EUROPEAN POLITICS 1815–1848

FREDERICK C. SCHNEID

European Politics 1815–1848

Edited by

Frederick C. Schneid

High Point University, USA

ASHGATE
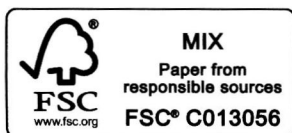
European Politics 1815–1848

The International Library of Essays on Political History
Series Editor: Jeremy Black

Acknowledgements

Series Preface

This series focuses on key episodes and issues in political history and does so by bringing together essays selected from journals that exhibit careful analysis of political history. The volumes, each of which is edited by an expert in the field, cover crucial time periods and geographical areas, particularly Europe and the USA. Each volume represents the editor's selection of seminal essays on political history in his particular area of expertise, while an introduction presents an overview of the issues in the area, together with comments on the background and significance of the essays chosen.

The strength and nature of political beliefs reflect, to a great extent, the degree to which ideologies provide a sense of identity, value and purpose to both individuals and the community. Like all important questions about recent and modern society, this is one that can be answered in a different way by commentators and by readers. Secular ideologies over the last 250 years tended to rely on the notion of progress and the desire of humans to improve their condition, and thus rejected the Christian lapsardian view of human existence with its emphasis on sin and humankind's fallible nature. Although they varied in the political, economic, social and cultural analyses and prescriptions, such ideologies shared a belief that it is possible, and necessary, to improve the human condition and that such a goal gives meaning to politics and society. In short, reform was seen as an end in itself and progress as something attainable.

There was only limited support for continuity and stability, as opposed to reform, as public goals. For an institution or government to pledge itself to inaction would have been extraordinary. Instead, as with Islamic and Christian fundamentalism, conservative politics were propounded primarily in terms of a return to an earlier situation (true or mythical), and thus as reform through reaction, against a perception of the present, rather than as a static maintenance of the present. Commitment to change rested on prudential considerations, especially the need to modernize in order to compete successfully on the international scene, but also on powerful ideological currents. Reform, as a means and goal, was the foremost secular ideology and one that was shared by governments with very different political outlooks. There is no sign that this will change. However, across the world, reform meant very different attitudes and policies and focused on both improving and abandoning the past. This was true not only of domestic policies but also of those abroad, both foreign and colonial policy. Thus, reform could entail the development of empires and also their dissolution. Like 'freedom', 'liberty' and 'justice', 'reform' was a value-laden term. It could mean both more and less government intervention and this helped to contribute to controversy.

Politics was not only a matter of ideologies and government initiatives. As volumes in this series indicate, it is also important to consider the extent and consequences of popular participation in politics, the nature of accountability and the conception of the public: from corporatism to individualism.

Any selection of what to include is difficult. The editors in this series have done an excellent job and it has been a great pleasure working with them.

JEREMY BLACK
Series Editor
University of Exeter

Introduction

The three intervening decades between the Congress of Vienna and the Revolutions of 1848 are marked by enormous social, political, economic and cultural change. The origins of these changes certainly can be traced back with great ease to the eighteenth century; yet, their widespread impact occurred during the quarter-century of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Era. Indeed, much of the early politics of the post-Napoleonic Era had their origins during this tumultuous quarter century, 1789–1815. The intellectual foundations of romanticism, nationalism and liberalism, the trinity of revolutionary doctrines in the early nineteenth century, can be found among such writers as Goethe and Rousseau. The appeal of these ideas gained momentum with the spread of French armies, and in reaction to French occupation. It is quite common in the English-speaking world to associate the issues and events following the fall of Napoleon to a culture, which projected itself forward into the age of Restoration. To that end, the popular writings of French romantics such as Balzac, Stendahl and Dumas are seen as clear examples of the Napoleonic legacy, which informed society and politics for three decades.

