KLEMENS VON METTERNICH

THE PRINCE OF DIPLOMACY

Written by LLA



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CHAPTER I
THE SON OF A LIAR CHATTER: A YOUNG COUNT HEARS THE STORM OF REVOLUTION (1773-1794)

Klemens von Metternich (I'll spare his very long full name for you) was born on May 15, 1773, in Koblenz, son of Franz George von Metternich and Maria Beatrice von Kanegegg.

The Metternich family had a very ancient lineage dating back to the Carolingian nobility, and for centuries they had held prominent positions in the city of Trier. However, they could be considered lower-middle-ranking nobles within the aristocratic sphere of the Germanic Empire. Apart from his father and an ancestor who was a commander in the Thirty Years' War, no Metternich had held offices outside the archbishopric of Trier or Mainz. Their importance was limited also due to the modest properties they owned (just a ruin and a castle near Trier, and some lands in Bohemia). Klemens' father had been the first in the family for a long time to attempt an ambitious career and had managed to obtain the role of ambassador of the Archbishop of Trier (who, we recall, was still a prince-elector within the now antiquated Holy Roman Empire) at the imperial court of Maria Theresa of Austria.

Throughout his childhood and early adolescence, the young Klemens lived in Koblenz, a small city in the archbishopric, cared primarily by his mother, as his father was often busy with diplomatic assignments. Indeed, those duties increased when, thanks to his wife's closeness to the Habsburg family, he was hired as Austrian ambassador to the Archbishop of Trier, perfectly reversing his previous role. His father was not particularly popular at court yet, so much so that the archduchesses called him a "cheater and a chronic liar", but evidently Beatrix's influence over the Habsburg women was enough to make up for some of Franz's shortcomings. In any case, as mentioned, it was she who oversaw Klemens's education. He and his brothers were educated by Abbot Bertrand, specializing in the study of French and French literature given his mother's, an intelligent and curious woman, fervent passion for Parisian culture. Already in his adolescence, the young Metternich spoke fluent French and preferred it to German until young adulthood[1].

(Fluid Intelligence: Learning Ability-Crystallized Intelligence: Knowledge)

Meanwhile, his father occasionally insisted that he accompany him on business trips, though not to Vienna: at age six, his father took him to Strasbourg (where he was vaccinated against smallpox), at age seven, to a conference of clergymen in Cologne, and at 14, he was introduced to the princes of Paderborn and Hildesheim, on his first visit to Habsburg lands[2].

Beginning in 1784, Countess Beatrice assigned another tutor other than Abbot Bernard, Johan Frederick Simon, a generous and sensitive Franco-German scholar who remained in the Metternich household for five years. During this period, he educated Klemens both in the study of philosophy and in physical exercise, making him a good swimmer and horse rider, instilling in

him the need for training that remained with him even in old age: even by then, he was described as athletic and fit. Simon's role was partially reinterpreted in a negative light by Klemens starting in 1792, when his former tutor had become a fervent Jacobin and obtained positions with the revolutionary government in Paris. Although Metternich specifies in his autobiographies that even as a teenager, some of his master's ideas seemed insidious and terrifying, this is unlikely to be true, and Simon was the young count's first, indirect, contact with the French Revolution, which would become his greatest enemy.

(Crystallized Intelligence: Knowledge-Adversity Capacity: Perseverance)

Given his good grades, at fifteen Metternich was considered ready to enter the University of Strasbourg, Simon's hometown, where he was accompanied by both teachers and where he met his tutor, Maximilian of Zweibrücken, a member of the royal house of Wittelsbach, whose wife was a friend of Countess Beatrix. Upon his arrival, Metternich immediately won the nobleman's favor and soon that of the other students as well (thanks to Simon's advice), and on his matriculation day he was described as "handsome, happy and amiable." In reality, Metternich's true character was vain, a liar, and a boaster, but these were flaws he knew how to mask well[3].

(Deception: Acting Skills-Social Engineering: Social Skills/Charisma-Adaptability: Social)

At Strasbourg, one of the best universities in the world at the time, Metternich showed himself to be a young man of great promise: in addition to regular courses, he attended private lessons (studying more than his colleagues) and also devoted himself to learning the violin, an instrument to which he demonstrated a certain sensitivity[4]. He focused his studies primarily on history, passionately pursuing Koch Montesquieu's courses.

(Fluid Intelligence: Learning Ability/Cognitive Capacity-Crystallized Intelligence: Knowledge)

While Metternich was absorbed in his university life, an earthquake of indescribable force had struck Paris: first the Tennis Court Oath, then attack at the Bastille, France was plunging into the chaos of the Revolution. A few days after the proclamation of the Rights of Man, confusing news reached Strasbourg (which was part of the Kingdom of France), prompting a stampede of beggars and drunks, easily quelled by Maximilian Wittelsbach. Klemens observed these events with a certain calmness and, unlike most young nobles, did not panic. Although his mother begged him to return to German territory (as his brothers had done), Klemens understood that as long as Louis XVI remained in power, the aristocrats had little to fear; moreover, Strasbourg was on the fringes of the kingdom, and revolutionary ideas had little root in the city[5]. He was therefore able to continue his studies for another year.

(Adversity Capacity: Impulse Management-Reasoning: Abductive-Emotional Intelligence: Management)

But it was the death of Emperor Joseph II, succeeded by his brother Leopold II, that called him home. Klemens's father spent all his energy to make his family shine during the new emperor's coronation, and while this had no effect on the intelligent Leopold, the same could not be said for his son and heir, Francis, who had been bullied for years by Joseph II and was now happy to get a few courtiers to flatter him, something Franz did very well. Klemens met Archduke Franz

during the ceremony, and in the following months, under his mother's guidance, he worked hard to build strong relationships with the Austrian nobility. He did the same during a visit at Frankfort.

(Social Engineering: Influence Building)

After the coronation, Klemens decided to continue his university studies, and since Strasbourg had meanwhile fallen to the Revolution, he decided to transfer to the University of Mainz, where he would complete his studies in law and diplomacy, with some additional scientific courses that interested him. Mainz was in his family's homeland, safe from the fury of the revolution, a place where it was easy to stand out and where the teaching was moderate—these were the reasons that had led him to choose it.

(Thinking: Linear/Associative-Crystallized Intelligence: Knowledge)

Thanks to his appearance and affable manners, Metternich achieved a certain success in the high society of Mainz, even among women: he fell in love with Marie Constance de Caumont, an extremely beautiful nineteen-year-old French married noblewoman, with whom he had a relationship for three years (therefore until his marriage), and by whom he remained fascinated for the rest of his life.

(Social Engineering: Influence Building-Emotional Intelligence: Understanding-Adaptability: Social)

In 1792, his studies were interrupted again by the death of an emperor. Leopold II indeed died prematurely after less than two years of reign, leaving the throne to Francis. Metternich returned to attend the coronation, where he even opened the ball with the future Queen of Prussia, Louise.

Although the celebrations were many and magnificent, the clouds of revolution were gathering even more, and by a strange coincidence, on the day Francis presented himself to the world as Holy Roman Emperor, Louis XVI was guillotined. Francis, less wise and capable than his father, organized a clumsy attempt to respond to the war that Revolutionary France had declared against him, and Metternich abandoned Mainz to return to Koblenz, where the Duke of Brunswick, commander of the Austro-Prussian forces, had organized his armies. If it’s true that initially he obtained some successes, the duke was repeatedly defeated by the French armies (remember the disaster of Valmy), allowing the French invasion of Belgium and then as far as the Rhine to happen, an invasion that even occupied some Metternich lands. Mainz also fell. The noble family then joined the coalition army for a time, and for two months Metternich served in the army, though with virtually no results given the limited time available.

His brief stay in the military, however, allowed him to network with some British military personnel of noble origins, which paved the way for his first official diplomatic assignment in 1794: a posting on behalf of his father in London in order to obtain a British loan. There Metternich received a unique welcome for a diplomat of his age, thanks to his exceptional ability to make himself appreciated. He even met King George, dined with London's most important families, and was flattered by the Prince of Wales, who called him “one of the handsomest and most charming men I have ever met”[5].

(Social Engineering: Charisma/Social Skills-Adaptability: Social)

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[1]Alan Palmer, *Metternich: Il genio della reazione (Metternich: Councillor of Europe)*, Novara 1983 (London 1972), Editoriale Nuova (Weidenfeld and Nicolson), p.16
[2]*Ibi*, p.18
[3]Michel Missofele, *Metternich*, Librere Artheme Fayard, 1959, p.16
[4]Alan Palmer, *Metternich: Il genio della reazione (Metternich: Councillor of Europe)*, Novara 1983 (London 1972), Editoriale Nuova (Weidenfeld and Nicolson), p.21
[5]Klemens von Metternich, *Memories*, Volume I, p.15

CHAPTER II
THE DIPLOMATIC CAREER: METTERNICH AT DRESDEN, BERLIN AND PARIS (1794-1808)

While Metternich was dawdling in London, the situation on the continent was deteriorating: a new revolutionary offensive had broken the coalition's defensive lines, and by then even Koblenz had fallen. The Metternich family had fled and fallen into disgrace at the emperor Francis's court since the father, Franz, who was responsible for the diplomatic administration of Austrian Belgium, had proven largely incapable of fulfilling his duties and had seen his jurisdiction swept away by the French. When Klemens joined his family in Vienna, his career seemed to be on the verge of collapse, having fallen along with his father's credibility[1].

