THE REVOLUTIONS THAT CONSOLIDATED EMPIRE: A RECONSIDERATION OF 1830*

I
INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth-century political satirists knew something about the revolutionary year of 1830 that many later historians appear to have forgotten, with caricaturists of the time depicting the authorities in various states of embarrassment as unrest spread across Europe. Alongside the usual suspects — the dethroned Charles X of France, the ousted duke of Wellington, and King William I of the Netherlands — they often included the less obvious figure of Hussein Dey, the last ruler of the Ottoman regency of Algiers. He too lost his throne, defeated by a French army of invasion on 5 July 1830. Satirists could not resist the parallels. They showed Hussein mocking or consoling Europe's monarchs. One anonymous Belgian lithographer depicted him as a gherkin, pickled along with the French, Dutch, and German *cornichons* that revolution had done away with.[1] (See Plate.)

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[1] Two other examples are 'Les Incurables' (1830), <https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200567895>; 'Willem I en de Dey van Algiers' (1830), <https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200565445>. For a discussion of these works, see Jennifer E. Sessions, *By Sword and Plow: France and the Conquest of Algeria* (Ithaca, NY, 2011), 62–3.

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These contemporaries clearly felt that the revolutionary wave sweeping over Europe had everything to do with events further afield, in the realm of empires and colonies.

There is a world of imperial connections and consequences to the revolutions of 1830 that historians hardly ever bring into focus. Various scholars have devoted significant attention to the year of revolutions, and few would disagree that it had a deep impact on the political, social, and diplomatic history of nineteenth-century Europe: the transnational nature of the revolutionary unrest is now a broadly accepted fact. Yet, old discussions that have long marked the historiography still simmer on. Historians continue to debate whether these revolutions really meant the demise of aristocratic politics, the birth of the radical left, or the death of the supposedly arch-conservative Congress System.[2] They have dedicated less attention to the relationship between the revolutions and empire as a European phenomenon, instead seeing these revolutions simply from the viewpoint of individual nations. Excellent work on individual imperial powers exists, particularly regarding Great Britain and France.[3] But the debate lacks a deeper understanding of the revolutionary year as a broader crisis that caught up European empires, transformed their mutual relations, and even altered the appearance of European imperialism itself. Historians have overlooked the centrality of empire to the continent-wide turmoil of 1830, focusing instead on domestic demands for constitutional rule and parliamentary representation, the

[2] Emmanuel Fureix, 'Introduction: Une révolution transnationale', in Sylvie Aprile, Jean-Claude Caron, and Emmanuel Fureix (eds.), *La Liberté guidant les peuples: Les révolutions de 1830 en Europe* (Seyssel, 2013), 24, 19–22; Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe, 1789–1848* (1962; new edn, London, 1995), 111, 117–119; Clive H. Church, *Europe in 1830: Revolution and Political Change* (London, 1983), 2–3; Alan Sked, 'Metternich's Enemies or the Threat from Below', in Alan Sked (ed.), *Europe's Balance of Power, 1815–1848* (London, 1979).

[3] C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830* (Harlow, 1989), 235–6, 245; Miles Taylor, 'Empire and Parliamentary Reform: The 1832 Reform Act Revisited', in Arthur Burns and Joanna Innes (eds.), *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain, 1780–1850* (Cambridge, 2003); Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*; David Todd, 'A French Imperial Meridian, 1814–1870', *Past and Present*, 210 (2011). Compare David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (eds.), *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c.1760–1840* (Basingstoke, 2010).

'Cornichons de quatre Nations' (1830–1). Anonymous caricature depicting monarchs 'in a pickle' because of the revolutions of 1830. Clockwise from top left: Hussein Dey of Algiers; Charles X of France; William I, 'Cornichon au fromage de Hollande'; and Karl of Brunswick. Lithograph. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-88.328, <https://id.rijksmuseum.nl/200567897>.

cross-border spread of new revolutionary scripts, or the transnational appeal of liberalism as an ideology.[4]