Michael Broers (1996) challenged the notion that European culture after 1815 looked backward, and was largely informed from romanticized bygone days. His contentions are followed by David Laven and Lucy Riall who continue this line, arguing that the legacies of the Napoleonic Era forced European governments to contend with a new social reality, which would not permit the restoration of pre-1789 institutions, but domestic and foreign policies that could address current concerns (Laven and Riall, 2000, esp. Ch. 1). Currently, this perspective is now widely accepted such that Tim Blanning (2007) concluded his magisterial work on Europe 1648–1815, pointing the reader to the changes necessitated by the events of the Revolutionary/Napoleonic Era, rather than conservative attempts to reclaim their glorious past.

The years 1815–48, involve some of the most salient developments in the course of Western civilization. There is far too much literature on these decades for a book of this scope; however, the ideas and actions in this era are all interrelated. Napoleon's spectre loomed over much of Europe in the decade following his second and final exile. More than a fear of his return – an unlikely event after 1815 – European monarchs and their ministers agreed on inviolable principles of conservatism. The actions of figures such as Clemens von Metternich, and his contemporaries focused squarely on maintaining order in an increasingly disorderly society. Order meant restoring and protecting the immutability of monarchy. On this issue there was unanimity among the Continental powers, and this meant developing a diplomatic climate that permitted close cooperation in terms of suppressing revolutions. The Vienna Congress and the subsequent alliances served that purpose.

The Quadruple Alliance – later Quintuple – opposed disruption of the *status quo* and existed to prevent a Bonapartist restoration. The Holy Alliance sought to uphold the principles of conservatism and the general tranquillity of the Continent. Under the guise of the latter, the principles of the former were applied. The actions of the monarchical regimes in the decade

after Vienna illustrated at once, a commonality of intention within the rather competitive world of international relations. The great difficulty controlling competition and revolution came with the industrial revolution: it created an economic transformation so profound as to prohibit monarchs from completely ignoring its fiscal, social and political significance. Britain, a constitutional monarchy and exception to the conservative principles, embraced economic change a half-century earlier, while Russia found little benefit and purposely ignored it. Industrialism in all its forms saved revolutionary ideas from the block, and enabled the liberal elements of European society to survive and eventually prosper. Nonetheless, the actions that dominated state policy and international relations during these intervening years operated under the assumption that conservatism backed by collective action and military force could curb political revolution.

The European powers that formed the backbone of the coalitions against France finally prioritized their interests in 1813. They subordinated their territorial desires temporarily to achieve military victory. Within a year, Napoleon was in exile, and their individual interests and desires could come to the fore. The Congress of Vienna served the purpose of dividing the spoils, but without alienating all parties. The negotiations foundered on issues of Saxony, Poland and Italy, but nonetheless, were settled amicably. Traditional historiography credits the Congress participants in general – and Clemens von Metternich, the Austrian Foreign Minister, in specific – with promoting a 'balance of power', a rejection of revolutionary *raison d'état*, as espoused and practiced by the French between 1792 and 1815, and the restoration of equilibrium. The general European peace that remained until 1854 was the product of this system.

The eminent diplomatic historian Paul Schroeder challenged this view (Chapter 1). The traditional perspective of the Vienna Congress, he argued, rests with a false notion that 'balance' is understood in the same terms as eighteenth-century international relations. Yet, as with the arguments introduced by Broers, and Laven and Riall, Schroeder believes that the conditions brought about by the Revolutionary/Napoleonic Wars, led to a new understanding in international relations. Stability in the international system was due to an acceptance of certain principles of action on the part of the respective powers, rather than any balance of forces. States continued to pursue what Schroeder calls 'hegemonic goals' (1992) but the response of powers differed after 1815, than before 1789.