It was the mother, Countess Beatrix, who saved the family's fortunes, thanks to the long-standing relationships she had established with the Habsburg court when she was young, particularly with the Kaunitz family, the lineage to which the recently deceased Austrian chancellor had belonged. Despite the fragile situation the Metternichs found themselves in, Beatrix managed to persuade the Kaunitzes to marry young Eleonora, a scion of the family, to Klemens. While the girl immediately fell in love with the diplomat's beauty, he showed her sincere affection, but her unappealing appearance apparently never led to the marriage being founded on love.

(Social Engineering: Charisma)

Eleonora's father, Prince Kaunitz, was disgusted by Metternich's political machinations and wanted to prevent the marriage, but his daughter's infatuation (Klemens had skillfully courted her) and Klemens's position slow recovery in Viennese salons convinced him to accept on two conditions: Eleonora would continue to reside with the Kauneitzes, and Klemens would not return to his diplomatic career until his death. After the marriage, Metternich became a true Austrian nobleman of high rank and managed to win the favor of several Viennese aristocrats, such as the vain Prince de Ligne, whom he skillfully approached by appearing to be his avid listener.

(Social Engineering: Influence Building/Social Skills/Seduction-Deception: Acting Skills)

Meanwhile, he continued his studies, taking courses in physics, geology, chemistry, and medicine[2]. In January 1797 the first child of Klemens and Eleonore, a girl, was born.

(Fluid Intelligence: Learning Ability-Crystallized Intelligence: Knowledge)

A few months later, his father-in-law died, and Metternich was able to return to his diplomatic role. Shortly thereafter, his father Franz asked him to serve as secretary at the Congress of Rastatt, a meeting organized to compensate the nobles who had lost the lands ceded to France following the Treaty of Campo Formio, imposed by Napoleon at the end of the Italian Campaign. The Congress had been planned by France as a potential burial ground for the obsolete Holy Roman Empire, but since Napoleon never showed up, it was a futile diplomatic move, which

nevertheless served Austria to buy time to strengthen ties with the Russians and the British. The Second War of Coalition ended in another defeat for Austria nevertheless. In the war's year (1800) Metternich avoided public service since he and Eleonore lost two children, a boy and a girl, and he limited himself to persecute his social life in Vienna and his scientific studies. In 1801 yet the emperor Francis personally encouraged him to accept a diplomatic post, offering him three possible occupations, of which Klemens chose the role of Austrian ambassador to Saxony (in Dresden), which was close to the Metternich family's Bohemian estates.

(Adversity Capacity: Mental Fortitude)

Before leaving for Dresden, Metternich wrote *The Instructions*, a short text that analyzed the political events from 1790 to 1801 with cynicism and judgment. The work focused less on the implicit political condemnation of the French Revolution, and more on the responsibilities of various European nations in the defeat of the two coalition wars. It also went into the possibilities that might affect Austria now: the loss of Austrian Belgium was seen by Metternich almost as an advantage, given that it was difficult to defend, and it was now necessary to reorganize the defeated and isolated German states under the banner of Vienna, forming a common German front that could link up with British naval power[3].

(Thinking: Analytic/Critical/Convergent-Reasoning: Abstract)

He hoped to bring these ideas to the ears of the Elector of Saxony, but the latter proved to be an incompetent and idle man, and Metternich's experience in Dresden was particularly unproductive given the lack of any decisive political will within the state. His only noteworthy activity in the city appears to have been his long list of lovers, one of which he also impregnated and the daughter was recognized even by his wife Eleonor.

Finally in 1803 Klemens was recalled from his position in Dresden to replace the Austrian ambassador to Berlin, a much more prestigious and politically valuable position that would have allowed him direct contact with the King of Prussia, in a delicate moment since the Third War of Coalition was about to start and Austria would have been again on the frontline against Napoleon. In the same year the Metternich father obtained from the emperor the title of prince (from count) and a chair in the Reichstag (the imperial parliament), significantly increasing the reputation of the family among the court of Vienna.

Metternich was well received in Berlin, partly because he already knew Queen Louise, who treated him like a friend, but he quickly realized that King Frederick William was trying to have little to do with the ambassadors. Metternich's intention was to push the Prussians into the Third Coalition with Russia and Austria, but the king's positions were very different, and even Austrian Chancellor Cobenzl disagreed with that policy, as it attempted to soften relations with Paris.

(Strategy: Building-Planning: Formulation/Aim)

The news of Napoleon's coronation was met with dismay and indignation by Klemens, who attempted to use his influence with Cobenzl to prevent Bonaparte from being recognized as emperor by Austria. However, decisions had already been made, and within a short time, since the Holy Roman Empire was about to be dissolved, Francis I became Francis II, new Emperor of Austria. Metternich deeply feared that within a short time, French ambitions would involve the

occupation of Germany itself beyond the Rhine. If Vienna still did not agree with his position, he understood that the Russians did, thanks to his contacts with the Russian ambassador in Berlin. Metternich was enthusiastic when London and St. Petersburg signed the Third Coalition and when Vienna also joined, albeit belatedly. His task of convincing the Prussians to join, however, was impossible[4], and indeed he failed: Frederick William had received from Napoleon the promise of Hanover in exchange for neutrality, and the Austrians or the Russians did not seem capable of promising anything as good; Metternich had no cards to play at all.

The situation seemed to change somewhat when Alexander I of Russia approached Prussia, both to lead his army and to convince King Frederick William to accept the alliance. Pressure from the Russian army made the sovereign more receptive, and he then negotiated with Metternich and Alexander, who convinced him to enter the war at least if the French did not accept some of the Coalition's peace proposals. Metternich attempted to include more clauses in the agreement, fearing that the Prussians would withdraw too easily from the pact[5], but Emperor Francis persuaded him to desist. The idea of the prince proved to be farsighted in this case, as the unfolding of events would demonstrate.

(Foresight: Accuracy-Counteraction: Trap Evasion-Strategy: Shielding-Field Crafting: Risks Calculation)

Just a few days after reaching the agreement with Prussia, a French offensive nearly led to the occupation of Vienna, and the coalition's resistance was swept away on December 1, 1805, when Napoleon achieved his absolute masterpiece at Austerlitz. The Prussians had not intervened in any way, despite the French rejection of peace proposals, nor even in the face of the collapse of the coalition front, thus losing international credibility. Metternich would grow closer to Tsar Alexander, with whom he shared the necessary political line to impose against France.

After the defeat of the Third Coalition, Metternich gained support in Vienna, as the emperor recognized that his initiative had been aimed solely at strengthening the allied front and that other politicians (such as Cobenzl) had been a drag and needed to be replaced. Key to the new shift in Austrian policy was the appointment of Archduke Charles, the emperor's brother, as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Furthermore a now political ally of Metternich (tho a future enemy), Philippe Stadion, was nominated Foreign Minister.

(Social Engineering: Influence Building)

In the spring of 1806, thanks to his newfound fame and his disdain for the Prussians, he was granted the embassy in St. Petersburg, at the court of the Tsar with whom he seemed to be so much in accord.

However, he was never sent because Napoleon had requested the replacement of the Austrian ambassador in Paris and had specifically requested a Kaunitz (although this statement seemed confusing), and since Eleanor's brother was too inexperienced, his brother-in-law Klemens was chosen. Metternich reluctantly renounced the embassy to Russia, knowing that in Paris he would have greater political scope, not to mention the fact that the role was the most prestigious of all Austrian ambassadors.

While Metternich was on his way to Paris (a journey that was prolonged due to some political incidents between Austria and France which provocated the close of the borders) Francis II definitively renounced the title of Holy Roman Emperor, dissolved the empire, and from it arose the Confederation of the Rhine, a group of Germanic states under French influence.
Finally, in Paris, our man was received by Talleyrand. Their first conversation was largely ceremonial; Metternich, who was younger, spoke more, while Talleyrand remained calm and amiable. Both viewed the other favorably.
In the very days of his arrival, Metternich committed himself to gathering as much information as possible in the French capital from the Austrian bureaucrats who had replaced him during the trip, namely Baron von Vincent and the secretary von Floret, thanks to whom he was able to gain a somehow complete idea of the political situation in France.
(Field Crafting: Info Gathering-Thinking: Speed)
The first meeting with Napoleon took place a few days after the one with Talleyrand. Metternich described Napoleon as a rude man (he hadn't removed his hat when they met) and detected in him the first signs of post-Austerlitz overpretentiousness[6]. Napoleon would need further meetings to truly understand the young Metternich's abilities, but the latter understood his interlocutor more quickly, just as he also understood that he no longer had any respect for the Austrian honors and army, as he wrote to Vienna a few days later.
(Emotional Intelligence: Perception/Realization-Sensory: Observation)
Thanks to a dinner with Lord Yarmouth, the British ambassador in Paris, Metternich realized that not only would the British forces not accept any peace with the French, but that London had pushed for the return of Hanover to King George III in order to incite the Prussians. Metternich then predicted that Prussia, already annoyed by the creation of the Confederation of the Rhine, would likely organize a war against France. Napoleon had failed to understand the same and was taken by surprise by the mobilization of Prussian troops towards the border.
(Foresight: Depth/Accuracy-Reasoning: Abductive-Field Crafting: Info Gathering)
Both he and Talleyrand left Paris for almost a year in order to follow the campaigns in Germany and Poland, which culminated with the decisive victory of the French. While Metternich was worried due to France’s overpower on the continent, he couldn’t hide his happiness for the humiliation of the country that betrayed the alliance with Austria not even two years ago.
As the Fourth Coalition War tore apart Central and Eastern Europe, Metternich conquered Parisian high society in a way never before seen from an ambassador. Within five months, he had become the man of the moment[7]: not only because of his extraordinary seductive power (regardless of the presence of his wife and children in the city with him) which had captivated the Parisian ladies, but also because of his elegant manners, the luxury with which he lived his public life, and his intense participation in salons, cultural life, and entertainment.
(Social Engineering: Influence Building/Charisma/Seduction-Adaptability: Social/Enviromental)
Metternich apparently avenged Austerlitz by cuckolding a large number of generals of the Grande Armé. His most notable victim was undoubtedly Joachim Murat, whose wife, Caroline