This article argues that the revolutions of 1830 were not simply an imperial event affected by imperial connections and with an impact on colonial situations, but that, as an imperial episode, they were truly and emphatically transformative. This transformative impact was felt in three ways, in that the revolutions gave a new impetus to European expansionism; they led to more direct forms of colonial dominion; and, most importantly, they brought in an era of heightened co-operation between imperial nations. The persistence of the Congress System, formulated by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, is key to this development. Its frameworks of multilateral diplomacy and collective security remained intact, from the congresses, conferences, and co-operative interventions to the body of positivist international law (*ius publicum europaeum*) which it enshrined.[5] Far from 'ruin[ing]' or 'utterly destroy[ing]' the 1815 settlement, as Eric Hobsbawm put it, the revolutions of 1830 showed the post-1815 system to be both durable and adaptable, with both old and new faces within the system swiftly adjusting to the political changes and accommodating the imperial ambitions of liberal elites, wherever they came to power. As John Darwin has argued, the imperial prowess of 'supercharged Europe' in the decades from 1830 to 1880 depended on the broad geopolitical stability offered by its 'states system'.[6] Indeed, this system enabled Europe's imperial powers to drawn upon broader resource zones, deploying 'more European capital, expertise and manpower than were available in their own territories', all through trans-imperial co-operation.[7]

[4] Fureix, 'Introduction', 21–2.

[5] Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford, 1994); Brian E. Vick, *The Congress of Vienna: Power and Politics after Napoleon* (Cambridge, MA, 2014); Matthias Schulz, *Normen und Praxis: Das europäische Konzert der Großmächte als Sicherheitsrat, 1815–1860* (Munich, 2009); Glenda Sluga, *The Invention of International Order: Remaking Europe after Napoleon* (Princeton, 2021); Beatrice de Graaf, Ido de Haan, and Brian Vick (eds.), *Securing Europe after Napoleon: 1815 and the New European Security Culture* (Cambridge, 2019).

[6] John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Rise and Fall of Global Empires, 1400–2000* (London, 2007), 25.

[7] Bernhard C. Schär, 'Switzerland, Borneo and the Dutch Indies: Towards a New Imperial History of Europe, c.1770–1850', *Past and Present*, 257 (2022), 138–9.

It was owing to the solid basis afforded by the Congress System that the impact on imperial policy of the revolutions of 1830 wholly diverged from that of earlier rounds of revolutionary upheaval. The French Revolution of 1789 ignited a series of global conflicts that shook the warring empires to their core, and Jeremy Adelman has shown how subsequent revolutions between the 1770s and 1820s ultimately tore apart the Spanish and Portuguese empires in Latin America.[8] Colonial revolutionaries, he argues, did not initially aim for secession; neither were the authorities incapable of meeting demands for change. Rather, Adelman claims that rampant competition between the empires themselves destabilized the colonial system in the Americas, with the heightened rivalry and lack of peaceable means to deal with these tensions causing the imperial break-up. 'Disequilibrium', Adelman writes, was 'embedded within an increasingly combustible interstate system, riven by warfare in the 1790s, and escalating to an epic confrontation and the shift to total Atlantic-wide war after 1805'.[9] After the Napoleonic Wars ended, European statesmen were keenly aware of the utter devastation that had been wrought upon the Iberian empires, and Britain, Russia, Austria, and Prussia no longer recognized Spain and Portugal as fellow Great Powers, excluding them from the Allied Council in Vienna that took over from Paris the trans-imperial management of European affairs in July 1815. From the Allied Council emerged a wholly new collective security architecture for Europe that fed into the solid framework of diplomatic deliberation that was in place in 1830.[10] This framework cushioned the blows of the revolutions of 1830 and kept tensions from spilling into war, as they had in 1789. As a result, the empires of Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands (the main case studies engaged with in this article) consolidated or grew after 1830.

[8] Alexander Mikaberidze, *The Napoleonic Wars: A Global History* (New York, 2020); Jeremy Adelman, 'An Age of Imperial Revolutions', *American Historical Review*, 113/2 (2008).

[9] Adelman, 'Age of Imperial Revolutions', 332.

[10] Beatrice de Graaf, *Fighting Terror after Napoleon: How Europe Became Secure after 1815* (Cambridge, 2020), 67–88, 103, 135, 179, 191, 317, 428–38.

As a recent string of publications reminds us, the architects of the Congress System feared 'disequilibrium'.[11] Much of this work builds on Paul Schroeder's characterization of the system as the shared rules, understandings, and practices that inspired statesmen to try and find 'a way beyond war, transcending violence, changing the previous goals and limits of power politics'.[12] Although scholars once perpetuated Schroeder's disregard for the imperial aspects of the system, they are now addressing the omission. Glenda Sluga has recently argued that the system's 'ordering' of international relations through formalized channels of multilateral diplomacy entailed the exclusion of women and non-European actors.[13] Others have shown how the Congress System enabled interventions that infringed upon Ottoman sovereignty under the so-called 'Eastern question', or helped to legitimize the French invasion and conquest of Algiers.[14] European efforts towards co-operative river management, first attempted on the Rhine and the Danube before being exported to the Congo, are another link between the system and imperialism.[15] Furthermore, historians are beginning to see the post-Napoleonic frameworks of diplomacy as a trans-imperial system in which diplomatic actors attempted to manage shared security interests, dampen mutual continental or colonial conflicts, and avoid the disequilibrium of all-out inter-imperial warfare.[16] The co-operating powers largely succeeded in this, enabling themselves to pursue their expansionist imperial agendas unhampered by infighting. The

[11] This is discussed in the following overview of the new historiography: Jonathan Kwan, 'The Congress of Vienna, 1814–1815: Diplomacy, Political Culture, and Sociability', *Historical Journal*, 60/4 (2017).