Robert Jervis (Chapter 2) took issue with Schroeder's contention in a special issue of the *American Historical Review*. Jervis, a political scientist, viewed international relations in terms of models and systems. He posited that, while the term balance may create certain assumptions, restraint of states through a Concert of Europe indicated that a balance was pursued, although not in the same way as it had been in the eighteenth century. The pursuit of hegemonic goals, he argued, does not mitigate the existence of a system. The interests of state leaders included extension of state power, but not at the expense of a general European war – at least, not until 1914.

Although Schroeder called for retiring the 'balance of power' paradigm, and Jervis makes the case to retain it, they both agree that the interaction of European powers in the post-Napoleonic era had been greatly affected by the previous quarter century. Schroeder begins his *magnum opus*, *The Transformation of European Politics*, 'European international politics was transformed between 1763 and 1848, with the decisive turning-point coming in 1813–1815' (1994, p.vii). It is abundantly clear that, despite the historiographical arguments,

there were two critical concerns to the victorious powers; revolution and the resurgence of Bonapartist France. To protect against the former, the Holy Alliance was founded upon the common conservative principles of the 'Most Christian Monarchs.' Russia, Austria and Prussia acknowledged the commonality of their monarchical institutions in a Europe profoundly affected by revolutionary ideologies. France, although under Bourbon restoration, had been compromised. This was evidenced in the midst of the Vienna talks when Napoleon returned from exile at the end of February 1815 and marched to Paris, unmolested and to the cheers of many Frenchmen, in a virtual processional. The second restoration following Napoleon's Hundred Days (1815) did little to establish confidence among the major powers that the Bourbons would remain on the throne. To that end, the Quadruple Alliance of Austria, Prussia, Russia and Britain maintained a watch from the Rhine, the Channel and Belgium.

The Quadruple Alliance deviated from its initial objectives with the addition of France to its membership in 1818 at the conference at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen). It is at this juncture, with the inclusion of France in an alliance originally designed to contain it, that the notion of a European concert appears. France's inclusion also reflected a growing concern for the potential imbalance of power in the east. Metternich, in particular, was keenly aware of Tsar Alexander I's interests in reasserting Russian influence in the new German Confederation. This was evident as early as the Congress, and in particular reference to the Saxon-Polish question that threatened the negotiations. Lawrence Flockerzie (1990) presented an updated discussion of this issue. Although Russian and Prussian competition in Poland was settled during the Congress of Vienna, the arrangement only mollified Prussia. To counter Russian interests in Germany, Metternich determined to assert Habsburg authority among the German states in their capacity as leader of the German confederation. Furthermore, France served as a counterweight to Russia, as they too would not be keen to observe a growing Russian presence in Central Europe (Flockerzie, 1990, pp. 661–2).

Metternich became obsessed with the intentions of Russia especially when they were entangled with his other all-consuming nightmare, revolution. Since the Napoleonic era, German universities were the centre of intellectual and cultural resistance to French imperialism. After the wars, these students, many of who had served in the armies of their respective princes, returned to university and agitated for political reform (Schneid, 2009, pp. 189–91). Two years earlier, in 1817, they gathered in Wartburg for a political rally. Matthew Levinger's insightful book on Prussian nationalism in this period includes a solid discussion of the event (Levinger, 2000, pp. 110–13.) The local authorities closely monitored their activities but little was done. Alexander, more than Metternich, saw these movements as a threat. Metternich agreed, but was careful to pressure the German princes, whom he was trying to bring back into the Habsburg fold after a decade in a French orbit. In 1819, Alexander found opportunity in the murder of his favourite conservative playwright, Auguste Kotzebue, at the hands of Karl Sand, a member of a *Burschenschaften*, a German student fraternity. This murder forced the hands of Metternich and the German princes to address the openly revolutionary organizations that plagued the German intellectual federati. Perhaps the best and most recent account of Kotzebue's life and careers is by George Williamson, who argued (2000, p. 892) that our understanding of his works, and subsequent murder, are shaped by the events which it unleashed.