Bonaparte (Napoleon's sister), became his lover, driven by her boredom with her husband. Metternich naturally selected his mistresses among those ladies who could pass on important information to him, and Caroline did so, providing him with extensive information on Empress Josephine, her brother's mistresses, and the political intrigues of Napoleon's court. After his affair with her, Metternich took General Junot's wife as his lover. In her case, he was so skilled at concealing the affair that not even the French secret police, who were constantly spying on him, learned of it before he himself revealed it. However, Caroline, jealous, compromised Metternich's relationship with Junot's wife.

(Deception: Concealment-Field Crafting: Info Gathering-Social Engineering: Seduction)

While Metternich was entertaining Parisian high society, two fundamental changes reshuffled the cards on the table: Talleyrand was replaced by Champagny as Foreign Minister, worsening relations with Metternich and Austria. More importantly, Napoleon and Tsar Alexander signed the Tilsit Agreement, which ended the Fourth World War and divided the European continent between France and Russia. While the news was perceived as a catastrophe in Vienna, Metternich did not give in to pessimism. In his view, although Austria was now effectively surrounded by the Grand Armé (the French had also acquired Poland, and their influence in Germany had further increased following the humiliation of Prussia), the European order created by Napoleon could not last long, since it was not only artificial, but governed exclusively by his personal military prowess. But above all, Metternich foresaw that it was only a matter of time before France and Russia would face each other again, and at that moment both would turn to Austria, which would be the decisive pawn on the chessboard.

(Foresight: Depth-Reasoning: Abductive-Thinking: Linear/Critical/Convergent)

Meanwhile, despite his diplomatic efforts with Champagny, the French occupied three fortifications on the Austrian border. His failure was once again due to the fact that Austria was then perceived as a toothless tiger and unable to mount effective resistance to Paris's demands. Aware that his political opponents might use the inevitable defeat against him, Metternich spent eight hours writing a solid self-defense immediately after his meeting with the French Foreign Ministry[8].

(Counteraction: Trap Evasion)

In the following months, however, the Prince's actions bore increasingly positive results. Napoleon intended to force Austria to break diplomatic relations with England, but the ambassador's actions succeeded in slowing down and ultimately derailing the emperor's demands, thanks also to the cooperation of the Austrian ambassador in London.

(Counteraction: Trap Evasion/Improvisation)

During the same period, Metternich and Talleyrand grew significantly closer, with the latter expressing his intention to defend Austria's role as a power by virtue of its importance in the European geopolitical balance. Although Metternich appeared enthusiastic about his words and promises, in reality he knew that the elder statesman could only be partially trusted. Nevertheless, he considered him the only true representative of a pro-Austrian party at Napoleon's court. It was Talleyrand himself who informed him, behind the emperor's back, that

France had two large-scale intentions: the first was the partition of Turkey, the second an expedition to India, which, however, seemed like a utopia. Metternich then hastened to warn his foreign minister of French intentions, and above all that Vienna must attempt to obtain the largest possible effect, since opposing the dismemberment of the Ottomans was impossible if Napoleon were the one deciding so. At the same time, however, he also informed the Russian ambassador in Paris, playing on Russian concerns over the dissolution of Constantinople. Metternich's goal was to strengthen Austro-Russian relations in order to secure an alliance, and although he succeeded in the first attempt, the second was impossible at the time, given that Tilstin was too recent and Russia was already engaged in fighting Sweden, not to mention that the humiliation of Austerlitz had left indelible marks.

(Field Crafting: Info Gathering-Thinking: Associative/Linear-Strategy: Building)

A few days later, Metternich was summoned by Napoleon, who presented him with a less precise outline than Talleyrand had already described. The prince pretended to know nothing about it and remained pleased with the proposals, enterntained at Napoleon's attempts to keep matters, on which Metternich himself was already well informed, vague. In any case, the English invasion of Portugal and Spain ruined Napoleon's plans and Turkey remained outside of future wars.

(Deception: Acting Skills/Sophistry)

Metternich was impressed by the war in Iberia, and it prompted him to suggest that Vienna light the fuse of German anti-French partisan sentiment.

(Thinking: Dissociative-Reasoning: Inductive)

He was, however, concerned that the moment Napoleon returned from the campaign, hostilities with France would reignite. The emperor was increasingly tense, and Archduke Charles' military reforms had attracted French attention, if not concern. Metternich's concerns were justified: as soon as he returned to Paris, Napoleon demonstrated his willingness to threaten the Austrians, so much so that during his thirty-ninth birthday celebrations, while greeting various ambassadors, upon reaching Metternich he asked, directly and bluntly: "How is Austria's rearmament going?"[9]. Such a lack of diplomacy left both Metternich and Talleyrand perplexed, but the Rhinelander tried in every way to smooth over tensions, given that he considered the Austrian army not yet ready for war and lacking the Russian military support, which was essential for him.

(Thinking: Associative/Critical-Counteraction: Improvisation-Foresight: Depth)

Subsequently, despite all their efforts, Austria and Emperor Francis were excluded from the negotiations at the Erfurt Congress, in which Napoleon and Alexander I wanted to have a virtual confirmation of Tilstin. Metternich himself was unable to attend, which could only underscore Austria's isolation. However, Talleyrand informed him that Napoleon's attempts to convince Alexander I to join the French in waging war against Austria had failed. The situation grew significantly in tension, and Metternich was called back to his country by Sideon.

Upon returning to Vienna, Metternich found the city and the nation preparing for war. His own observations and information were crucial in convincing Archduke Charles (and subsequently Emperor Francis) to declare open hostilities. Metternich summarized them in three points: the French nation was beginning to lose its sense of approval for Napoleon's constant wars, the

Russians would not follow Austria, and Napoleon could only muster 206,000 soldiers, most of whom were under-recruited, having been conscripted from Poland or Germany. Charles thought that, although the Austrian financial problems (maybe covered by England?) and the absence of the Tsar's support, a possibility of win was concrete if Napoleon would have been caught in surprise.

Returning to Paris after delivering his information, Metternich learned from an unknown source (perhaps Talleyrand?) the disposition of some French regiments. He immediately communicated that to Stadion, although he entrusted the letter to Saxon couriers to prevent the Austrians from being intercepted en route.

(Field Crafting: Info Gathering-Counteraction: Trap Evasion)

Despite what Metternich feared, he was not arrested violently, much less shot. On the contrary, he was able to live peacefully in Paris for a few weeks until he was actually arrested, albeit only formally, and used as an exchange for the French embassy in Vienna.

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[3]Alan Palmer, *Metternich: Il genio della reazione (Metternich: Councillor of Europe)*, Novara 1983 (London 1972), Editoriale Nuova (Weidenfeld and Nicolson), p.50

[4]*Ibi*, p.58

[5]*Ibi*, p.60

[6]*Ibi*, p.71

[7]Ernest d'Hauterive, *La Police Secrète du Premier Empire*, Paris Perrin, 1864, p.18

[8]Klemens von Metternich, *Missive to Stadion on 11 October 1807*

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CHAPTER III
FROM A LACKEY TO NAPOLEON'S CONQUEROR: THE COMPLEX VICTORY OVER THE REVOLUTION (1809-1814)

The war was lost, once again. Although Austria performed far better than in 1805 (Charles even managed to defeat Napoleon at Espern), the predictions of French fatigue were overestimated, and the Austrian second army led by Archduke John was too easily swept away. Metternich returned to Vienna while it was virtually under French occupation, finding the hated Champagny governing it. Thanks to his connections with Berthier, the Rhine prince obtained the abolition of a tribute imposed by Champagny on all Viennese, and he also had the courage to refuse two talks with Napoleon at such a critical moment, realizing that the emperor wanted to use him as an emissary of peace.

(Adversity Capacity: Stress Management/Mental Fortitude-Reasoning: Abductive)

After Austria's collapse at Wagram, Emperor Francis and Archduke Charles decided there was nothing left to do but sue for peace. Francis decided to immediately replace Stadion with Metternich as Foreign Minister, but Metternich astutely suggested he wait until the peace treaties were concluded: immediately removing Stadion, who had been the war's greatest supporter, would clearly make Austria's already tenuous situation completely subjugated and seeking surrender. His appointment was therefore postponed until the armistice was signed.