[12] Schroeder, *Transformation of European Politics*, pp. viii–ix.

[13] Sluga, *Invention of International Order*.

[14] Ozan Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts: Imperialism, Security, and Civil Wars in the Levant, 1798–1864* (Oxford, 2021); Erik de Lange, 'The Congress System and the French Invasion of Algiers, 1827–1830', *Historical Journal*, 64/4 (2021).

[15] Joep Schenk, *The Rhine and European Security in the Long Nineteenth Century: Making Lifelines from Frontlines* (London, 2020); Constantin Ardeleanu, *The European Commission of the Danube, 1856–1948: An Experiment in International Administration* (Leiden, 2020); Joanne Yao, *The Ideal River: How Control of Nature Shaped the International Order* (Manchester, 2022).

[16] Beatrice de Graaf, Ozan Ozavci, and Erik de Lange (eds.), *Securing Empire: Imperial Cooperation and Competition in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 2024).

Crimean War (1853–6) was an important exception, but, owing to the Congress System, even that crisis was overcome.

The revolutions of 1830 could have shaken the foundations of collective security and torn down the system's imperial edifice, but they did not, and the important question is, why? A crucial part of the answer is that, in the end, the revolutionary challengers of 1830 did not fundamentally contest the imperial hierarchy at the heart of the international system. Imperial standing and the possession of colonies were central markers of status that determined the ranking of a state within the Congress System, among other criteria including its conduct in the late wars against Napoleonic France and the ability to mobilize resources such as troops and funds.[17] This created a hierarchy of first-rank states, or Great Powers (Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Great Britain, joined by France after 1819); second-rank, middle powers (Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Bavaria, Württemberg, Saxony, Baden, the Italian kingdoms of Sardinia and the Two Sicilies, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom of the Netherlands); third-rank, 'petty' sovereignties (the Hanseatic city states, the Papal States, and the Duchy of Tuscany); and non-European or non-Christian polities that were outside the system and could lay no legitimate claim to its developing body of positivist international law.[18] The system was deeply imperialistic because it sanctified a civilizational hierarchy of states, while the possession of colonies helped to determine a state's position within that hierarchy.

Central actors in the revolutions of 1830 put this association between colonial possessions and diplomatic standing at the heart of their political agenda, which made imperial concerns a major issue. Indeed, the imperial world was no afterthought to contemporaries. The revolutions themselves were not simply caused by domestic grievances; they were also prompted by ambitions and disappointments concerning the international

[17] Beatrice de Graaf, 'The Legacy of the Wars for the International System', in Alan Forrest and Peter Hicks (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Napoleonic Wars*, iii (Cambridge, 2022), 540–41.

[18] *Hansard*, 1st ser., xxxi, cols. 179–80 (5 May 1815); *The Diaries of John Quincy Adams, 1779–1848*, ed. David Waldstreicher, 2 vols. (New York, 2017), i, 392–5, 444, 501; Ozan Ozavci, 'A Priceless Grace? The Congress of Vienna of 1815, the Ottoman Empire and Historicising the Eastern Question', *English Historical Review*, 136/583 (2021).

system and its hierarchy. Projecting power beyond Europe through the expansion of imperial influence and territory became the chosen means of overcoming these grievances. Moreover, the system actively facilitated such efforts after the revolutions. Its deliberations altered the political map within and beyond Europe, recognizing Belgian independence from the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1830 (formal recognition only ensued in 1839 when the Dutch king signed the separation treaty), accepting the French occupation of Algiers, and carving out a Greek state from the Ottoman empire.