Kotzebue's murder endangered the tenuous state of things. Tsar Alexander threatened to use military force to purge Germany of these revolutionary societies. Metternich, fearing the

Tsar would be as good as his word, sought to defuse the situation through a meeting of the Quintuple Alliance at Carlsbad in 1818. Rather than see Russians marching through Germany, as they had done in 1813, Metternich managed to craft a decree presenting the German princes with a choice – to take care of matters, or to face foreign intervention. This ultimatum, better known as the Carlsbad Decrees, was sufficient. German princes clamped down on universities, closing student societies, firing liberal faculty and censoring student newspapers. Although the meeting at Carlsbad can be framed within the context of the congress system, it can be viewed equally as a means by which Metternich outmanoeuvred Tsar Alexander, achieving both a limitation of Russia's interests and increasing Austria's in Germany. After the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, the restoration of Austrian power in Germany became one of two paramount objectives. The formation of the German Confederation, and with Austria as the presiding state, was a victory for Metternich and the Habsburgs. The problem, however, did not end there.

Tsar Alexander also looked toward Italy to extend influence. Alan Reinerman (1974, p. 264) lucidly argued that, while Metternich sought to temper Russian ambitions, Alexander pursued his Italian policy to weaken what Reinerman referred to as the 'Austro-British entente'. This was more problematic than affairs in Germany. Metternich worked assiduously at Vienna to mediate the state of German affairs, but Italy was the reward. Austria annexed Lombardy-Venetia into the Empire, while extended family, including the Emperor's daughter in Parma, ruled Modena and Tuscany. This dynastic expansion into northern Italy strengthened Austrian power in the peninsula to a level not seen for almost two centuries. Both Alexander and his father Paul I had tried to prise Italian states from their Habsburg orbit. To that end, Alexander I spent much time in 1802 and thereafter in support of the independence of the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, which Napoleonic France had absorbed.[1] After 1815, Alexander tried once again to restrain Austrian influence, with little success. Nonetheless, he found occasion in 1820.

The Revolution in Naples in 1820, provided another opportunity for Russia to make its presence known in the peninsula. King Ferdinand II found sanctuary in Austria after a revolution in which Carbonari, Italian republican revolutionaries, and part of the Royal army compelled him to accept a constitution. Although technically still the monarch, Ferdinand fled his capital, seeking the assistance of the Habsburg Minister, soon to be Chancellor. Metternich feared Russian intervention and again used the platform of the Quintuple Alliance to avoid any unpleasantries. The Alliance met at Troppau in 1820 and, with Metternich's careful guidance, crafted an ultimatum to the Italian revolutionary governments, demanding they restore the monarchies to their full powers. The Troppau Protocols, Metternich hoped, would resolve the crisis without formal action, as the Carlsbad Decrees had done three years earlier. Unfortunately, Italian revolutionaries proved more determined, and 1821 saw the explosion of revolutions in Piedmont, Modena and Parma. Alexander threatened military intervention, and, having gained the approval of the Alliance at Laibach (Ljubljana), Metternich moved quickly to employ Austrian forces to restore order.

The annual meetings of the Quintuple Alliance mask the true nature of this organization. The 'Concert of Europe' accepted the premise of a general European peace among the

---

[1]   Tsar Alexander I consistently argued that the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia should be restored after Napoleon violated the Treaty of Lunéville, by annexing the Italian state in 1802.

major powers; however, their actions are framed more properly within the realm of the Holy Alliance. Britain played no role in the decisions at Carlsbad, Troppau or Laibach. They stood outside the realm of the conservative powers under these circumstances. Revolution was not necessarily a bad thing to Britain, but a cancer to the monarchies of Europe.

In 1820, Metternich penned his famous 'Confession of Faith' in which he savagely attacked revolution as a threat to civilization. More than a mere attack on the order of things, revolution had provided Austria's rivals with the opportunity to chip away at its power. If constitutionalism was bad enough, the previous quarter-century transformed nationalism from an intellectual notion to a popular movement. To this end, nationalism, if harnessed by conservatives in Prussia or France, could be useful; in the world of the multi-national, multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire, it was a force of entropy.