(Reasoning: Inductive-Thinking: Associative-Psychological Warfare: Reinforcements)

Metternich, however, participated in the peace negotiations and attempted in every way to defend what little Austria could still hold on. His diplomatic actions seemed far too fluid to the Emperor Franz and Stadion: Metternich argued that for the time being the Empire could only accommodate the continental system created by Bonaparte and attempt to replace Russia as France's primary foreign interlocutor. On the one hand, he had to withstand Napoleon's outbursts, and on the other, face the distrust of those at the Austrian court who believed it would be better to honor the monarchy in a struggle of self-destruction against Napoleon rather than humiliate themselves so much[1].

(Strategy: Building-Planning: Aim-Adversity Capacity: Stress Tolerance-Thinking: Critical)

The rift between Metternich and the Habsburg court, however, arose because the diplomat was attempting to negotiate with the French the strengthening of an independent Polish state ruled by a national dynasty. While Stadion and the Emperor considered this unacceptable, Metternich was actually doing so because it could create a potential future ally for the Empire, in an anti-Napoleonic spirit. After that Francis started to ignore the prince and he was left out of the final negotiations, being re-ammitted in the government once they were over, finally obtaining the role of Foreign Minister.

(Planning: Contigencies/Aim)

Over the next three years, Metternich concentrated his efforts on bringing Austria and France closer, seeing no possibility of defeating Napoleon through military force after five consecutive defeats.

The first strategy devised to achieve this was the marriage between Archduchess Marie Louise of Austria, daughter of His Majesty Francis, and Napoleon himself. Metternich was aware that the Corsican general was looking for a wife since Josephine was unable to bear him a child, and since relations between Paris and St. Petersburg were strained due to Russia's neutrality during the War of the Fifth Coalition, the possibility of a marriage between Napoleon and a sister of Tsar Alexander seemed less likely. Metternich used his Parisian connections and especially his wife Eleanor (who had remained in the French capital) to support Bonaparte's choice of the Austrian archduchess.

(Strategy: Building/Adaptability-Social Engineering: Influence Building)

However, it was during this period that Metternich's past extramarital affair with Laura Junot was exposed by anti-Austrian circles in Paris[2]. Junot, after nearly killing his wife in his rage, attempted to convince Eleanor to inform her husband of his intention to challenge him to a duel. However, Eleanor, accustomed to Klemens's infidelities, managed to calm him down and then treat Laura Junot's wounds, resolving what had seemed a dire situation. The situation was resolved also because public opinion was more critical of Junot's jealous reaction than of the extramarital affair itself, and the scandal did not affect Metternich's foreign policy, and in the end the marriage negotiations were approved and Metternich attended the wedding ceremony.

While in Paris for the wedding (although he remained in the French capital for much longer than the ceremony), he pursued a personal special mission. He had shown great courage in leaving Vienna for such a long period, given the opposition that many at the Habsburg court were building against him (they branded him a half-foreigner who had sold out the archduchess and the dignity of the nation) and for entrusting his duties to a man with limited capabilities like his father. He had an ironclad self-confidence, but above all, he was certain that personally moving to France would have a far greater impact than simply issuing dispatches from Vienna. The mission, in any case, was to limit the extremely harsh conditions Napoleon had imposed on Austria in recent negotiations and to reconnect the French emperor with the papacy, which had been outraged by his marriage and which threatened to jeopardize Austro-Papal relations[3].

(Planning: Aim-Adversity Capacity: Mental Fortitude/Perseverance)

The results of this mission were, however, poor: the treaties were revised, but the concessions to Austria were not many, and the pacification between Napoleon and the Vatican fell through completely.

During that stay, however, Metternich had the opportunity to study Napoleon further. No non-French politician could claim to have a closer relationship with the emperor than he did: Napoleon even went so far as to make political confessions, such as regretting having entrusted the Neapolitan throne to Murat[4] or the letdown for Bernadotte's betrayal. Although Metternich was satisfied with his adversary's understanding, he knew how to watch out for occasions when

the latter was actually intending to laugh at him behind his back or propose Austrian expansions into the Balkans at the expense of Russia, thus pitting the only two surviving old empires in Europe against each other. On his return to Vienna, Mettenrich brought a letter written by Napoleon to Emperor Francis in which he underlined his high regard for the Austrian Foreign Minister[5].

(Emotional Intelligence: Facilitation/Realization/Perception-Field Crafting: Risks Calculation-Deception: Sophistry/Acting Skills-Sensory: Observation)

Back in Vienna, however, Metternich found his political position severely weakened: the great Austrian families who had always supported him, including Stadion (who from now on became a political rival), had abandoned him, and his opponents had grown increasingly stronger. The only three cards he decided to play for political continuity were his successful rapprochement with and understanding of Napoleon, his manipulation of Emperor Francis, and the progressive weakening of his opponents[6].

The first had already been achieved. As for the second, he managed to strengthen his strange relationship with the emperor thanks to his charming manners and the fact that his plans for rapprochement with Napoleon were the only ones that truly seemed to promise a future for the Habsburg dynasty. Francis, who, while not stupid, was not a great thinker either, placed his full trust in him, a trust that was gradually confirmed by Metternich's results.

(Manipulation: Direct/Logical)

The third card was the one that demonstrated how much his stay in Paris had made Metternich's political methods more Machiavellian. He created a network of spies and allies at the Russian court, knowing that a faction within the Austrian court favored an anti-French alliance with the Tsar (an idea he himself had pursued from 1805 to 1808, but which now seemed unfeasible). The network caught its fishes: he managed to capture compromising letters from both Archduke Joseph (the emperor's brother) and Empress Maria Ludovika themself. Although, since they were members of the same Habsburg family, he could not present the evidence to the emperor and denounce them (not yet at least), Metternich managed to exert sufficient pressure on the pro-Russian faction to quash the initiatives.

(Field Crafting: Info Gathering/Setting Traps/Tactical Response-Planning: Coverage/Process-Strategy: Building/Foresight/Logistics-Foresight: Accuracy)

Meanwhile, tensions between Russia and France were growing, and preparations for Napoleon's great campaign had begun. Having quelled the pro-Russian faction, Metternich initially considered giving Napoleon full support, but after witnessing the humiliation Prussia had suffered in this regard, he decided to further negotiate Austrian support for the campaign. Napoleon requested sixty thousand men, and Metternich managed to convince him to accept half of them, who, however, would not take orders from French generals. Furthermore, Austria would have to obtain territorial compensation at the end of the war. Metternich, and here he completely miscalculated, believed that Russia would be unable to resist a French invasion.

(Strategy: Adaptability-Deception: Sophistry-Planning: Process-Field Crafting: Risks Calculation)

In the spring of 1812, the meeting between Emperor Franz and Napoleon in Dresden, attended by Metternich, concluded the preparations for the campaign, and Napoleon's army set sail for the cold Russian territories.

In the following months, Metternich definitively crushed the opposition of Empress Maria Ludovika and Archduke Joseph within the Austrian court. His network captured further letters in which the Empress complained about certain attitudes of Emperor Francis, and Joseph harshly criticized the new imperialist policy that had been established for the government of Hungary. Metternich convinced Francis that a personal relationship as well as a political alliance was developing between his brother and his wife, but he also persuaded him to handle the matter with "paternal" moderation, so as not to expose his actions. Thanks to this reckless move, the emperor's trust in him will always remain solid.

(Psychological Warfare: Reinforcements/Abusing Insecurities-Field Crafting: Setting Traps/Info Gathering-Counteraction: Trap Evasion-Manipulation: Direct/Emotional)

News from the Russian campaign was arriving considerably late, and until word reached him of the withdrawal of the first French columns, Metternich remained convinced that Alexander I would be forced to surrender. The fact that things turned out the other way was certainly positive for him, though not particularly exciting: Metternich was still hesitant to believe that an alliance with Russia and Prussia would be enough to force Napoleon to capitulate. Nonetheless, in the preceding months, as the French emperor advanced into Poland and Belarus, the Austrian foreign minister had always favored as much Austrian neutrality toward Russia as possible, even though the Austrians had sent an expeditionary force into Napoleon's campaign in order to avoid antagonizing the tsar. Thanks to its position sufficiently distant from Russia and formally close to France, Metternich now hoped to be able to give Austria the role of negotiator between the two empires.

(Planning: Contingencies)

Thanks to his position, sufficiently distant from Russia and formally close to France, Metternich now hoped to give Austria the role of negotiator between the two empires. Meanwhile, he recalled the troops sent to Russia and vetoed a clash with the Russians. Napoleon though only got mad by the independent Austrian decision.

The alignment of the anti-French front was proceeding at a disarmingly slow pace: not only there was Metternich, who was continuing to act with a peacemaking attitude (attracting much criticism, and even a foiled assassination attempt), but Prussia was meanwhile in the midst of a political crisis, and England was doubtful of Austria's intentions. Meanwhile, Russian forces were slowly advancing towards the western border, menacingly.

