylor states that “Europe has known almost as much peace as war; and it has owed these periods of peace to the Balance of Power”.³ The alternative, according to Taylor, is “some universal authority which would overshadow the individual states and deprive them of sovereignty”.⁴ Taylor then elucidates: “The simplest 'solution' for anarchy, as Hobbes held, is that one Power should subdue all the rest”.⁵

This brings us to the concept of anarchy. It does not necessarily mean disorder but rather the absence of any authority above sovereign states. Taylor states that anarchy “makes war possible” although “it does not make war certain”.⁶ The concept of anarchy is the foundation of modern theories of international relations among which the dominant theory is neorealism. Neorealism originated with Kenneth Waltz and one can divide neorealism into

¹ Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 79.

² Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 82.

³ A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), ix.

⁴ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918*, ix.

⁵ Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918*, ix.

⁶ A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005), 108.

two distinct schools of thought. One school is defensive realism which includes the theory of Kenneth Waltz and also more recent approaches such as those of Stephen M. Walt.

The other school of thought is offensive realism whose main theorist is John Mearsheimer. In his book “The Tragedy of Great Power Politics” he lays out his theory of offensive realism. Mearsheimer considers the neorealism of Waltz to have a status quo bias. States under anarchy seek security and thus care about the balance of power but there is no incentive to acquire more power built into the theory.⁷ The offensive realism of Mearsheimer assumes that states try gain as much power as they can to survive but there is a nuance. The power that states seek under anarchy is relative power and not absolute power. There is not much evidence to suggest that Austria was actively seeking absolute gains during the era of the Concert of Europe. The question of whether she was seeking relative gains is much more intriguing however.

The title of the thesis, *The Status Quo Illusion*, has a twofold but interconnected meaning. Firstly it relates to my argument that Austria was not a status quo state in the modern meaning of the term in International Relations discourse. Secondly it refers to how I consider Austria to have frequently used contemporary status quo policies to survive and gain relative power vis-à-vis the other great powers of Europe. My research question is the following: Did Austria behave according to the assumptions of offensive realism in the era of Metternich. Thus the application of status quo policies by Austria would have to be underpinned by the assumptions of offensive realism.

According to Mearsheimer and Walt “a theory explains why a particular hypotheses should be true, by identifying the causal mechanisms-that produce the expected outcome(s). Those mechanisms - that are often unobservable - are supposed to reflect what is actually happening in the real world”.⁸ Mearsheimer and Walt then suggest that a good way to test a theory is by using process tracing where the objective is “to determine if a theory’s causal mechanisms are actually operating in the real world in the manner it depicts”.⁹

⁷ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2003), 20.

⁸ John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “Leaving Theory Behind: Why Simplistic Hypothesis Testing is Bad for International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19(3) (2014): 432.

⁹ Mearsheimer and Walt, “Leaving Theory Behind,” 432.

Historical Background

There is exists considerable volume of historical work concerning the subject matter of this thesis. Currently the historical work can be divided into two main categories. The first category includes scholars whose position is that there was a the balance of power system in the 19th century. To begin with there is eminent historian A.J.P. Taylor who wrote several books about this era: “The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918” and the more comprehensive “The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of Germany since 1815. He also wrote the classic “The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918” and “Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman”. The monumental work of Henry Kissinger, former Harvard scholar, national security advisor and secretary of state (for the U.S.A.), “A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace 1812-1822” forms the basis for much of the research in this thesis. Finally there is historian Alan Sked who has written the most recent major work about this subject in his book “Metternich and Austria: An Evaluation”. I also draw heavily from that work in this thesis.

The other category consists of mainly one man, historian Paul W. Schroeder. He seeks to draw contrasts between the 18th and 19th centuries which entail a transformation that resulted in Europe changing from a balance of power system in the 18th century to a new equilibrium after 1815 that was not based on the balance of power. This thesis does not engage Schroeder in a debate about the balance of power but rather starts from the orthodox historical assumption that there was a balance of power system in the 19th century. The difference between the 18th and the 19th century was a nuanced adjustment to the balance of power system to confront the challenges of a revolutionary age. Kissinger, inspired by Weber, admired the visionary statesman who is creative and can face unexpected challenges in contrast to the conformist bureaucrat.¹⁰ The Concert system was the creation of such statesmen in response to the challenges of nationalism and liberalism. They were preserving the balance of power system, not fundamentally changing it. However, Schroeder’s work contains interesting historical background material which is worth delving into.

¹⁰ Mario Del Pero, *The Eccentric Realist: Henry Kissinger and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2010), 67, 104.

Sked is a major critic of Schroeder and provides an overview of Schroeder's arguments in his book about Metternich and Austria. Schroeder's "magnum opus" is "The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848".¹¹ According to Sked, Schroeder argues in the book "that there was no balance of power established in 1815 but a hegemony of Britain and Russia".¹² Sked then goes on to note that Schroeder's argument is even more complicated as Schroeder asserts that an equilibrium was indeed established in 1815 but insists that it was not a balance of power but rather a "moral and legal term" as quoted by Sked.¹³ This equilibrium thus meant "a condition of international stability, peace, respect for rights and law, the preservation of order, the suspension of international affairs and legitimisation of change through the Concert of Europe" as quoted by Sked from Schroeder.¹⁴ Sked then notes that "the whole system was now based on a mutual recognition of norms, rules, respect for law, rights and duties, status, securities, claims and satisfactions, rather than on power".¹⁵

Schroeder argues that the two hegemonic powers, Britain and Russia, were so powerful when allied that no combination of the other three powers could hope to threaten them.¹⁶ Sked quotes from Schroeder that "even when not in alliance, no combination of other states could coerce or control them" which prompts Sked to cynically note that this is added for "good measure" by Schroeder.¹⁷ Sked rejects this notion and argues that only on the high seas was Britain supreme and that only in Asia was Russia dominant. On the European continent, neither power was hegemonic.¹⁸

In addition "there was also a system of sub-hegemonies" which were weaker states within the spheres of influence of the hegemonic states.¹⁹ These sub-hegemonic states had a benign relationship with the hegemonic states according to Schroeder.²⁰ Sked also disagrees

¹¹ Alan Sked, *Metternich and Austria: An Evaluation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 54.