The difficulty with combating revolutionary forces was their insinuation into institutions that remained the prop and support of monarchy. Royal administrations and armed forces were contaminated after almost two decades of revolutionary and Napoleonic rule with the concept that constitutional monarchy was an acceptable alternative to the *anciens régimes*. This fact was in evidence in France after 1815, when Louis XVIII established a constitutional monarchy in the wake of his short-lived restoration in 1814, after Napoleon's first exile. To this end, and as stated clearly in the Troppau Protocols, any movement which advocated the limitation of monarchical powers via constitution, regardless of whether the monarchy remained intact, was a clear and present danger to the stability of Europe.

The revolutions of 1820 in Italy not only tried to circumvent conservative reaction by retaining their monarchies, albeit restrained on a constitutional leash, but significant portions of the Neapolitan and Piedmontese armies participated actively in these revolutions. The fear of Ferdinand VI and Victor Emmanuel that their armies were wholly disloyal prevented them from responding with greater force against their revolutions. Compromises were made to preserve their thrones.

The root of Metternich's dilemma over a response to the revolutions of 1820–21 extended beyond Alexander's demand to dispatch Russian troops to central Europe and Italy and lay in the desire of the revolutionaries to use Spain as their constitutional model. In response to Napoleon's invasion of Spain (1808), deposition of the Bourbon royal family and insinuation of his brother Joseph as monarch, the Spanish waged a very personal war against Napoleonic aggression. In the absence of a monarch, the entire Spanish royal family had abdicated, king and prince, and were under 'house arrest' in France, the Spanish formed a Cortes (Parliament) in Cadiz and hammered out a constitution in 1812. The Spanish constitution was rather liberal by the standards of the day, and upon victory in 1814, Spanish liberals demanded that Ferdinand VII, heir to the Bourbon throne accept the constitution in return for legal recognition by the Cortes. Reluctantly the agreement was made, but Ferdinand had little intention of honouring it. In the following years it became abundantly clear that the monarchy had other plans and, by 1817, Ferdinand faced numerous local revolts, the suppression of which gave a false security to his regime. In 1820, the hammer fell. The local revolts hid a larger national discontent that was even present in the Royal army. The officers and soldiers had fought the French for six years in the absence of a monarch, and Ferdinand misread their mood. Large portions of the Spanish army supported the revolutionaries of 1820, and the king was compelled to acquiesce to the Cortes.

News of the success of the Spanish revolution, and the subsequent taming of the monarchy by the Cortes, encouraged the Neapolitans to try their hand at curbing their own conservative king. Their victory in Naples in 1820 further encouraged Piedmontese revolutionaries to do the same the following year. The Piedmontese revolutionaries, called *Federati*, received ample support from the Piedmontese army. Victor Emmanuel abdicated in favour of his brother Charles Felix, a staunch conservative. The Piedmontese revolution, however, was far more complex. The revolutionaries in the army preferred Charles Albert, the crown prince and son of Victor Emmanuel, but his liberalism prevented his father from calling him to the throne in the face of this revolution. Nonetheless, he accepted the constitution in the name of his uncle. Timing. however, proved unfortunate. Charles Felix rejected the revolution and the constitution. With the support of loyal troops and an Austrian army, the monarchy was restored with full power and Charles Albert sent to France.