It also seems that Metternich during this period fueled an anti-French revolt in Tyrol together with Archduke John (another brother of Francis), but that he then abandoned the project, also having the conspirators arrested (significantly weakening the archduke's position at court) in order to gain even greater political power within the court. This affair would have undermined the old trust that the English had always placed in Metternich[7].

(Strategy: Building-Field Crafting: Setting Traps-Manipulation: Direct/Indirect/Mass/Logical-Planning: Coverage/Versatility-Social Engineering: Influence Building)

Seeing that Prussia had allied itself with Russia, Metternich realized that perhaps a military resolution to the French eternal problem could be considered, even though he had little hopes for the Austrian army. Metternich was particularly frightened by the idea that Prussia was inflaming liberal German nationalism to free itself from the French. The idea of a popular revolution in Germany frightened him even more than a Napoleonic invasion. In a meeting with the Tsar, who distrusted him like almost everyone in Europe, Metternich attempted once again to propose a peace, albeit a much harsher one, with France. Alexander accepted, but obtained from Metternich that Napoleon's refusal would mean war. Meanwhile, the emperor was achieving several victories in Germany, such as that of Lützen, which caused discouragement among part of the anti-Napoleonic front. Finally, Metternich was summoned to Dresden by Napoleon to negotiate peace.

The Dresden meeting was dramatic. Metternich arrived with the firm intention of bringing about a peace, even one less harsh than that proposed by Tsar Alexander I. His attempts to avoid war, indirectly favoring Napoleon, were driven more by fear of the Russo-Prussians (and the nationalistic, and perhaps military, consequences of their invasion of the West) than by sympathy for the Corsican general. In any case, the Austrian foreign minister found Bonaparte extremely nervous; he felt cornered and betrayed. The meeting lasted eight hours, which was a culmination of tension between the two, or rather, on Napoleon's part. He threw his glove to the ground thirteen times in anger; at the end of the discussion, he threw his own hat at Metternich. He cried out about Austrian betrayal of the alliance and his family, to which Metternich responded that the conditions demanded were the only way to save his throne in France. He pointed out that the French forces were now composed mostly of little more than armed children, that the Spanish front had already fallen, and that France was locked in a vise from which it could not escape. While Napoleon was furious, Metternich was calm and impassive. In the end, all attempts at rapprochement failed (although Napoleon attempted to renew negotiations in the following days, but failed). Although still under strong criticism from all his new allies, Metternich gave the order for Austria to declare war on the French Empire.

(Emotional Intelligence: Management-Adversity Capacity: Stress Management/Impulse Management-Psychological Warfare: Abusing Insecurities)

Three courts, three prime ministers, three armies. The Russian-Austrian-Prussian alliance was marked by severe disunity, numerous internal factions, and mutual distrust, particularly toward Austria. Alexander I and the Prussians, however, believed they had put Metternich in check: despite all his attempts, he had been forced to declare war, demonstrating the failure of his policy. He, however, saw things very differently, and his diplomatic successes while the enormous Allied army was being organized proved him right. Thanks to a careful political maneuver, Metternich managed to have the three powers negotiate separately, preventing the Russians and Prussians from playing a common game against him, or at least buffering the

situation. Furthermore, the fact that the alliance was not bound by the three parties allowed Austria to reopen negotiations with Paris whenever it deemed appropriate. He ensured that Austria, at the end of the war, recovered all the territories that had been taken from it, but at the same time he persuaded Russia to accept that the post-victory European reconstruction would be dictated by a balance of powers among the previous ones. There could be no French humiliation and an unconditional Russian ascendancy.

(Thinking: Associative/Analytic/Convergent-Manipulation: Indirect-Counteraction: Trap Evasion-Planning: Process-Strategy: Adaptability/Castling-Adaptability: Strategic)

It was also crucial for Metternich to renew relations with the British, whose economy was essential for a profound Austrian rearmament. London no longer trusted him after his defense of Napoleon, but Metternich knew how to frame the British government. After years of absence (enforced by France) of British diplomats in Vienna, Metternich requested one, and Lord Ardeen, an aristocrat who had recently become ambassador, was sent. Metternich was extremely skilled at manipulating him: within two months of meeting him, Ardeen was convinced that the foreign minister was essentially a stupid man, completely harmless and incapable of complex political maneuvers[8]. He reassured London that the financing of Austria was in no way at risk, and that it was indeed a good idea to approve it immediately. Metternich, for his part, after receiving the million-pound loan, commented that Ardeen was an adorable fool[9].

(Manipulation: Direct/Logical-Deception: Acting Skills/Misrediction-Planning: Coverage)

A few weeks later, the Battle of Leipzig took place. Metternich followed it from afar. More through sheer force of attrition than tactical skill, the Allied armies, commanded by Schwarzenberg (a particular the Austrian government later exploited to good effect), forced Napoleon to retreat from Germany. Metternich was ecstatic, not only because victory had finally subdued Napoleon, but because it had been an Austrian who had formally achieved it, placing the Habsburg Empire in an even more dominant position within the alliance. He organized the triumphal entry of Alexander I, and especially Francis, into Dresden, and then into other German cities, where they were joyfully acclaimed by the crowds. It was the apotheosis for the Allies; the French, meanwhile, had retreated behind the Rhine, decimated by typhus and more demoralized than ever.

(Psychological Warfare: Reinforcements)

The fear of German nationalism, however, was far from over. First, Metternich refused to recreate the Holy Roman Empire: restoring it would have officially confirmed that the Habsburgs' role as emperors of Austria had been a humiliation, and in the end Germany could continue to be formally controlled even without Charlemagne's crown. Slowing down the Russian and Prussian rise was still a matter of debate; now, negotiations with Napoleon could be decided from a clearly overwhelming position indeed.

(Thinking: Associative)

Metternich, however, had no intention of having to negotiate with France alongside Alexander or Prussia; he believed his allies were too little inclined to rationality and more inclined to vengeance. After having them agree that he would take charge of the negotiations directly, he

also had to obtain Aberdeen consent, which would certainly have been forbidden by London's government. The only available English ambassador was indeed Aberdeen, who had already been instigated by Metternich, but even he did not formally hold the power to accept Austrian demands. Metternich knew this, but to force his hand, knowing his sensitive nature, he took him to visit the Leipzig battlefield, or the dusts that remained of it, showing him firsthand the expanses of corpses and the countless dying wounded. Aberdeen was so shaken that he unequivocally agreed to deliver the peace treaty to Metternich[10].

(Psychological Warfare: Abusing Insecurities/Inducement-Manipulation: Emotional/Direct-Emotional Intelligence: Facilitation/Perception)

Metternich's attempts to secure peace were once again rejected by Napoleon, or rather, put on hold. Metternich at that point realized that reasoning with him was futile; diplomacy with Bonaparte on the throne was impossible. He then accepted Radetzsky's plan to march directly on Paris, a change so sudden that it caught even the tsar off guard. Klemens rightly believed that the moment the Allied armies crossed the Rhine, France would lose all hope of gaining any diplomatic or political favor; Napoleon's idea of procrastinating to secure some minor military success was entirely futile. Once again, however, Metternich managed to favor the Austrian command in organizing and conducting the military campaign[11]. Russia and Prussia, who ironically had been the main supporters of an anti-French crusade, found themselves overshadowed by an Austria that until a few months earlier had still been Napoleon's ally.

(Adaptability: Strategic-Planning: Versatility/Process-Strategy: Adaptability-Tactics: Timing-Reasoning: Abductive-Foresight: Accuracy)

Furthermore, in agreement with Alexander I, Metternich expressed disapproval of Aberdeen's performance as ambassador, who had come under strong criticism from London politicians. Metternich had by now used the poor lord for his own purposes, and now that he needed to deal directly with the English high authorities, he abandoned him to his fate.

(Deception: Concealment/Misrediction/Sophystry-Planning: Coverage)

Meanwhile, tensions between Metternich and the Tsar continually flared, due to disagreements over the Austrian leadership of the advance on Paris, the future of the French monarchy, and a hypothetical triumph of Alexander in the French capital at the head of the Allied army. The Tsar was so furious that he abandoned the Allied command center for several days, just as Castlereagh, the British Foreign Secretary, arrived to replace the incompetent Aberdeen. Metternich and he immediately hit it off, and Metternich befriended him to such an extent that Anglo-Austrian relations could be said to have largely recovered. Indeed, thanks to the interception of a letter from Stein in which he warned England to be wary of Metternich, Prussia's position within the Allied framework was weakened to Austria's detriment. After reaching a firm consensus, Castlereagh and Metternich tried again to persuade the Tsar, obtaining a compromise that satisfied everyone: there would be a triumph, but Alexander had to forget about creating a Bernadotte monarchy in France, as for the future of Europe, it would be decided at a peace conference in Vienna, at Metternich's home.

(Strategy: Building/Adaptability-Planning: Versatility-Tactics: Timing-Field Crafting: Info Gathering-Social Engineering: Influence Building)

Tensions, however, never truly subsided; on the contrary, they continually flared up over everything. Metternich was exhausted; the daily clashes with the Prussians and Alexander were terribly draining him; every attempt to restore order and mediate was a failure in the medium term[12]. Added to this was Napoleon, who had won a couple of victories against the Allies, slowing their advance, and who therefore attempted to propose peace treaties that would restore France "to its natural borders." Metternich, however, didn't take the bait; it was clear that Napoleon was running out of time; shortly thereafter, Blucher defeated him at Laun, and the march resumed. Although it wasn't the outcome Metternich had hoped for, the French humiliation partially succeeded, and Alexander entered Paris triumphantly as a conqueror. He finally accepted the Bourbon dynasty's resumption of power in France, even though he had worked hard to ensure that the throne was entrusted to the regency of Marie Louise. Despite great difficulty, maintaining an unnatural front both united and disunited, Metternich had finally succeeded in subduing the revolution and Napoleon. Now he had to recreate a balanced and new Europe.