To clarify how the events of 1830 strengthened Europe's international system with its trans-imperial co-operation, we must address two deep-seated forms of historical typecasting. First, we need to understand that the diplomats and statesmen who gave shape to the Congress System were not stubbornly conservative.[19] They were not deaf to popular demands voiced in earlier revolutionary moments such as that of 1820–1, and they saw that reformist constitutions could have 'benign applications'.[20] The 1820s taught them that revolutions could be incorporated into the system (as in the case of Greece), and made them warier of mutual warfare than revolutionary changes per se. Second, the liberal challengers of the existing order in 1830 complained loudly of empire's burdens on taxpayers but offered a less radical challenge to the basic tenets of the system (particularly its underlying belief in European supremacy and imperial destiny) than the historiography holds.[21] Alongside more recent publications, the late Christopher Bayly reminded us that liberal attempts at imperial reform in no way slowed the pace of expansionism or dulled the edge of dominion.[22] We would add that a similar dynamic played out on the systemic

[19] For instance, Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (London, 2012), 5.

[20] Joanna Innes, 'Popular Consent and the European Order', in Joanna Innes and Mark Philp (eds.), *Re-Imaging Democracy in the Mediterranean, 1780–1860* (Oxford, 2018), 298.

[21] For portraits of liberal revolutionaries that leave out their imperial mindsets, see David H. Pinkney, *The French Revolution of 1830* (Princeton, 1972); Church, *Europe in 1830*.

[22] Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*; Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*. See also Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton, 2005); Lauren Benton and Lisa Ford, *Rage for Order: The British Empire and the Origins of International Law, 1800–1850* (Cambridge, MA, 2016).

level, where empires managed their mutual concerns, which can explain why European imperial expansionism intensified after 1830.[23]

In this article, we combine our analytical focus on the international system and its hierarchical structures with the methods of trans-imperial history. A trans-imperial approach entails decentring nationally bounded imperial units to emphasize the use of resources across, between, and beyond imperial boundaries. 'Empires' are defined here as 'large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over space, polities that maintain distinction and hierarchy as they incorporate new people'.[24] 'Trans-imperial' refers to the osmosis, conflict, and co-operation between empires, or to the way they worked together and influenced each other's expansionist endeavours; for our purposes here, it pertains particularly to the formulation and defence of shared imperial interests.[25] We do not claim to foreground or integrate subaltern perspectives with this approach, along the lines of New Imperial History.[26] Rather, the novelty of our argument is that we embed the domestic events of 1830 in the trans-imperial frameworks of the collective security system. This leads us to a better understanding of the revolutionary year's transformative impact, which could then inform further in-depth analyses of subaltern agency during the disruptions of 1830.

Our main focus is on north-western Europe — on France, Belgium, and Great Britain — between 1830 and 1834. Simultaneous upheavals in other areas, including the German states, Greece, Italy, the Ottoman empire, Portugal, Poland, and Switzerland, will provide further context to our analysis of the selected cases. The participation of Austria and Russia in trans-imperial endeavours shows similar mechanisms and technologies, but follows different political, cultural, and ideological trajectories. Two such trajectories that warrant

[23] Jürgen Osterhammel, '"Imperiologie"? Neues nach der *New Imperial History*', *Neue politische Literatur*, 67 (2022).

[24] Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, 2010), 8.

[25] Daniel Hedinger and Nadin Heé, 'Transimperial History: Connectivity, Cooperation and Competition', *Journal of Modern European History*, 16/4 (2018), 430; de Graaf, Ozavci, and de Lange (eds.), *Securing Empire*, editors' intro.

[26] Osterhammel, '"Imperiologie"?'

further analysis include, first, a stronger focus on exporting religious ideas, since both empires saw themselves as defenders of the Christian faith; and, second, their emphasis on 'internal colonization', a 'form of contiguous, continental expansion, imperialism, and colonialism that incorporated indigenous lands and peoples', mostly through the conquest of adjacent territories.[27] Contemporary opposition figures eagerly welcomed unrest and constitutional change in all these places as the 'crumbling of the old imperial order'.[28] By 1834 the questionable outcomes of their own imperial agendas started to become discernible, while they faced anti-revolutionary or counter-revolutionary tendencies at home.[29] We aim to show how, within this span of four years, the causes and ambitions, the diplomatic handling, and the imperial consequences of 1830, all became entangled with colonial events in North Africa, South-East Asia, the Americas, and the Levant. Using archival and published sources from Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium, in particular, we analyse the persistence and, notably, the transformation of the Congress System.