¹² Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 54.

¹³ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 54-55.

¹⁴ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 55.

¹⁵ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 55.

¹⁶ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 55.

¹⁷ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 55.

¹⁸ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 60.

¹⁹ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 55.

²⁰ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 55.

with Schroeder about the nature of the sub-hegemonies as the latter contends, in Sked's words, that they served to “create cooperation between the powers”.²¹ Sked instead suggests that the great powers clashed within the spheres of influence and that this created “serious risks of wars”.²²

Schroeder even goes so far as to suggest that Austria herself was a sub-hegemony and not a great power. Sked was highly critical of that assertion in his work about “The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815-1848” where he noted that Austria threatened war in 1830, 1854, 1887 and 1912-1913. In response, Schroeder has recanted his position that Austria was not a great power.²³ Sked notes that a final nuance in Schroeder’s argument is that he goes to great length to point out that “his arguments are not merely about semantics”.²⁴ Schroeder asserts that the balance of power theorists are the ones “that twist the language and meaning of the time to fit a particular theory” as quoted by Sked.²⁵

It should be noted that Schroeder’s system of two hegemonic powers is not a bipolar balance of power theory which in itself would challenge the orthodox conception of the Concert of Europe as a multipolar system. Neither is Schroeder working with the theory of hegemonic stability as he has two hegemonic powers and not one. The relationship, if any, between Schroeder’s theory and hegemonic stability theory would presumably be an interesting avenue for further study.

One example which illustrates the difference between Schroeder and the historical orthodoxy is how he views the climactic meeting between Napoleon and Metternich in Dresden (1813). Metternich, as quoted by Sked, tried to induce Napoleon to “reduce [his] power within bounds compatible with the general tranquility”.²⁶ Napoleon’s reply as quoted by Sked was: “Never. I shall know how to die, but I shall not yield a handbreadth of soil. Your sovereigns, borne to the throne, may be beaten twenty times and still go back to their palaces; that I cannot – the child of fortune, my reign will not outlast the day when I have

²¹ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 60.

²² Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 60.

²³ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 60.

²⁴ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 55-56.

²⁵ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 55-56.

²⁶ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 45.

ceased to be strong and therefore to be feared”.²⁷ Schroeder agrees that “two different personalities with incompatible world views faced each other”.²⁸ Crucially, however, he rejects the traditional view that Napoleon, the 19th century romantic hero, was confronting Metternich, the 18th century enlightenment aristocrat. Instead he considers it to be a meeting between a 16th century mercenary warlord and a 19th century conservative statesman.²⁹ According to Schroeder it was Napoleon who was in the wrong century and not Metternich.

²⁷ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 45-46.

²⁸ Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 471.

²⁹ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848*, 471.

Theoretical Foundation and Methodology

Realism has its origins as an academic discipline in the 20th century.³⁰ It can be argued that political realism has a much older history though.³¹ The first important realist work of the 20th century is “The Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919-1939” by British historian E.H. Carr which fittingly came out in 1939. In the book Carr “criticizes liberalism at length”.³² The second important realist work in the 20th century is by a German immigrant to the U.S. named Hans Morgenthau who became the iconic realist.³³ In his seminal work, “Politics Among Nations” which was first published in 1948, Morgenthau outlines his six principles of political realism. The most important of these is the first principle that states that “Political realism believes that politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature”.³⁴ The key element of Morgenthau’s theory is thus the will to power that is inherent in human nature and compels every state “to strive for supremacy”.³⁵ There are several different versions of realism but the two most important are classical realism and neorealism. Both Carr and Morgenthau belong to the tradition of classical realism.

Neorealism or structural realism has its roots in the work of Kenneth Waltz, “Theory of International Politics”, which came out in 1979 and is the third important realist work of the 20th century. In that book Waltz lays out a systemic theory of international politics which emphasizes the anarchic structure of the international system.³⁶ Waltz thus avoids making the a priori theoretical assumptions about human nature inherent in the classical realism of

³⁰ Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 20.

³¹ Robert B. Gilpin, “The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism,” in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 305-306.

³² Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 18.

³³ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 18.

³⁴ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2006), 4.

³⁵ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 19.

³⁶ Kenneth N. Waltz, “Political Structures,” in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 81-82.

Morgenthau.³⁷ As noted in the introduction, states do not have an incentive to seek power beyond what they already have in Waltz's theory. They are thus by definition status quo states. States can of course pursue power if they want to but that is then a separate foreign policy issue which is distinct from the theory itself.³⁸

Offensive realism falls under the umbrella of neorealism and is therefore a structural theory that emphasizes the anarchic structure of the international system. As previously noted in the introduction, neorealism is divided into two schools of thought. One is called defensive realism and includes Waltz and other approaches from scholars such as Stephen M. Walt and Stephen Van Evera. The other school of thought is the offensive realism of Mearsheimer. It differs from defensive realism in one crucial aspect. Instead of maintaining a balance of power, states seek all the relative power that they can get. All states are thus revisionist states in Mearsheimer's theory and all states strive to achieve hegemony in the international system.³⁹

It should be noted that Mearsheimer stresses the point of calculated aggression. When a great power is confronting powerful opponents it will be more cautious about offensive action and more concerned about defending the balance of power.⁴⁰ It is also necessary to delineate between relative power and absolute power in Mearsheimer's theory. Offensive realism asserts that states strive to maximize their relative power.⁴¹ This means that states are prudent in their pursuit of power and that they have to know their "limitations to survive in the international system".⁴² Therefore "great powers are not mindless aggressors so bent on gaining power that they charge headlong into losing wars or pursue Pyrrhic victories".⁴³

³⁷ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 19.