(Counteraction: Trap Evasion-Thinking: Critical/Convergent-Adversity Capacity: Stress Management/Impulse Management/Mental Fortitude/Perseverance)

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CHAPTER IV
THE RESHAPER OF THE WORLD: THE BEGINNING OF THE METTERNICH ERA (1815-1822)

Napoleon had finally abdicated, and France had collapsed. It was Alexander I who negotiated with the decaying Nightmare of Europe, granting him full sovereignty over Elba's island and to his wife the Duchy of Parma, inheritable to their son. The terms were extremely humiliating for Napoleon, but in the end, after a failed suicide attempt by poison, he accepted them.

Metternich was absolutely opposed to these provisions. First of all, Marie Louise and Napoleon would remain too close geographically, and it was his and Emperor Francis's intention to sever the relationship between the two as much as possible, now that the Bonapartist threat had passed. Secondly, Metternich was certain that Elba's proximity to the mainland was too great: Napoleon would surely try to gain power again[1]. However, in order not to spoil the already fragile relations with Russia, he accepted the conditions.

(Foresight: Accuracy-Reasoning: Abductive)

Metternich now had to face a long series of problems to resolve: the Italian situation, where it was necessary to reassert Habsburg supremacy, and the same had to happen for Germany, where Prussia was threatening, and also to halt the Tsar's supremacist ambitions over Europe itself. Added to this were the uncertain future of Saxony, Poland, and negotiations with the new French kingdom of the Bourbons, governed by Talleyrand.

The Italian cause was the first on which Metternich focused. During the war, the Austrians had managed to reach Veneto, reclaiming Dalmatia, Friuli, and Trentino in the process, but the Lombard territories, which had been most deeply affected by revolutionary ideals, were under provisional government. Metternich obtained from the allies the Austrian right to incorporate them. Adding to this the fact that the Duchy of Parma would also be granted to Maria Luisa and that Tuscany had historically been ruled by the Habsburgs, the dynasty's supremacy in the peninsula was sufficient. For Metternich, the idea of fomenting Italian nationalism was absurd; in his view, Italy was merely a geographical expression, its peoples were not comparable to one another.

(Fluid Intelligence: Problem Solving)

Negotiations in Paris with Prussia and Russia were struggling to progress, as Metternich had predicted. Paris was too crowded with Polish dissidents trying to persuade the Tsar to negotiate the partition of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and if Russia did not make concessions in Poland, Prussia would recall them to Germany, where Metternich wanted to maintain Austrian predominance. For this reason, he shifted the negotiations to the French question, which was much easier to address on the spot. Talleyrand proved once again to be reasonable: he offered no particular resistance to the allies' demands, and the French borders returned to those of 1792.

Metternich insisted that France should not have been humiliated: it was not forced to reduce its army's conscripts, it would not have to dismantle its fleet, pay huge war expenses, or pay other humiliating practices that the French themselves had imposed on the conquered countries in previous years. It was necessary to avoid the formation of a feeling of revenge and French hatred towards Europe, and a sufficiently strong France balanced the continental chessboard.

(Reasoning: Abstract/Inductive-Thinking: Analytic/Associative/Convergent)

Subsequent negotiations in London succeeded in allaying the mistrust that still lingered in England toward Metternich, thanks in part to Castlereagh's constant kind words. While the British court increasingly appreciated Metternich, it increasingly distanced itself from Alexander I, who, on the other hand, had presented himself in a far less accommodating manner at the negotiating table. This could only benefit Metternich's policy, and he quickly realized that the threat of Russian hegemony in Europe was difficult to achieve[2].

(Social Engineering: Charisma/Communication-Adaptability: Social)

The Foreign Minister's organization of the Congress of Vienna was lavish and spectacular. The city filled with entertainment, concerts, balls, parties, and parades like never before, making the diplomatic congress almost a secondary event. Metternich made himself particularly unpopular with the Allied sovereigns and ministers in those first weeks of meetings: the constant parties he organized cut into the time for real negotiations, and he himself displayed such a display of vanity and preening before the ladies that he was perceived as a megalomaniac even by his own allies. In reality, beyond a display of his worldliness, the festivities served Metternich as a means of gaining time and preventing the formation of a stable Prussian-Russian axis.

(Strategy: Logistics/Shielding-Social Engineering: Social Skills/Charisma/Seduction-Deception: Sophystry/Misrediction)

During the preparations, the Big Four (Austria, Russia, Prussia, and the United Kingdom) had decided to proceed with negotiations without consulting France or Spain. This angered Talleyrand and he promptly demanded a retraction. The reprimand received from the Allied delegation worried everyone except Metternich: in fact, it was exactly what he had wanted. Thanks to Talleyrand's protests, another group of nations, Portugal and Sweden first and foremost, requested a greater presence at the Congress. The ensuing discussions prevented Prussia and Russia from discussing the partition of Saxony and Poland, and gave Metternich time to better understand Russia's plans for the East. Alexander was, in fact, an enigmatic figure, far more cryptic than Napoleon: understanding his intentions was difficult even for Metternich.

(Foresight: Accuracy-Strategy: Foresight-Field Crafting: Setting Traps)

It was also for this reason that a private audience with Alexander took place. Metternich was accustomed to capricious emperors, but unlike his meetings with Napoleon, in this case he also harbored a personal resentment toward him, stemming from a game of lovers between his own faction and the tsar. When Alexander provoked him, Metternich did not back down, asserting that Austria had as much right as Russia to decide Poland's fate. Alexander reacted furiously, shouting at him, and Metternich was forced to leave. However, this further tarnished Alexander's image among his allies, but at the same time it also weakened Metternich's position at the

Viennese court: his political enemies considered him too rebellious and bold, and began to wonder who would pay all the expenses associated with the Congress.

The Prussian-Russian alliance gradually weakened, thanks to a sudden shift on the part of Alexander, now gripped by mystical obsessions that prioritized the defense of the Orthodox Church, and thus allowed for greater relaxation regarding Poland. Furthermore, Metternich and Talleyrand, along with Castlereagh, agreed that Murat should be removed from the Neapolitan throne, even though he had betrayed Napoleon and sworn loyalty to the Congress. How to do so, however, was a particularly thorny issue. Metternich was not at all pleased with a Murat strong in southern Italy, as he represented a potential boost to Italian nationalism. It would have been better to restore the Bourbons to the throne.

(Thinking: Associative/Convergent-Reasoning: Deductive)

The general impression, however, was that the Congress was moving too slowly; in three months, very few decisions had actually been made, and discontent was growing. It was precisely in this context that rumors spread that Napoleon had left Elba to regain power in France.

Metternich immediately alerted all ministries and called an emergency meeting of the major powers. For once, the Congress unanimously agreed: getting rid of Bonaparte once and for all was the top priority. Within days, the news that the Corsican general had returned triumphant to Paris was spread throughout the whole continent. While military commanders organized their armies, the members of the Congress accelerated the decision-making process: the borders of the Kingdom of the Netherlands were defined, the Swiss Confederation was confirmed, and a first draft of the partition of Poland between the Prussians, Austrians, and Russians was drawn up.

(Thinking: Speed)

Meanwhile, as Metternich had suspected, Murat was working to inflame Italian nationalism and had issued calls throughout the peninsula for the people to rebel against foreign powers. Metternich wasted no time in declaring war on the Kingdom of Naples, a conflict that lasted little more than a month and ended with the fall of Murat, who fled to France, where Napoleon, however, refused to see him.

(Foresight: Accuracy)

In Germany, too, the situation was critical. In an attempt to replace the Holy Roman Empire (which was not possible to replicate due to Prussia’s opposition), Austria was organizing a new, decentralized confederation led by Vienna. But this, combined with Bonaparte's return to power, had inflamed the spirits of the German liberals and the deposed princes, the former desiring a true German central government, the latter seeking to regain their privileges[3]. Metternich, however, ignored this and continued with his operation, and in agreement with Berlin, the German Confederation was created, an institution deliberately decentralized and weak, but sufficient to maintain Austrian prestige.

(Fluid Intelligence: Problem Solving-Thinking: Divergent-Reasoning: Abstract)

Fundamentally, thanks also to the fall of Murat, which had significantly accelerated Austria's return to Italy, the Congress of Vienna could be considered concluded. Austria emerged from it

profoundly strengthened, more than any other country except perhaps Great Britain, but it was the one that had played its cards best, achieving all its objectives from a not really stable starting point. Italy was almost half in Habsburg hands, Germany was still formally under their influence, Poland had not fallen solely into Prussian and Russian hands, the Tsar had been limited, and the prestige of having hosted the negotiations was unique. Metternich now wanted to concentrate his efforts against Napoleon, like everyone else in Europe, but there was no need. The Duke of Wellington and Blucher had in fact crushed the Napoleonic dream once and for all at Waterloo; the order had won ahead of schedule.