The revolutions of 1820–21 complicated international matters considerably. Jacobinism, the term applied to revolutionaries in the post-Napoleonic period, favoured republicanism. This could be combated easily, by resurrecting the memory of the radical revolution in France, but constitutional monarchism meant that legitimacy could no longer be defined by whether or not a king sat on the throne. This matter became even trickier as two members of the Quintuple Alliance – Britain and France – were functioning constitutional monarchies. The crafting of the Troppau Protocols, then, had to establish a delineator between the acceptable, and the unacceptable government. The agreed-upon result removed any doubt:

> States that have undergone a change of Government due to revolution. The results of which threaten other states, *ipso facto*, cease to be members of the European Alliance, and remain excluded from it until their situation gives guarantees for legal order and stability. If owing to such alternations, immediate danger threatens other states, the Powers bind themselves, by peaceful means, or if need be by arms, to bring back the guilty state into the bosom of the Great Alliance.

The voluntary acceptance of a constitution by a monarch would be permitted. A monarch compelled to accept a constitution under threat of revolution, could find security in the illegality of that act and garner the support of the major states to restore him to his full powers.

The success of Austrian forces in Italy, acting with the consent of the Alliance, and under the aegis of the Troppau Protocols, spelled the end for revolution in Italy, and foreshadowed its death knell in Spain. The Congress of Verona (1822) addressed the deteriorating situation in Spain and the Italian crisis. Reinerman (Chapter 3, p. 38 below) contended that, while this was the overt purpose of the Congress, Metternich feared the success of liberal movements in Naples and Piedmont and desired to establish a 'counterrevolutionary front'. The revolution in 1820, did not sit well with everyone. Clergy and conservatives struggled, and in 1822 attempted a counter-revolution. Violence followed in the north, and the border with France became unstable. The Spanish issue then, did not logically follow the conservative reaction in Italy the year before, but the recent events in Spain necessitated a response. It was one thing to act in Italy, whose states were small, and resistance easily crushed; Spain was another matter. To that end Tsar Alexander again threatened to use Russian troops to restore Ferdinand VII in Madrid. Neither Metternich nor Louis XVIII desired to see Russian troops in the west once more. Under the principles espoused at Troppau, the French were given permission to restore the Spanish monarchy to its full power by force. This was an unbridled irony as a French

army including many officers and men who had come to Spain during the Napoleonic Era to remove the same monarchy, returned a decade later to restore it.

The actions of the Quintuple Alliance may appear wholly successful, but enormous differences among the powers were temporarily suppressed in the face of the crises of 1820–23. First, the actions of the Alliance did not meet with the support of Britain. Lord Castlereagh watched in horror as both conservatism, and Austro-Russian rivalry played out on the field of central Europe. There had been little in the actions of the Alliance in the previous years that was to the benefit of Great Britain. In fact, much of their actions were contradictory to British interest, and Castlereagh, who played prominently since the Congress of Vienna, saw Britain's role on the Continent slip away. His suicide in 1823 was the product of a lifelong fight with depression, but his perception of Britain's declining influence in European decision-making as a personal failure, was undoubtedly a factor.

Castlereagh's death by no means removed Britain from the equation. The elephant in the room, purposely ignored since 1821, emerged in force by 1823. The Greek revolt disquieted the Alliance, because, more than any other revolution, this one compelled the powers to question whether *raison d'état* would overrule collective security. After 1818, collective security meant defence of the regimes from revolution. The revolution in Greece was the product of a religious and ethnic struggle the origins of which dated back to the Byzantine Empire. In more immediate terms, the Greek revolt forced Metternich and his contemporaries to decide if their commitment to maintaining legitimate monarchy in the face of revolution would outweigh their national interest in extending their influence into the Balkans, at the expense of the Ottoman Turks. The resulting disagreements and divergent policies would ultimately lead to the dissolution of the Quintuple Alliance.