³⁸ Colin Elman, "Realist Revisionism," In *Rethinking Realism in International Relations*, ed. by Annette Freyberg-Inan, Ewan Harrison and Patrick James (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 65.

³⁹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 21-22.

⁴⁰ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 37.

⁴¹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 36.

⁴² Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 37.

⁴³ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 37.

Offensive realism has five bedrock assumptions that are a crucial foundation for this thesis. Thus they need to be detailed verbatim as they appear in “The Tragedy of Great Power Politics”:

The first assumption is that the international system is anarchic, which does not mean that it is chaotic or riven by disorder. It is easy to draw that conclusion, since realism depicts a world characterized by security competition and war. By itself, however, the realist notion of anarchy has nothing to do with conflict; it is an ordering principle, which says that the system comprises independent states that have no central authority above them. Sovereignty, in other words, inheres in states because there is no higher ruling body in the international system. “There is no government over governments.”⁴⁴

The second assumption is that great powers inherently possess some offensive military capability, which gives them the wherewithal to hurt and possibly destroy each other. States are potentially dangerous to each other, although some states have more military might than others and are therefore more dangerous. A state’s military power is usually identified with the particular weaponry at its disposal, although even if there were no weapons, the individuals in those states could still use their feet and hands to attack the population of another state. After all, for every neck, there are two hands to choke it.

The third assumption is that states can never be certain about other states’ intentions. Specifically, no state can be sure that another state not use its offensive military capability to attack the first state. This is not to say that states necessarily have hostile intentions. Indeed, all of the states in the system may be reliably benign, but it is impossible to be sure of that judgment because intentions are impossible to divine with 100 percent certainty. Furthermore, intentions can change quickly, so a state’s intentions can be benign one day and hostile the next. Uncertainty about intentions is unavoidable, which means that states can never be sure that other states do not have offensive intentions to along with their offensive capabilities.

The fourth assumption is that survival is the primary goal of great powers. Specifically, states seek to maintain their territorial integrity and the autonomy of their domestic political order. Survival dominates other motives because once a state is conquered, it is unlikely to be in a position to pursue other aims. Soviet leader Josef Stalin put the point well during a war scare in 1927: “We can and must build socialism in the [Soviet Union]. But in order to do so we first of all have to exist.” States can and do pursue other goals, of course, but security is their most important objective.

The fifth assumption is that great powers are rational actors. They are aware of their external environment and they think strategically about how to survive in it. In particular, they consider the preferences of other states and how their own behavior is likely to affect the behavior of those other states, and how the behavior of those other states is likely to affect their own strategy for survival. Moreover, states pay attention to the long term as well as the immediate consequences of their actions.”⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 267.

In “The Tragedy of Great Power Politics”, Mearsheimer asserts that the main strategies for survival are balancing and buck-passing. Buck-passing is the more desirable of the two choices for states as the buck-passer does not have to actually do any fighting. There might even be a relative power gain for the buck-passer if the buck-catcher and the aggressor end up in a long war.⁴⁵ Mearsheimer also maintains that in his theory the most important cause of war is the distribution of power among the leading states in the system.⁴⁶

The methodology this thesis uses is called process tracing and it is the same one used by Mearsheimer in “The Tragedy of Great Power Politics”. Process tracing emphasizes causal mechanisms and is also called “historical analysis” and “detailed case studies”.⁴⁷ Stephen Van Evera states that “in process tracing the investigator explores the chain of events or the decision-making process by which the initial case conditions are translated into case outcomes”.⁴⁸ The link between cause and effect that connects independent variables and outcomes is “divided into smaller steps; then the investigator looks for observable evidence of each step”.⁴⁹ An example would be that a bipolar distribution of power causes peace. According to Van Evera, Waltz would argue that bipolarity causes the following phenomena:⁵⁰

Less false optimism by governments about the relative power of opponents; easier cooperation and faster learning by each side about the other, leading to thicker rules of the game; faster and more efficient internal and external moves by each side to balance growth in the other's power to check the other's aggressive moves, causing deterrence; and the selecting of fewer inept national political leaders." A process tracing test would look for evidence of these phenomena in cases of bipolarity (for example, the cold war, 1947-1989) and if they are found, for evidence that they stemmed from bipolarity (for example, testimony by policymakers that reveals the motives and perceptions that fit this interpretation).⁵¹

⁴⁵ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 30-30.

⁴⁶ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 334-335.

⁴⁷ Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 85.

⁴⁸ Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 64.

⁴⁹ Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, 64.

⁵⁰ Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, 64.

⁵¹ Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, 64-65.

Van Evera goes on to note that “Process predictions are often unique—no other theories predict the same pattern of events or the same actor testimony on their motives—hence process tracing often offers strong tests of a theory”.⁵² Thus the causal process is examined through historical data and tested against what offensive realism would state should have happened according to the theory. In this thesis my goal is to see if the status quo diplomacy and anti-revolutionary policy of Austria conform to the offensive realist bedrock assumptions of great power behavior.