Our north-west European cases bring to light four ways in which the revolutions of 1830 were shaped by, and in turn affected, trans-imperial co-operation and expansionism. These connections followed and built upon each other, naturally dividing this article into four sections: section II addresses how the imperial campaigns prior to 1830 left the metropole with fewer troops and means of domestic defence, which catalysed unrest at home; section III shows how revolutionaries and opposition figures rose to power with critiques of colonial policies and their excessive costs, but harboured imperialist ambitions of their own; section IV delineates how these ambitions were absorbed within the framework of the Congress System, creating new forms of trans-imperial co-operation; and section V indicates how empire was understood as a safety valve

[27] On the notion of internal colonization that was specific to both the Habsburg and the Russian empire, see, for example, Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA, 2018); Alexander Etkind, *Internal Colonization: Russia's Imperial Experience* (Cambridge, 2011). Quotation from Steven Sabol, *'The Touch of Civilization': Comparing American and Russian Internal Colonization* (Boulder, 2017), 3.

[28] Taylor, 'Empire and Parliamentary Reform', 296–7.

[29] Fureix, 'Introduction', 11.

for the lingering discontent that followed the upheaval. In short, the revolutions of 1830 boosted and deepened, rather than demolished, trans-imperial co-operation within the framework of Europe's international system.

II
IMPERIAL CAUSES AND DISCONTENT

Imperial wars abroad created opportunities at home. The revolutionary crisis of 1830 began with victory in Algiers, when French forces took the city after a campaign of twenty-one days, during which they suffered just 409 deaths and 2,061 injured; losses for the Algerian defenders are estimated to have been ten times higher. On 5 July, the French flew the blue-and-white flag of the House of Bourbon from the Palace of the Dey in the Casbah. Its former inhabitant, Hussein Dey (r. 1818–30), left the city on 10 July, boarding a ship headed for Naples.[30] Hussein was the first ruler of the revolutionary year to be toppled, but a string of monarchs and ministers soon followed him into deposition. The victorious French king Charles X himself fell at the end of the month, in the July Revolution. Unrest then spread across Europe: revolution in Belgium ended William I's reign over the Southern Netherlands in August; in Britain the campaign for parliamentary reform brought down the government of the duke of Wellington in November; and an armed insurrection broke out in Poland on the 29th of that month. The following years saw further upheaval, including constitutional assemblies in Switzerland, 1830–1; intermittent rebellions in Parma, Modena, and the Papal States in 1831–2; civil war in Portugal, 1828–34, following the emperor Dom Pedro's abdication and return from Brazil; the assassination of the Greek governor, Ioannis Capodistrias, on 27 September 1831; ferment across the German states, culminating in the Hambach Festival of May 1832; and the beginnings of civil war in Spain after September 1833. It was no coincidence that events in Algiers started all this agitation.

Across the empires, imperial policies contributed to the outbreak and intensification of revolutionary unrest. First and foremost was the absence of troops in the metropole, which

[30] The National Archives, Kew (hereafter TNA), FO 27/413, fos. 3–24: St John to Stuart de Rothesay, 29 July 1830.

constrained government repression and favoured political opponents. Second, opposition figures used metaphors of imperial oppression and being 'colonized' or 'enslaved' to question the establishment's political legitimacy. Third, dismay about the costs of empire for taxpayers (along with claims of imperial corruption) featured prominently in calls for reform. These factors linked French imperialism in Algiers to revolution in Paris; they were also at play in Great Britain and Belgium.[31]

The absence of troops in the metropole directly tied imperial expansionism to the 1830 revolutions, with overseas military campaigns leaving the authorities ill-equipped to deal with outbreaks of domestic unrest. The majority of the French army was still in Algiers when Parisians took to the streets on 26 July after Charles X and the ultra-royalist government of Jules de Polignac issued their four ordinances imposing censorship, dissolving the Chamber of Deputies, and announcing new elections. The commander of the Paris garrison, Auguste de Marmont, found himself exceptionally short-handed, with only 8,000 of the expected 18,000 troops turning out to be in the capital.[32] As fighting intensified in the city, confusion reigned within the army, with the minister of war, Marshal Louis-Auguste-Victor de Bourmont, away leading the expeditionary army in Algiers. This left his personal division in Paris without a commander.[33] Marmont saw the city garrison wholly outnumbered after it started firing on demonstrators on 27 July, provoking larger protests during the following days. He could only admit, 'This is no longer a riot, this is a revolution'.[34] On 2 August, Charles X abdicated, to be succeeded by his cousin Louis Philippe under the liberal, constitutional July Monarchy. The army in Algiers heard about this revolution some time after the fact, when a merchant vessel from Marseille delivered the news on the morning of 11 August. Bourmont drew his sword for the Dauphin, aiming to sail to Toulon and march on Lyon, but the lower ranks and less loyalist generals refused to support him. He would only be reunited with the monarch he had vowed

[31] Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*.

[32] Richard J. Evans, *The Pursuit of Power: Europe, 1815–1914* (London, 2016), 64–5; Henry d'Estre, *Bourmont: La Chouannerie, les Cent Jours, la conquête d'Alger, 1773–1846* (Paris, 1934), 218–222.