The Greek Revolt led to curious and divergent responses from Metternich and Tsar Alexander I. The latter could not recognize a revolution against any legitimate monarch, not even the Ottoman Sultan. The revolt, on one hand, represented religious and national aspirations of Greeks in the Peloponnese and Attica, and the disparate Greek communities living in Western Europe. Yet, the revolt was a clear attack against legitimate authority, albeit a Muslim ruler. The critical issue for Metternich and the Habsburgs was in seeing the Greek Revolt as a national movement. National aspirations could spell doom for the Empire, but in more immediate terms, contemporary events proved this even more so. Despite religious and national diversity, the majority of the peoples of the Balkans possess a common Slavic ethnicity. This is one of the reasons the Russians were able to gradually insinuate themselves in the Balkans during the 19th century. Although the Greeks were not, their Christian Orthodoxy placed them theologically closer to the Russians than to the Roman Catholic Habsburgs. In 1819, a Serbian revolution, originating in 1804 within the Ottoman Empire, ended with the creation of a small independent Serbian state. The Russians provided clandestine support for this revolt, while during the Russo-Turkish War (1806–12) they gave overt assistance. Lawrence Meriage (Chapter 4, p. 66 below) rightly argued that the impact of the Greek Revolt is better understood in the context of its following on the heels of the Serbian revolt. The actions of Austria, Britain and Russia to the eastern question are apparent well before 1821. Vienna worried deeply about Russian involvement in this national and religiously motivated uprising, and members of the Imperial government noted it during the Napoleonic Wars. Metternich understandably viewed the victory of the Serbs followed shortly thereafter by a revolution in Greece with great anxiety. George Jewsbury (Chapter 5) furthermore presented active Russian

support for Balkan nationalities. These actions represented continuity in Russian foreign policy and Metternich resolved to restrain it without resorting to a conference.

Sympathy for the Greek Revolt remained quite high throughout Europe. Beyond Russia, the Greek communities in France, Italy and, most significantly, Great Britain garnered enormous popular and financial support. In the early years of the revolution. Greek success in ejecting the Turks from the Peloponnesian peninsula, and the subsequent massacre of Greeks in Istanbul created enormous sympathy. The French government had maintained close relations with the various Balkan pashas since the Napoleonic Wars. The further erosion of rule from Istanbul could mean greater autonomy for the pashas, and provide greater opportunities for France. In both Britain and France, however, popular support for the 'cradle of democracy', as the Greek patriots billed their homeland in Western Europe, stoked the passion of liberals. Philhellenic societies were formed in support of the revolution. At first this took the form of financial aid, but eventually included the provision of arms to the revolutionaries. By 1823, however, philhellenic societies had begun to form companies of volunteers to join the Greek cause. Romantics such as Lord Byron of Britain heard the call and sailed off to Greece, where philhellenic battalions from Britain, France and Italy soon converged. Their numbers were actually quite small, perhaps a thousand in all, but their existence evidenced the clear affinity between liberal revolutionaries in the west and the Greeks of southeastern Europe. It confirmed Metternich's notion that revolution was a disease.

Russian interests only complicated matters. Tsar Alexander's advisor was Capodistrias, a Greek who had become one of Alexander's favourites prior to the revolt; and serendipity now placed him close to the Tsar. Despite Capodistras' desire to offer full support, Alexander restrained his policy and merely provided covert aid. However, the Tsar's approach did not prevent others in Russia from organizing more formal support. Alexander Ypsilanti, a Russian officer of Greek origin, gathered volunteers on the Danubian frontier of the Ottoman Empire and launched an unauthorized invasion in 1821. His troops were few in number, and soon found themselves with their line of retreat cut off. Forced to escape across the Austrian border, they were disarmed and imprisoned by Austrian forces.

Ypsilanti's unauthorized action threatened to widen the conflict. His march took him through the Ottoman provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia (modern-day Romania), where he found significant sympathy and some support, although they had achieved a certain autonomy within the empire. The fear of emerging national movements in these provinces was as much a concern to the Austrians as it was to the Ottomans. The recent success of the Serbian revolt made this possibility even more problematic and Metternich's concern about Ypsilanti's Russian connection exacerbated matters.