It is necessary to point out that John Mearsheimer considers himself to be a scientific realist.⁵³ Scientific realism assumes that there are both observable and unobservable causal mechanisms. An example of an unobservable mechanism in international relations theory is insecurity.⁵⁴ This is important for this thesis as phenomena such as nationalism and liberalism are unobservable causal mechanisms. A good example is the effect of nationalism on Austria as she was eliminated as a great power after World War I and smaller states drawn on national lines replaced the Empire. It is true that Austria lost the war but so did Germany. Thus the cause of her demise as great power cannot only be that she lost the war. After the war it can be argued that Germany was at least as strong and even relatively stronger then before as central Europe had been divided into a collection of small state, most of which had been a part of Habsburg Empire. Kissinger describes this as follows: “In 1919, the Austro-Hungarian empire disintegrated not so much from the impact of war as from the nature of the peace, because its continued existence was incompatible with national self-determination, the legitimizing principle of the new international order. It would have occurred to no one in the eighteenth century that the legitimacy of a state depended on linguistic unity.”⁵⁵

⁵² Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, 65.

⁵³ Mearsheimer and Walt, “Leaving Theory Behind,” 432.

⁵⁴ Mearsheimer and Walt, “Leaving Theory Behind,” 433.

⁵⁵ Henry A. Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace, 1812-1822* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), 145.

Statesman of the Enlightenment: Metternich and Political Philosophy

To analyze the status quo policies of Austria it can be helpful to examine the political philosophy that underpins them. The most important aspect of that political philosophy is to be found in the enlightenment principles of Metternich. Although not empirical, such analysis can add important insights to the thesis.

Klemens Wenzel von Metternich was born in the Rhineland in 1773.⁵⁶ He came from an ancient line of aristocrats although his family was not a part of the highest echelons of the Holy Roman Empire.⁵⁷ The Rhine valleys are the historic crossroads of the west where the Roman empire clashed with Germanic tribes.⁵⁸ He had, according to Kissinger, the “typical upbringing of the eighteenth-century aristocrat”.⁵⁹ He was educated at Strasbourg and Mainz and raised in Brussels where his father was the Governor General of the Low Countries. Kissinger goes on to say that he was both “cosmopolitan and rationalist” and “always more at home with the French language than the German”.⁶⁰ It is fitting then that Kissinger quotes Metternich as writing to Wellington: “For a long time now, Europe has had for me the quality of a fatherland.”⁶¹

According to Kissinger “the Enlightenment retained deep into the nineteenth century its last champion, who judged actions by their ‘truth’, not by their success, an advocate of reason in an age of philosophical materialism, who never surrendered his belief that morality could be known and that virtue was teachable”.⁶² Kissinger then quotes Metternich as writing in 1822: “These maxims have been proved true, [policy is based] not on novels, but on

⁵⁶ Alan Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe* (New York: Faber & Faber, 2014), Kindle edition, chap. 1.

⁵⁷ Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe*, chap. 1.

⁵⁸ Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe*, chap. 1.

⁵⁹ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 12.

⁶⁰ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 12.

⁶¹ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 321.

⁶² Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 196.

history, not on faith, but on knowledge.”⁶³ This passage demonstrates well that Metternich championed the principles of the Enlightenment against Romanticism. Many of Metternich’s revolutionary opponents claimed to have their intellectual origins in the Enlightenment but that can be misleading. It can be argued that Rousseau, who greatly influenced the revolutionary thought about nationalism and liberalism, belonged to the Romantic movement and was in fact an enemy of the Enlightenment.⁶⁴

Kissinger distinguishes between two different kinds of conservative positions based on history and reason. Edmund Burke exemplified the former while Metternich belonged to the latter category based on reason. The thinkers of the Enlightenment maintained that “reason is the same for all thinking subjects, all nations, all epochs and all cultures”.⁶⁵ Kissinger goes on to say that “to Burke history was the expression of the ethos of a people, to Metternich it was a ‘force’ to be dealt with, more important than most social forces but of no greater moral validity”.⁶⁶ Burke rejected reason as a premise for social obligation. Metternich accepted reason as a premise “but drew from it conclusions diametrically opposed to that of his opponents”.⁶⁷ In that context it is essential to carefully examine what Metternich had to say about order and freedom as quoted by Kissinger:

”The word freedom” wrote Metternich in his political testament, “has for me never had the character of a point of departure but of a goal. The point of departure is order, which alone can produce freedom. Without order the appeal to freedom is no more than the quest of some specific party for its special objectives and will in practice always lead to tyranny. Because I have been a man of order, my efforts were directed towards the attainment of a real, not a deceptive freedom. ... I have always considered despotism of any kind a symptom of weakness. Where it appears, it condemns itself; most intolerably where it appears behind the mask of advancing the cause of liberty.”⁶⁸

⁶³ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 196.

⁶⁴ Graeme Garrard, *Rousseau’s Counter-Enlightenment: A Republican Critique of the Philosophes* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 2003), x.

⁶⁵ Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 6.

⁶⁶ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 193.

⁶⁷ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 193.

⁶⁸ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 195.

It was precisely this “point of departure” that separated Metternich from many of the revolutionaries. In the context of the philosophy of the Enlightenment it is crucial to bear in mind that, in the 18th century, philosophical ideals were modeled on contemporary natural science. These in particular were the ideas of Isaac Newton about physics.⁶⁹ The core “of Newtonian research is universal order and law in the material world” where “observations produce the datum of science; the principle and law are the object of investigation”.⁷⁰ There cannot be an arbitrary a priori starting-point in physics.⁷¹ Such hypotheses can “be invented and modified as desired”.⁷² A valid “starting-point can thus only be obtained from experience and observation”.⁷³ It is hardly surprising then that “into his old age Metternich retained a profound interest in the natural sciences, engaging in extended correspondence with scientists, particularly in the experimental sciences”.⁷⁴

Metternich had some interesting insights into both revolutions and progress. Kissinger quotes the following from Metternich: “Revolutions are temporary disturbances in the life of states. ... Order always ends up reclaiming its own, states do not die like individuals, they transform themselves. It is the task of statesmanship ... to guide this transformation and to supervise its direction.”⁷⁵ Kissinger then quotes Metternich warning us that “a consideration that the liberal spirit usually ignores ... is the difference in the life of states, as of individuals, between progress by measured steps or by leaps. In the first case, conditions develop with the consequence of natural law, while the latter disrupts this connection”.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 7.