[33] Estre, *Bourmont*, 212–222.

[34] Evans, *Pursuit of Power*, 64–5.

to defend when he eventually joined Charles X in his place of exile, Holyrood Palace, in Edinburgh.[35]

The Belgian Revolution was equally influenced by Dutch campaigns overseas. Officials had trouble putting down the riots that broke out in Brussels during the night of 25 August, and revolutionary sympathy spread across the Southern Netherlands as the unrest continued. A small force of 8,000, led by William I's son Prince Frederick, was unable to retake Brussels in late September, with many of the Dutch army's senior commanders, along with its newest weaponry of percussion guns, having been dispatched to the East Indies. William I had tasked one of his most capable and trusted officers, General Andreas Victor Michiels (a veteran of Waterloo, nicknamed Lord Tiger for his brutal actions in Java during the 1820s), to bring an end to the Padri Wars (1803–37) in Sumatra.[36] Among other commanders called back to the metropole was the Dutch general Josephus Jacobus van Geen, who had been involved in the Java War (1825–30) and was now ordered to lead Dutch troops into Belgium. The northern monarchy had already lost control of the Belgian territories when these colonial reinforcements arrived, too late, in the summer of 1831.[37]

Politicians in Britain faced their own military problems as domestic unrest grew. Radicals among the opposition had long criticized the duke of Wellington (prime minister since January 1828) regarding the costly upkeep of imperial forces. Referring to the Treaty of London (1827), the duke despaired over the calls for troop reductions, 'just at the very moment when we have had the folly to make Russia a naval power in the Greek Archipelago'. Opposition figures complained that he wanted 'to make all Europe a military camp and govern upon arbitrary principles', especially when news of the revolutions in France and Belgium arrived.[38] Demands for wider representation in

[35] Charles-André Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, 2nd edn, 2 vols. (Paris, 1979), i, 62–3; Estre, *Bourmont*, 255–63. For the impact on Algerian resistance, see Benjamin Claude Brower, *A Desert Named Peace: The Violence of France's Empire in the Algerian Sahara, 1844–1902* (New York, 2009), 12.

[36] Jaap de Moor, *Weerzien met Indië, 25: Oorlogen in de archipel, 1817–1870* (Zwolle, 1995), 599–600.

[37] 'Geen, Josephus Jacobus baron van', in P. C. Molhuysen and P. J. Blok (eds.), *Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek*, 10 vols. (Leiden, 1933), ix.

[38] Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People? England, 1783–1846* (Oxford,

parliament sparked massive protests in London, a wave of arson in rural Kent, and agitation in northern manufacturing districts. Cabinet ministers feared the country was on the brink of revolution. With an eye to 'the unwillingness or inability of the soldiers to cope with them in Paris and Brussels', the home secretary, Robert Peel, dared not deploy the military against 'mobs' in the industrial centres. Wellington's government resigned on 16 November, and that of Charles Grey succeeded it with a reformist ministry, explaining before the House of Lords that 'The principle of my reform is to prevent the necessity of revolution'.[39]

While economic downturn brought people onto the streets across Europe, in imperial metropoles this discontent merged into concerns over colonial finances.[40] Expensive campaigns in pursuit of colonial revenues caused opposition figures to rail against taxation and call for retrenchment. Belgian Catholics and liberals joined forces against William I's stubborn colonial policies and ballooning debts during the 1820s. They lamented their subjection to a forced process of 'Hollandization', in which the Belgian economy was subservient to the larger interests of the Dutch empire.[41] As early as 1828, when the world market for colonial products collapsed, the Belgian opposition proposed that these costly colonies should be sold or surrendered in order to restore the financial balance.[42] French liberals worried who would foot the bill of the expedition against Algiers, which was estimated to cost millions of francs.[43] Around the colonies of the British empire, fiscal pressures dampened agricultural opportunities while exports to the metropole faltered, and the

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2006), 378–9, 398.

[39] Roland Quinault, 'The French Revolution of 1830 and Parliamentary Reform', *History*, 79/257 (1994), 384, 392.

[40] Fureix, 'Introduction', 11; Evans, *Pursuit of Power*, 75–7; Mark Mazower, *The Greek Revolution: 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe* (London, 2021), 435–6.

[41] Frank Judo and Stijn Van de Perre (eds.), *Belg en Bataaf: De wording van het Verenigd Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Antwerp, 2015).