The complexities of the Greek Revolt, and its implication for the nascent alliance system effectively ended the collective activities of the Holy Alliance. The last congress in Verona, addressed issues related to the revolution in Spain, but no meeting was held to directly address the Greek issue. The conflict expanded in 1825 with the intervention of Egyptian troops in the Peloponnesian peninsula. Mehmet Ali, Khedive (governor) of Egypt, had created a professional army along Western lines and also had a substantial fleet. Within two years, his son, Ibrahim Pasha, quelled the revolution in the Peloponnese and nearly brought an end to the conflict. In 1827, however, Russian and British naval squadrons engaged and sank the Egyptian fleet at the port of Navarino, the main Egyptian supply depot, thus effectively ending Ibrahim's ability to conduct his campaign in Greece.

Although the actions of the Russian and British admirals at Navarino were not officially sanctioned, their respective gopverments did benefitfrom them. It was in the interests of both states to see Greece independent and the Egyptian khedive curbed in his Mediterranean ambitions. The Ottoman Sultan, Mehmed IV, paid the price of Crete for Egyptian aid. British hostilities ceased after Navarino, but Tsar Nicholas I (r. 1825–55), actively intervened in 1828, formally declaring war on the Ottoman Empire. Direct Russian military intervention brought an effective end to the Greek revolution. Loyal Colwes (1990) provides a revisionist perspective of the Russians' participation, and their ultimate victory over the Turks. He argued that, despite the events at Navarino, George Canning, the British Prime Minister, had no coherent policy toward Greece, and this enabled the Russians to move swiftly to take advantage of Britain's undefined position. (Colwes, 1990, p. 691). Within a year the Ottomans officially recognized Greek and Serbian autonomy, and Russian occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia, and had to contend with a weakened position in the Balkans. Nonetheless, the Russian agreement at Adrianople in 1829 did not seek to alter the state of the Ottoman Empire, only to strip it of Greece and its influence in the Christian Balkans (Nicolae Ciachir, Chapter 6). The formal treaty granting Greece independence as a monarchy was signed at the London Conference in 1832.

The Greek revolt ended the same year as the revolutions that shook much of Europe, but it did not produce the domestic stability that perhaps the powers desired. The decade following the accession of the Bavarian prince Otto to the Greek throne did not produce a dynamic constitutional society, but one characterized by David McLean (Chapter 7) as absolutist. In 1843, Otto was deposed by an Athenian revolution, which led to intensive political action by the British and French. Both had vested interests in establishing a stable constitutional monarchy that could serve their particular national concerns in the eastern Mediterranean (pp. 116–18 below).

Events in the East had become quite complex – or, at the least, complex for the European powers. As much as the Ottoman Empire had been seen as a general threat to Christian Europe through the eighteenth century, its coherence as a viable state entity became a central theme in nineteenth-century European policies. To that end, France and Britain played a dangerous game with the Balkan Pashas and Mehmet Ali of Egypt. The latter's desire to extend his power in the Middle East became evident with Egypt's central role in supporting the Ottoman Sultan during the Greek revolt. Yet, later, Mehmet Ali sought to supplant the Sultan as the true power in the East. In 1832, and again in 1840, the Egyptian army defeated Ottoman forces and marched on Anatolia. Intervention on the part of Britain, France and Austria prevented the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Mehmet Ali's power extended into the Hejaz and Arabia. His army kept the Wahabis in check and, in both 1818 and 1837, Egyptian troops attacked and destroyed centres of Wahabi power which threatened Mehmet Ali's own influence (J.B. Kelly, Chapter 8). This meant that, despite the seeming international stability of European politics, the powers collided over conflicts of interest on the European peripheries.

The events in the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East added stress to the international system, but did not remove the commitment of the conservative powers to act against revolutionary movements elsewhere. Events in central Europe were an entirely different matter. The revolutionary movements in Germany represented one end of the political spectrum; although liberal romantic nationalism found a home among intellectuals, there were other critical matters, which greatly affected the evolution of German politics. The establishment