⁷⁰ Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 8.

⁷¹ Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 7.

⁷² Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 7.

⁷³ Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 8.

⁷⁴ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 197.

⁷⁵ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 200.

⁷⁶ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 200.

Between Scylla and Charybdis: Nationalism and Liberalism

It is necessary to examine why the impact nationalism and liberalism was so important for Austria and the other great powers in the Concert of Europe era. Austria was an empire with territories that “combined the most polyglot nationalities and levels of civilization, united only by the common Emperor”.⁷⁷ Her bond was thus dynastic and not national. There is empirical evidence about what would happen to Austria if nationalism were to be given free rein in Europe. After World War I the Habsburg Empire was dismembered into national states which included a small, primarily German speaking Austria.⁷⁸ She certainly did not survive as a great power but does survival in the context of offensive realism mean survival as a state or as a great power?

Two examples can shed some light on this issue. The first example is Japan and her decision to attack the United States in 1941. According to Mearsheimer, the U.S. embargo against Japan left her with “two terrible choices”.⁷⁹ Either she would accept the U.S. terms and a significant reduction in her power or initiate a war that she had little chance of winning.⁸⁰ Japan, of course, elected to fight. The other example to consider is France at the beginning of World War I after war had broken out between Russia and Germany. France was allied with Russia but Germany offered her neutrality if she would surrender two border fortresses.⁸¹ France would probably have survived but certainly not as a great power. France, just as Japan did, elected to fight. It can therefore be argued that great powers fight to survive as a great power and not merely as vassal states of other powers or shadows of their former self.

Although this thesis focuses on Austria it is necessary to establish that nationalism was a structural factor that could affect all states. Prussia had Poles within her borders and

⁷⁷ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 208.

⁷⁸ Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 217.

⁷⁹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 223.

⁸⁰ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 223.

⁸¹ Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 216.

Russia had among others: Poles, Finns and various Asian tribes. The United Kingdom was perhaps the least vulnerable but nevertheless it had abolished the Irish parliament in 1800 for fear of it becoming a wellspring of Irish nationalism. An independent Ireland could potentially have become allied with France. The most intriguing case is that of France which was seemingly a national entity and a recent exporter of the revolutionary values of nationalism and liberalism. Yet France “was still rich in the diversity of its racial types, its dialects and its customs”.⁸² France appeared uniform primarily because of a strong centralized administration rather than national unity.⁸³

Nationalism thus had varying effects on the great powers but all of them could potentially feel the impact of it. In many cases, and certainly for Austria, nationalism could weaken the power of states. In other cases it could potentially strengthen a state if it managed to enhance its population and territory as a result of nationalism. Even if nationalism did not directly affect the borders of a particular state it could affect other states and therefore the balance of power.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte was one of the prime theorists of German romantic nationalism.⁸⁴ Gregory Moore in his introduction to Fichte’s influential “Addresses to the German Nation” outlines his core objectives. The first objective was to eliminate the “post-Westphalian dogma of the balance of power in Europe, which posits a state system in which Germany acts as the fulcrum, but is required to remain impotent and divided so as not to upset the delicately poised equilibrium”.⁸⁵ Moore then goes on to note that Fichte asserted that “this arrangement is inherently unstable, a kind of armed peace, and not the lasting harmony of a new moral arrangement such as Fichte demands”.⁸⁶

What seems clear is that nationalism increases uncertainty and decreases flexibility in international relations. Uncertainty is already one of the bedrock assumptions of offensive realism as noted above. Increased uncertainty should induce states to exercise caution as calculating relative gains, especially from aggression, becomes more difficult. The decrease in

⁸² J.P.T. Bury, *France 1814-1940* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 8.

⁸³ Bury, *France 1814-1940*, 8.

⁸⁴ Gregory Moore, introduction to *Addresses to the German Nation*, by Johann Gottlieb Fichte (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2008), xi-xii.

⁸⁵ Moore, introduction, xxviii-xxix.

⁸⁶ Moore, introduction, xxix.

flexibility stems from the fact that distributing people and territory becomes much more contested when both are linked to a particular nation.

Another example of a fervent German nationalist was Friedrich Ludwig Jahn. He was involved in the formation of the Burschenschaften, which were radical student associations whose role will be examined better later in the thesis. Eagerly anticipating a national Germany in 1815, Jahn made his own “German” uniform and then set forth on a journey to conquered Paris. Once there he “harangued crowds” with his political views and then proceeded to perform vandalism on the Arc de Triumphe.⁸⁷ One can only question just how liberal Germany would have been under the aegis of someone like Jahn. Metternich certainly had no illusions as he swore to liberate Germany from the tyranny of such men as Jahn.⁸⁸

It has been suggested by some Metternich scholars such as Peter Viereck that Metternich intended to federalize the Empire.⁸⁹ Sked has rejected that argument and instead asserts that Metternich wanted to reshape the machinery of government through efficient central institutions.⁹⁰ Rather than being a solution to the problem of different nationalities, it can be argued that federalism has the opposite effect and actually accentuates national differences within states. It can even lead to an increase in secessionist tendencies.⁹¹

Nationalism and Liberalism were closely connected on the Continent and most revolutionaries championed both principles. National freedom was seen as both a prerequisite and a component of individual freedom. Nationalism was certainly a point of departure for freedom that Metternich disagreed with. Kissinger asserts that “the Continent has never been able to accept the Anglo-Saxon version of freedom”.⁹² Kant and Rousseau were therefore the main theorists of the Continental version of liberty rather than John Locke.⁹³ Kissinger then notes that “the Continental version of liberty which sought freedom in the identification of the

⁸⁷ Peter Viereck, *Conservatism Revisited: The Revolt Against Ideology* (New York: Scribner, 2011), 96-97.