[42] Alicia Schrikker, 'Restoration in Java, 1815–1830', *BMGN: Low Countries Historical Review*, 130/4 (2015), 138; P. J. Blok, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Volk*, 3rd edn, 8 vols. (Leiden, 1926), iv, 277.

[43] Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, i, 47–8; Benjamin Constant, 'Alger et les élections' (20 June 1830), in Benjamin Constant, *Positions de combat à la veille de juillet 1830: Articles publiés dans le temps 1829–1830*, ed. Ephraïm Harpaz (Paris, 1989), 190.

radical pamphleteer William Cobbett included Whitehall's fixation on bearing the costs of overseas dominion in his broader indictment of 'Old Corruption'.[44]

Statesmen and monarchs saw their political legitimacy shattered during the revolutions of 1830. Popular accusations of imperial despotism were a particularly common line of assault. Liberal newspapers in France accused Charles X and his ultra-royalist government of organizing a coup against the Charter of 1814. On 12 July 1830, *Le Constitutionnel* noted: 'French warriors had gone to destroy the dominion of a ferocious African despotism, only … to return to establish an exactly similar one in their own *patrie*'. The Bourbon monarchy faltered under such attacks on its legitimacy, unable to resolve the contradictions between allegedly fighting despotism abroad and imposing absolutist despotism at home.[45] Belgian liberal politicians such as Jean-Baptiste Nothomb claimed that their compatriots were 'mistreated shamefully, equated with a colony', and felt they could therefore justifiably revolt against the king's illegitimate rule'.[46] Meanwhile, British supporters of parliamentary reform likewise used the trope of the disfranchised colonial subject, or even of the enslaved, to contest the legitimacy of the established order. Inhabitants of Bristol encountered posters that read: 'Bill of Pains and Penalties, or, West India Whip for the Bristol Slaves'.[47] Henry Cockburn, the solicitor-general for Scotland and local Whig leader, compared the unfairness of Scottish under-representation in parliament to that of colonial, pre-revolutionary North America.[48]

The liberals' successful bid for power in Britain, Belgium, and France depended significantly on military, financial, and ideational aspects of European imperialism. Opposition movements in eastern Europe dealt with some of these aspects,

[44] Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*, 240–41; Taylor, 'Empire and Parliamentary Reform', 303.

[45] Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, 54, 47–9, 58–60.

[46] [Jean-Baptiste] Nothomb, *Essai historique et politique sur la Révolution belge* (Paris, 1833), 231.

[47] Peter Marshall, *Bristol and the Abolition of Slavery: The Politics of Emancipation* (Bristol, 1975), 16.

[48] Taylor, 'Empire and Parliamentary Reform', 297–8; [Henry Cockburn], 'Parliamentary Representation of Scotland', *Edinburgh Review*, 52 (1830), 220–21 (art. X).

although their revolutionary efforts faced utter defeat or only bore fruit after much longer struggles. As Christopher Clark has argued, these movements were too fragmented and poorly organized to form a unitary front and withstand imperial repression. The November Uprising in Poland lasted more than a year, but the movement was hampered by bitter infighting over whether to settle with the tsar, abolish serfdom, include peasants, or adopt a radical or moderate agenda. Severe repression followed, with the complete abolition of Polish autonomy and a consequent great wave of emigration.[49]

The opposition in southern and central Europe was often more aware of the need to relate to, and organize themselves alongside, imperial interests.[50] The success of the July Revolution in France gave a new boost to the ambitions of Portuguese émigrés, who supported Dona Maria II's constitutionalist claim to the throne over that of her absolutist uncle (and former betrothed) Dom Miguel. In June 1829, a band of such émigrés occupied Terceira, an island in the Azores. Dom Pedro, the emperor of Brazil who later abdicated in favour of his son in April 1831, joined them at Terceira and launched an invasion of mainland Portugal from there. The Portuguese experience of 1830 was thus shaped by its Atlantic empire and its enduring ties with independent Brazil.[51] Meanwhile, disgruntled Greek dignitaries in the Aegean islands and the Peloponnese, for their part, saw the governor of Greece, Ioannis Capodistrias, as a tyrant who ruled only with foreign backing and therefore had to be assassinated.[52] The commander-in-chief of the Royal Naval Mediterranean Fleet, Admiral Sir Pulteney Malcolm, even compared his possible fate to that of Charles X: 'Capodistrias, like the late King of France, is upheld, against the opinion of the best part of the nation, and like him will fall'.[53] In Germany, a framework of colonial subjugation permeated the speech of the

[49] Christopher Clark, *Revolutionary Spring: Fighting for a New World, 1848–1849* (London, 2023), 73–86, 750.