In the aftermath of Napoleon's definitive fall, the major European powers sat at the tables in Paris for a long time, although the issues were similar to those addressed in the previous year's peace treaty. Here too, there were two factions: the first interested in harsher punishments against France, the second more moderate, and Metternich was still on that side, partly because Talleyrand had stubbornly defended any vengeful action against the nation.

The Prussian-Russian demonstrations against the French, however, were also slowed by the tsar's new obsession: a strong mystical charge that had invaded him in recent months and which now led him to strongly promote an alliance between the major European powers based on the defense of fundamental Christian values. Metternich and Francis were not enthusiastic about the idea, partly because the Russian emperor's constant mood swings gave little reason for great hope, but the foreign minister understood that binding himself to an official treaty with Russia would prevent the latter from further reckless actions on the continent. In any case, Metternich modified Alexander's draft of the alliance, and while he retained the religious focus, he added an anti-revolutionary one, aligning the Tsar's vaunted ideals with those of defending the new European status quo created in Vienna. Alexander faced no criticism, wherever he understood or didn’t the effects of them, and along with Prussia, the two empires officially entered into an agreement.

(Deception: Sophistry/Misrediction-Adaptability: Strategic-Counteraction: Improvisation)

An agreement with France was eventually reached, and aside from minor territorial changes and the payment of war reparations, the country did not suffer excessively harsh conditions, confirming yet another diplomatic success for Metternich. He, in agreement with Castlereagh, also supported the initiative for the new system of European Congresses, which would have made it mandatory for representatives of Austria, Russia, Prussia, and the United Kingdom to meet every two years to discuss political issues in Europe.

After completing his foreign assignments in Paris, Metternich headed to Italy, intent on organizing preparations for Francis's entry into Lombardy-Venetia and, above all, establishing the new Austrian government for the region. While the emperor and his statesman were welcomed enthusiastically in Venice, their entry was met with indifference by the population in Milan. The Lombard city had long been the capital of Napoleon's Kingdom of Italy and had been more welcoming than any other to revolutionary ideals; furthermore, Francis was proving completely insensitive to the idea of repaying his Italian subjects with concessions. Metternich, in one of his sporadic liberal outbursts, attempted to convince him to grant autonomy to the

Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia and even to support the Lombard identity to avoid the outbreak of anti-Austrian resentment in the territory, but both the personal feelings of Francis (who felt betrayed by the very fact that Northern Italy had been so pro-Napoleonic over the years) and a powerful clique at court that also harbored mistrust of greater Italian freedom thwarted his attempts.

(Foresight: Depth-Reasoning: Deductive-Thinking: Associative/Divergent-Strategy: Shielding)

While they were in Italy, Francis's wife Maria Ludovica died, a fact that not only eliminated an important opponent of Metternich at court, but also allowed the minister to organize another imperial marriage, between his sovereign and the daughter of Maximilian of Württemberg, a marriage that allowed Austria to improve its relations with the small southern German principalities, weakening Bavaria, which in recent months had been claiming territories taken from it during the Congress of Vienna.

(Strategy: Building/Castling)

Metternich's efforts in the peninsula, however, were poorly rewarded: the Piedmontese, with whom the Austrians bordered, refused to cooperate in the creation of a Habsburg-led Italian confederation, Emperor Francis continued to oppose Metternich's proposed reforms of decentralization and autonomy for the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia, and he was also receiving information about the formation of ever-increasing secret Italian nationalist circles throughout the region. Pessimistic about the possibility of achieving significant results with his current policy, Metternich established a secret police force based in Milan specifically dedicated to monitoring and gathering data on Italian patriotic movements[4].

(Field Crafting: Info Gathering)

Upon returning to Vienna, Metternich was struck by the death of Countess Julie Zichy-Festetics, a woman he had deeply loved, but whose mistress he had never managed to become due to her fidelity to her husband. The countess's death plunged Metternich into deep mourning, accompanied by physical pain from the various journeys he was undertaking at the time, including a second to Italy, during which he faced criticism from the population against the corrupt government that had just been installed, and to Portugal, to accompany Francis's daughter to her marriage to the crown prince. Despite the difficult period, Metternich continued to work hard to draft a plan of imperial reforms that could revitalize the administration of the most problematic provinces, Italy first and foremost, but also Galicia and Illyria.

(Adversity Capacity: Mental Fortitude)

Metternich's main fear was that Italian nationalists would one day turn to the House of Savoy, which ruled Piedmont, to advance the dream of Italian unity, something that could only be avoided by ensuring a just government for the Lombardo-Venetians that could represent them, and not make them feel oppressed.

(Foresight: Depth-Emotional Intelligence: Perception/Realization-Psychological Warfare: Reinforcements)

The three documents prepared by Metternich were presented to Francis in the autumn of 1817. Thanks to the death of the empress, the minister's prestige at court had further increased, but the reforms he was proposing went far beyond the powers normally held by a foreign minister. Metternich proposed the creation of four chancelleries in the outer provinces of the empire to ensure greater representation for non-German peoples. He also called for the creation of a ministry of justice separate from the chancellor's powers. Finally, he proposed the establishment of an imperial assembly that could bring together representatives from all the provinces. The absolutist nature of imperial power was not questioned, but its decentralization was suggested. Francis ratified only a part of Metternich's proposed reforms: the assembly and the ministry of justice were not approved, while a chancellery was granted in Italy. It was the first and last time Metternich attempted to reform the imperial administration.

(Fluid Intelligence: Problem Solving-Reasoning: Abstract-Thinking: Convergent/Divergent)

Also in October 1817, disturbing news arrived from Dresden: in the Saxon city, a major intellectual festival had seen students publicly burn copies of the Vienna Congress treaties and chant for liberation from reactionary tyranny. Metternich was quite concerned, but not surprised: for two years, a dense network of spies he had organized in Germany had been keeping him informed of the movements of German liberals at all the universities of the German Confederation. He reassured the French minister Richelieu (Talleyrand's successor) about the danger of a German revolution and gave permission for the Austrian propaganda machine (active since 1813, headed by his faithful political ally, Gentz, an expert in journalism and communications) to attack the student demonstrations in Saxony[5].

(Field Crafting: Info Gathering-Psychological Warfare: Demoralization)

Restricting German neo-Jacobism was as important as clipping the wings of Italian nationalists. For this very reason, Metternich ordered the Austrian ambassador in Berlin to pressure Frederick William III of Prussia to resume the fight against liberalism with greater vigor. Frederick was the leading Protestant king in Germany, and Metternich was convinced that most of the students involved in the uprisings were Protestants. He then warmly welcomed Castlereagh's proposal to reunite the members of the Quadruple Alliance, as agreed upon at the Congress of Vienna. During the meeting, his goal was to try to convince Tsar Alexander to exert less influence on Giovanni Capodistria, his new minister, who was sympathetic to the spread of neo-Jacobin ideas both in Russia and throughout Europe.

(Thinking: Critical/Analytic-Reasoning: Inductive/Abductive)

Six months passed between the English proposal for an international meeting and the actual Aix Congress. The delay was caused primarily by Metternich's successful attempts to prevent the Tsar from inviting the Spanish and representatives of the minor German courts to the meeting. During those six months, Metternich's father died, and he developed severe rheumatism and back problems.

(Adversity Capacity: Mental Fortitude)

During those six months, Metternich also visited the Diet of the German Confederation in Frankfurt, where it was working too slowly and inefficiently. His contribution was decisive, and within a short time, as if smoothing over a jammed mechanism, the Confederation approved his proposal to create a federal army. The Diet had completely changed its face during his brief stay in Frankfurt[6].

(Social Engineering: Persuasion)

The Congress of Aix was another diplomatic success for Metternich, who achieved all his intended objectives. France was cleared of the occupying Allied troops, the war indemnity it was forced to pay was confirmed, and most importantly, it was possible to reconcile Tsar Alexander with conservative positions, weakening the position of Capodistria at the Russian court. Since Metternich had come to the negotiations with clear ideas and thoroughly studied proposals, the congress lasted only a month, and the only flaw he encountered was that Castlereagh, with whom he had by then a very solid alliance/friendship, informed him that from that point on their relations would be slowed by the London cabinet due to a British government reform.

(Planning: Invincibility/Formulation-Social Engineering: Influence Building)

Upon his return to Austria, Metternich had to deal with the aftermath of the murder of von Kotzebue, a German playwright (a Russian spy) who had been killed by a young liberal fanatic in Mannheim. This sparked protests and outcry throughout Germany, and Gentz urged Metternich to apply even more pressure against German university students in order to suppress dissent. However, the minister did not see placing the universities under direct imperial control as an effective solution, although he agreed that a tougher fight against the neo-Jacobin uprisings was necessary. He concluded that the students were a symptom, not a cause, of the discontent and decided that placing the press under greater censorship would have better results. However, he also believed that Prussian involvement and approval for a united policy against the liberal uprisings was necessary, and for this reason he visited King Frederick William III. Thanks to the prestige recently acquired at Aix, Metternich allowed himself to raise his voice with the sovereign, who cowered before him, aware of Austria's superior position and, above all, of the fact that Metternich had been the first to warn him, right there in Aix, of the need to unite a common anti-liberal efforts, but that he had not heeded.