⁸⁸ Viereck, *Conservatism Revisited*, 95.

⁸⁹ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 107.

⁹⁰ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 121.

⁹¹ Joel Selway and Kharis Templeman, “The Myth of Consociationalism? Conflict Reduction in Divided Societies,” *Comparative Political Studies* xx(x) (2011): 7-8.

⁹² Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 194.

⁹³ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 194.

will with the general interest and considered government freest, not when it governed least, but when it governed justly”.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 194-195.

The Congress of Vienna and the Balance of Power

Austria had been allied with France prior to Napoleon's invasion of Russia. After his defeat there Austria moved to a position of armed neutrality.⁹⁵ Austria was trying to avoid committing herself fully to the sixth coalition until allied war aims, conducive to her long-term survival, would be agreed upon.⁹⁶ The sixth balancing coalition against France was formed in 1813. Prussia, in the wake of Napoleon's defeat in Russia, formed an alliance with Russia. The United Kingdom joined the coalition in June 1813 and Austria finally joined on August 11, 1813. This alliance combined for the first time these four great powers in a balancing coalition against the fifth, France.⁹⁷

In 1814, France was finally defeated and a peace congress in Vienna took place. Emperor Francis and Metternich were thus the hosts of the congress. Metternich's personal secretary, Friedrich Gentz, was appointed the secretary of the congress and thus he became, by implication, the secretary of Europe.⁹⁸ Napoleon escaped Elba in 1815 before being decisively defeated at Waterloo that same year and the victors reassembled in Paris to negotiate peace. Historian Alan Palmer wrote an excellent overview of what Austria gained at Vienna and later Paris:

Austria recovered all the territory she had lost since the outbreak of war with revolutionary France except for Belgium, some small enclaves in southern Germany (the most important of which was the Breisgau) and part of western Galicia, acquired only during the Polish Partitions. As compensation for these losses Austria received back Lombardy and the Tyrol and was allowed to absorb Venetia, Istria and Dalmatia (which had been in Habsburg hands from 1797 to 1805 by grace of Bonaparte) and to retain Salzburg, another territorial prize bestowed by Napoleon. In 1815 the Austrian Empire was almost half as large again as when Metternich became Foreign Minister and was second in population only to Russia among the states of Europe; the double-headed eagle of the Imperial coat-of-arms flew over cities as far apart as Milan and Lvov, Prague and Dubrovnik, Innsbruck and Brasov. Metternich's 'Austria' comprised all of the present-day republics of Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, half of Roumania, over a third of Yugoslavia, almost a fifth of Italy and a sixth of Poland, and a

⁹⁵ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 44.

⁹⁶ Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 86.

⁹⁷ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 280.

⁹⁸ Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe*, chap. 9.

large segment of the Soviet Ukraine. Moreover Habsburg influence extended throughout the German confederation and was paramount in the dynastic dependencies of the Italian peninsula.⁹⁹

The system established at Vienna and Paris rested on a balance of power. It was a partition of Europe in the interest of the great powers.¹⁰⁰ Sked defines the balance of power in the following way: “The balance of power had no objective meaning and every state had a different assessment of what its own best interests were and how these interests related to other states.”¹⁰¹ A good example in the context of offensive realism is that Austria hoped to pass the buck to Prussia when she gave up her South German provinces which were adjacent to France. Sked also notes that in the 18th century the cost of mercenary troops induced states to be careful when it came to engaging in warfare.¹⁰² In the 19th century something else was at work according to Sked: “The assumption was that international order and domestic tranquility went hand in hand. Revolution caused war and war caused revolution.”¹⁰³ Kissinger argues that “the concept of the unity of conservative interests had transcended national borders and thus tended to mitigate the confrontations of power politics”.¹⁰⁴ The result was that the powers that formed the Concert of Europe were cautious when it came to the question of war. Cooperation after 1815 was therefore aimed at the suppression of revolutions and the protection of each state’s own position.¹⁰⁵

Two different alliances came into being in 1815. The quadruple alliance was created by the victors to contain France and preserve the balance of power.¹⁰⁶ The Holy Alliance was created by Tsar Alexander of Russia, whose “mind had been taking an increasingly mystical turn” according to Kissinger.¹⁰⁷ The flowering of this mental turn was the Holy Alliance, a religious brotherhood of conservative sovereigns. Indeed, the Tsar envisioned that

⁹⁹ Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe*, chap. 10.

¹⁰⁰ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 57.

¹⁰¹ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 61.

¹⁰² Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 56.

¹⁰³ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 101.

¹⁰⁴ Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 94.

¹⁰⁵ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 59.

¹⁰⁶ Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 88.

¹⁰⁷ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 187.

only sovereigns could sign the declaration, such was the exalted nature of it.¹⁰⁸ Metternich was cautious about such a commitment and made some alterations to make it a practical tool for domestic stability.¹⁰⁹ The initial signatories were Russia, Prussia and Austria, although all of the European sovereigns eventually signed it with the exception of the Pope, the Ottoman Sultan and the King of Britain.

To analyze the essence of something it is illuminating to examine both how it begins and how it ends. Taylor, in his study of Bismarck, recounts that when French statesman Adolphe Thiers tried to rally support among the European powers for France during the Franco-Prussian war (1870-1871) he had no success. Friedrich Ferdinand von Beust, the Austrian Foreign minister, said to Thiers: "I do not see Europe anymore".¹¹⁰ Taylor then goes on to note that "Bismarck had grown up when the Concert of Europe was a reality, and it was difficult for him to appreciate that it no longer existed. He was driven desperate by the fear of European intervention".¹¹¹ Intervention to preserve the balance of power was therefore the core function of the Concert of Europe.

¹⁰⁸ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 188.

¹⁰⁹ Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 88.

¹¹⁰ A.J.P. Taylor, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1967), 127.

¹¹¹ Taylor, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman*, 127.

The Carlsbad Decrees and the Crown of Germany

On March 23, 1819, August von Kotzebue, a reactionary author and consul general for Russia, was assassinated by Karl Ludwig Sand.¹¹² The assassin was, in the words of Kissinger, “a demented student from the University of Jena”.¹¹³ Significantly, Sand was a member of the “Burschenschaften” which were German student associations that were suspected of championing nationalism and liberalism.¹¹⁴ Panic gripped the various German powers as visions of the Reign of Terror were conjured up in the minds of their sovereigns.¹¹⁵ Metternich was at the time in somewhat more serene surroundings in Rome as he was touring the Italian courts with the Emperor. Gentz, somewhat prone to panic, was in Austria and informed Metternich of these developments “through a series of hysterical letters” and urged him to return with alacrity.¹¹⁶ Gentz seemingly feared being pursued by regicide revolutionaries through a post-apocalyptic Jacobin Europe.

Metternich, in a calmer state of mind than Gentz, saw in this situation an opportunity to bring the German courts under the aegis of Austrian leadership.¹¹⁷ To accomplish that he only needed to do one thing: wait. This would insure sufficient panic among the German sovereigns. Some groundwork had to be laid first with Prussia though. The Prussian King, seemingly paralyzed with fear of revolution, thought that it would be an excellent idea to allow Metternich to advise Prussian chancellor Hardenberg on how to proceed. After all, Austria seemed unaffected by the revolutionary frenzy and Prussia did not want to be left alone in the German Confederation to face the coming Jacobin apocalypse. Thus Metternich, who came from the state that had the most to lose from nationalism, found himself in a position to advise on the constitutional structure of the state that had the most to gain from it.

¹¹² Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 128.

¹¹³ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 238.

¹¹⁴ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 128.

¹¹⁵ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 240.

¹¹⁶ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 238.

¹¹⁷ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 238-239.

The two powers then agreed on a common reactionary program known as the Convention of Teplitz.¹¹⁸

On June 17, almost three months after the assassination, Metternich finally decided to act. It was a fine line, however, as Kissinger quotes Metternich as saying: "Today the governments are afraid enough to act, soon their fear will have reached the stage of paralysis".¹¹⁹ His plan of action, submitted through Gentz, was devoid of any unnecessary haste though. He was going to the spa town of Carlsbad for a rest and he invited the ministers of the various German powers to meet him there.¹²⁰ Metternich had sampled the delights of Carlsbad a year earlier on the advice of one of his physicians, a certain Dr. Staudenheim.¹²¹ Metternich enjoyed his stay in a "spa of such Rococo splendour" and Dr. Staudenheim even found a way to augment the treatment.¹²² Angelica Catalan, an opera singer from Florence, who had enchanted Metternich with her voice also consulted Dr. Staudenheim and he promptly "prescribed a month of Carlsbad waters".¹²³ Once there, and surprisingly invigorated, she hosted a grand concert which immensely pleased Metternich. On top of that, an amorous acquaintance from the Vienna Congress, Wilhelmine of Sagan, was present. However, her relations with Metternich at that point were formal and her appearance a coincidence as she was not even a patient of the fabled Dr. Staudenheim.¹²⁴

Carlsbad thus held the promise of good things for Metternich and he would not be disappointed. At Carlsbad a number of repressive measures, the Carlsbad Decrees, were agreed upon by the German powers. Kissinger notes that "The Austro-Prussian proposals were accepted in their entirety".¹²⁵ Censorship of published material was introduced with each member state of the German Confederation having a veto power over what would be published. The universities were placed under state supervision by means of appointed

¹¹⁸ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 242.

¹¹⁹ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 240.

¹²⁰ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 241.

¹²¹ It is interesting to note that Jakob von Staudenheim counted Beethoven among his patients.

¹²² Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe*, chap, 11.

¹²³ Palmer, *Metternich: Councillor of Europe*, chap, 11.

¹²⁴ Palmer, *Metternich: Concillor of Europe*, chap, 11.

¹²⁵ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 243.

representatives. This was specifically aimed at the “Burschenschaften”. Finally, a central commission was set up to investigate revolutionary activity.¹²⁶

According to Kissinger “Metternich had succeeded in a tour de force”.¹²⁷ Metternich had appeared as a savior of conservative principles who ensured the domestic positions of the German sovereigns but at the same he enhanced Austrian hegemony over the German Confederation. Kissinger goes on to say that “The deferential address with which the assembled diplomats thanked Metternich for having been permitted to do his bidding showed that conquest need not always take the force of arms”.¹²⁸

The implications for offensive realism are twofold. Austria did not have the military power to dominate Germany by force and the “twin currents of nationalism and liberalism” threatened her survival.¹²⁹ The Carlsbad Decrees thus extinguished the threat of nationalism and liberalism. Kissinger quotes Metternich as saying that: “It is more important to eliminate the claims of others than to press our own.”¹³⁰ In that context, Mearsheimer asserts that “states motivated by relative power concerns are likely to forgo large gains in their own power, if such gains give rival states even greater power, for smaller national gains that nevertheless provide them with a power advantage over their rivals”.¹³¹

In addition to curtailing the dangerous threats of nationalism and liberalism, Austria had increased its relative power over the other German states. Kissinger quotes Metternich as saying: “If the Emperor of Austria doubts that he is the Emperor of Germany then he is mistaken”.¹³² Kissinger then notes that “in this manner the Carlsbad Conference ended with the spontaneous affirmation of Austrian predominance”.¹³³

¹²⁶ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 243.