A series of meetings were organized in Carlsbad (in Bohemia, therefore in the Austrian Empire), in which the Prussian ministers firmly approved Metternich's proposals for joint Austrian-Prussian action to limit liberal teaching in universities and censor the press. Thanks to Prussian submission, Metternich faced no obstacle in ensuring that the decisions taken at Carlsbad were approved by the Diet of Frankfurt and therefore valid in all the principalities of Germany. It was one of the peaks of Austrian influence in Central Europe and one of Metternich's greatest triumphs, and he was hailed by the European courts as a visionary in the fight against revolutionaries and a shield for the whole continent. He had become not only a political leader, but also a moral guide in Europe[7]. Metternich had been able to defend Austria's new imperial dignity and maintain control over Germany without having to revive the Holy Roman Empire and thus weaken the prestige of the Habsburgs.

(Foresight: Depth/Accuracy-Planning: Invincibility/Process/Aim-Thinking: Convergent/Critical/Analytic-Field Crafting: Risks Calculations-Social Engineering: Influence Building/Charisma-Emotional Intelligence: Facilitation-Adaptability: Social/Enviromental)

To prevent the Tsar from meddling in the German affairs he had just decided, as King William of Württemberg hoped, Metternich exploited the feuds and jealousies that were dividing the Russian court[8]. Austrian diplomatic maneuvers succeeded, and Alexander I blocked Koper's attempts to provoke a political crisis in Southern Germany.

(Counteraction: Trap Evasion-Strategy: Castling)

A short and subsequent conference in Vienna between German princes saw the successes of the Treaties of Carsbald confirmed, despite opposition from Bavaria and Wuttemberg. "A word from Austria in Germany is as important as an inviolable law" wrote Metternich after the end of the conference[9].

During this period, Metternich devoted himself, in a free hour in the evening, to the study of scientific instruments, to reading novels and travel books and to the study of contemporary history[10].

(Crystallized Intelligence: Knowledge)

On May 15, 1820, during the conclusion of the German Conference in Vienna, Metternich's fifteen-year-old daughter, Clementine, died of fever. It was his second child who died prematurely, and Metternich, who was extremely fond of his daughter, attempted to overcome the grief by working even harder. Less than three months later, however, another daughter, his favorite, Marie, was struck by the same illness as her sister and died within weeks. Metternich was devastated by the second loss in such a short space of time.

“From now on, duty will completely replace my joy in life”.

He remained alone in Vienna, as his wife and other children moved to Paris, convinced that the Viennese climate was causing their children's ailments.

(Adversity Capacity: Mental Fortitude)

A few days after these personal tragedies, Europe exploded. In Spain, a constitutionalist insurrection ravaged the country, forcing King Ferdinand to compromise. When the Tsar learned of this, he was furious, having championed divine right in Spain, and demanded that the Quadruple Alliance form an immediate intervention army. However, the United Kingdom had no intention of further destabilizing the Iberian theater, and Metternich attempted to broker a compromise between the two sides. With great difficulty, he succeeded, and although an invasion of Spain was avoided (advised against by Wellington himself), the Alliance front remained politically committed to opposing the new liberal developments in Spain. Metternich, however, could not have known that this fuse had been only the first of a great explosion.

(Strategy: Adaptability-Adversity Capacity: Stress Tolerance)

When news of Madrid reached southern Italy, some army contingents launched a liberal revolution against the Bourbon king, forcing him to grant a constitution similar to the Spanish one. Metternich did not expect the political situation in the South to be so unstable, and once

again he was forced to navigate the English demands (Castlereagh was pushing for Austria alone to quell the revolt) and the Russian-Prussian demands (which called for a joint effort by the Alliance). To try to reach a solution, Metternich agreed to participate in the Conference of Troppau, proposed by the Tsar. His fear of being isolated, however, became acute when Castlereagh refused to attend personally and declared that England would not intervene against the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (the new name for the Kingdom of Naples). The only point Metternich could make was that there was no rush to resolve the situation in Naples, since his spies had informed him that the revolutionaries were disputing among themselves and therefore the formation of a liberal government would take a long time[11]. The main goal during the conference, however, was to once again limit Capodistria's influence on the Tsar, in order to curb his impulses.

(Field Crafting: Info Gathering-Planning: Aim)

In the days leading up to the Conference, he met with both the Tsar and Capodistria. Alexander appeared more submissive than usual, and Capodistria, too, had an affable temperament and attempted to establish a closer and more friendly relationship with Metternich. However our hero remained wary: his reports from London had informed him that Capodistria had obtained great popularity in England the previous year thanks to his personality and his liberal-moderate ideas. As much as he laughed with him, he was certain that in all of Europe he was the most dangerous man to the order he had painstakingly built[12].

(Field Crafting: Info Gathering-Deception: Acting Skills-Counteraction: Trap Evasion)

Metternich opened the conference with the proposal that although it was the Quadruple Alliance's duty to limit the spread of neo-Jacobinism, no great power could directly interfere with another state unless the latter became a problem for it. Simply put, Austria, as a member of the Alliance and Italy's guardian power, had the right to intervene in Naples, while its allies did not.

(Strategy: Building)

Capodistria resisted this formulation, emphasizing that it was the responsibility of the sole Alliance to make decisions on the continent and that Austria could not move without the approval of the other three Allies. Capodistria's opposition, however, was overcome, firstly thanks to the submission Metternich had obtained from Prussia to Carsbald. Secondly, however, it pushed his sister Pauline, who was related to the Tsar by marriage, to draw him further along the Austrian lines. Finally, Metternich's own relationship with Alexander had progressively improved in recent years, and finally the Tsar ordered Capodistria to find a compromise with Metternich.

(Strategy: Castling)

Troppau was, in short, another diplomatic great success for Metternich. The only concession he made to Capodistria was that the Austrian occupation army be accompanied by ambassadors from the three Allied powers. Furthermore, although Castlereagh had received the news coldly, Metternich understood that his reaction was not motivated by personal convictions, but by parliamentary pressure in London. Therefore, at least partially, there was British support, or at

least neutral approval. Given the worsening bad weather and the wait for the arrival of the King of Naples to the negotiations, Metternich and Alexander I remained quite a long time in Troppau, where they further bonded. Metternich was now closer and more influential on the Tsar than the Russian ministers themselves. To gain the Tsar's friendship in this way, Metternich had once again underlined the religious value of the political union of the Quadruple Alliance, focusing on a point that was particularly crucial for Alexander's ideology.

(Reasoning: Abductive-Social Engineering: Influence Building-Psychological Warfare: Abusing Insecurities)

When King Ferdinand of Naples finally arrived in Laibach, negotiations continued. Metternich's European authority at Laibach's Conference was expressed with unprecedented force. The attempts in Capodistria were crushed, the English delegation demonstrated no resistance against him and the Tsar was equally compliant with Austrian directives. It was more important for Metternich to contain the French proposals, which intended to replicate what the Austrians were organizing, but against liberal Spain. Metternich managed to curb the counterrevolutionary aspirations of the French monarchy, but just as the congress dragged on, in March 1822, news arrived that even in Alessandria, Piedmont, some military contingents had risen up to demand a constitution from the king. While Metternich was achieving increasing diplomatic successes, these were taking away time from immediate action, and this led to a slow buildup of revolutionary winds. In reality, however, the outbreak of a revolution in Northern Italy was part of the Austrian foreign minister's plan: he hadn't halted the coup d'etat in Piedmont despite being informed of it through his spies. 170,000 men were immediately deployed by the Austrian army, half of which were to cover Naples and half of Piedmont. This would not only have further strengthened Austrian influence in Italy, but would also have provided the Austrians with a pretext for more aggressively combating the Italian liberal secret societies (known as the Carbonari), which had increased their activities in recent years. Obtaining the Tsar's approval had been necessary to allow Austria to concentrate a dual army in Italy without leaving its eastern and northern borders exposed, and also to ensure protection against potential crises with the Ottomans, not to mention that the whole decision was legally approved and supported by all the European main powers.

In essence, the entire organization of Troppau and Leibach and the prolonged fights with Capodistria had been part of a plan intended to suppress the revolution in Italy, strengthen Vienna's authority there, and establish the Austrian Empire as the leading nation of the Alliance bloc, and so the most prestigious nation in Europe.

When his political opposition in Vienna, led by Stadion, protested that financing a dual campaign in Italy would be impossible to sustain for the state coffers, Metternich responded that he had already secured from the Alliance that the Kingdom of Sardinia (Piedmont) and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies would pay the costs of the war. The success was complete, and Metternich also garnered further praise at home, culminating in his appointment as State Chancellor, a position held only by his wife's grandfather, von Kaunitz, before him, which made him superior to all the ministers of the Empire.

(Planning: Intricacies/Coverage/Aim/Process/Flexibility-Strategy: Castling/Building-Tactics: Timing-Field Crafting: Setting Traps/Info Gathering/Risks Calculations-Deception: Concealment/Acting Skills/Sophistry-Foresight: Depth/Accuracy-Thinking: Critical/Analytic/Divergent-Social Engineering: Influence Building)

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