¹²⁷ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 243.

¹²⁸ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 243.

¹²⁹ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 233.

¹³⁰ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 236.

¹³¹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 36.

¹³² Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 244.

¹³³ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 244.

Revolution in the Danubian Principalities and Greece

The Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldova were a special administrative case. Their officials were appointed by the Porte but approved by Russia.¹³⁴ In 1821 a revolt broke out against the Porte in Bucharest and Ypsilanti, a Greek leader of the rebellion, appealed to Tsar Alexander for help in the name of Christianity. This was a cause for alarm for Austria as the Tsar, founder of the Holy Alliance, was prone to “conducting policy in a mood of exaltation.”¹³⁵ The Ottoman Sultan was not a part of the Holy Alliance and only a very flexible understanding of the concept of legitimate government would include the Porte in that category.¹³⁶

Austria had herself recently intervened in Piedmont to crush a revolution there. The action had been taken concert with the other great powers based on the Concert of Europe conservative principles during the Congress of Laibach. Russia had even supplied a reserve of ninety thousand men for Austria to draw upon.¹³⁷ This placed Austria in a certain dilemma as Metternich had declared that the preservation of the Ottoman Empire was an essential Austrian interest.¹³⁸ Metternich therefore had no desire to allow the Tsar’s magnanimity to be translated into an armed intervention in the Balkans. The Holy Alliance included a protocol regarding such interventions which is analyzed by Schroeder in the following way:

The protocol itself subjected the right of intervention to various conditions and escape clauses, meaning in practical terms that the particular circumstances of each case would decide whether the Holy Alliance powers would intervene or not. This was as Metternich intended and what Austria always did. He was eager here and at other times to pin Russia down to his absolutist principles and to gain Russian support for any actions Austria wanted, but not to give others, especially Russia, a general sanction for similar actions. Moreover, the fact that

¹³⁴ The government of the Ottoman Empire which was based in Constantinople.

¹³⁵ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 292.

¹³⁶ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 286.

¹³⁷ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 279.

¹³⁸ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 288.

the sovereign whose rights were violated had to make a formal request for intervention made the practical meaning and application of the doctrine even more unpredictable.¹³⁹

Metternich proceeded to send the Tsar a memorandum which stated that the revolutionary conspirators were trying breach the monarchical solidarity between Russia and Austria in a bid to advance their radical agenda. The plan worked and the Tsar denounced the revolutionaries who were then easily defeated by Turkey. This would be a tool of statecraft again used by Metternich when revolution broke out on a larger scale in Greece. He would overwhelm the Tsar with numerous police reports regarding revolutionary activities that were seemingly directed by a Central Revolutionary Committee in Paris.¹⁴⁰

Metternich was essentially trying to restrain the Tsar by linking the Greek revolution to the Tsar's throne and even his life. Sked provides an illuminating quote from Tsar Alexander regarding this: "If we reply to the Turks with war the Paris directing committee will triumph and no government will be left standing. I do not intend to leave a free field to the enemies of order. At all costs means must be found to avoid war with Turkey."¹⁴¹ The Greek war of independence lasted for 11 years, however, and ended with victory for the Greeks. Metternich was less than thrilled and Sked quotes him as saying that Greece had been "condemned to life".¹⁴²

In summary the above demonstrates that Austria tried again to eliminate the claims of others powers, in this case Russia, to prevent them from gaining relative power. The method used was that of a status quo reactionary policy. The same method of a status quo policy was used to justify Austrian intervention in Piedmont which was not under direct Austrian rule. It was a clear case of Austria strengthening her relative power position. In this context Morgenthau states that "the conception of the status quo that determined the policies of Russia from the outset, and those of Austria, Prussia, and France from the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century, was unlimited territorially and as to subject matter".¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848*, 611.

¹⁴⁰ Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 293.

¹⁴¹ Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 70.

¹⁴² Sked, *Metternich and Austria*, 85.

¹⁴³ Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 466-467.

Conclusion

The research question of the thesis was: Did Austria behave according to the assumptions of offensive realism in the era of Metternich. Historical data has been analyzed using process tracing test to the theory of offensive realism. It is my conclusion that the theory explains the behavior of Austria very well. That explanatory value is somewhat, but not totally, dependent on the role of unobservable causal mechanisms such as nationalism and liberalism. If one were to deny that such unobservable causal mechanisms had the potential to impact Austria in any way then the explanatory power of offensive realism is somewhat diminished. The epistemological role of scientific realism is therefore a crucial factor in evaluating the explanatory power of offensive realism for the subject matter of this thesis.

I would be remiss if I did not address the role of sources. Most researchers are eager to find material that supports their arguments. Consequently, there is always the danger that a researcher will select only sources that support his argument and ignore other sources that are likely to refute it. This problem can become even more pronounced when there is vast historical literature available on the subject. My approach in this thesis was to try to include mainly arguments that, to the best of my knowledge, had not been undermined by heavy criticism. Therefore I tended to avoid academic debates between two contested positions and tried instead to select the strongest argument possible. This approach was somewhat inevitable due the limited length of this thesis. There are thus many interesting theoretical approaches which could serve as points of departures for further research in this area.

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