[50] Maurizio Isabella, *Southern Europe in the Age of Revolutions* (Princeton, 2023), 247–9, 591–4.

[51] Gabriel Paquette, *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions: The Luso-Brazilian World, c.1770–1850* (Cambridge, 2013), 235–6, 268–300.

[52] Mazower, *Greek Revolution*, 434–8.

[53] National Records of Scotland, Edinburgh, GD51/2/1087/79: Malcolm to Melville, 27 Aug. 1830.

co-organizer Johann Wirth's at the Hambach Festival of 1832. He claimed that Germany was 'being ruined and plundered, split and torn apart, enchained and dishonoured' by its '34 kings'. This exploitation allowed the Great Powers to dominate Europe, enabling 'the foundation of an eternal empire of darkness, slavery and crude brutality'.[54]

III
IMPERIALIST AMBITIONS

Although the orators and other revolutionaries at Hambach expressed their discontent in colonial terms, they were not without imperialist ambitions of their own. A long historiographical tradition, revived by a slew of recent work, has shown that the ascendant liberals in France and Britain were as eager imperialists as their conservative opponents.[55] Liberals in Belgium likewise craved imperial gains, although this fact is conspicuously absent in the historiography.[56] As Frederick Cooper has argued, nineteenth-century political elites often thought of their polities not as nation states but as empire states: they conceived of their political space as imperial, which explains the fundamental support for imperialism across divides of ideology and party.[57] What many historians overlook, however, is the role that the international system played in liberal critiques of colonial policy. The revolutionaries of 1830 often linked their imperialist ambitions to the frameworks of multilateral diplomacy, with their hierarchical ranking based on colonial possessions. These challengers therefore did not destroy the system: they transformed it.

Even in the Rhineland, revolutionary actors dreamed of empire. Few states there had an imperial political space to speak

[54] J. G. A. Wirth, *Das Nationalfest der Deutschen zu Hambach*, 2 vols. (Neustadt, 1832), i, 41.

[55] Bernard Semmel, *The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism: Classical Political Economy, the Empire of Free Trade and Imperialism, 1750–1850* (Cambridge, 1970); David Todd, *A Velvet Empire: French Informal Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, 2021); Pitts, *Turn to Empire*; Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*.

[56] Els Witte, *Het verloren koninkrijk: Het harde verzet van de Belgische orangisten tegen de Revolutie, 1828–1850* (Antwerp, 2014); Els Witte, *Belgische republikeinen: Radicalen tussen twee revoluties (1830–1850)* (Kalmthout, 2020).

[57] Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley, 2005), 154–5.

of, except, perhaps, for Prussia. Johann Wirth nevertheless continued his speech at the Hambach Festival with a deeply imperialist plea for unhampered global trade and the spread of civilization. He argued that the 'liberation of Europe' would also free the 'rich provinces of European Turkey' from rule 'by the enemies of all culture'. Constantinople, he claimed, should 'be transformed into a free city and free port, becoming an all-powerful lever of European trade'. Wirth envisioned that this would 'open Africa's resources for Europe' and 'spur on all nations to ever newer advances in civilization'. 'What the diplomats eagerly try to hide', he wrote elsewhere, is that 'the unhappiness of the entire European continent is not natural, but rather brought about by … [a] devastating system'.[58] Wirth's call for the emancipation of all European nations thus went hand in hand with an imperialist project of free trade, both of which, according to him, the Congress System obstructed.

Revolutionaries who had more success in their bid for power than those who attended the Hambach Festival held similarly conflicted views on the system and its imperial aspects. In France, the new political elite saw the conquest of Algiers as the only worthwhile legacy of Charles X, principally because it bolstered the country's status within the European hierarchy of states.[59] Unfounded suspicions that the ultra-royalist government might renege on the victory in the face of European opposition, or use it as a diplomatic trade-off with the other Great Powers, had even contributed to the revolutionary agitation of July 1830.[60] Liberals such as the politician and historian François Guizot soon realized instead that the European system and its hierarchical ranking could legitimize French colonialism in North Africa.[61] Adherents of the more radical Saint-Simonian movement also embraced the consequences of the victorious invasion, advocating a 'Mediterranean system' of infrastructural integration, peaceful trade, and cultural renewal. One of their members, Michel

[58] Wirth, *Das Nationalfest der Deutschen zu Hambach*, i, 43; ii, 65.

[59] Jennifer Pitts, 'Republicanism, Liberalism, and Empire in Postrevolutionary France', in Sankar Muthu (ed.), *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2012), 263–4, 277–8; Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, 65.

[60] J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi, 'De l'expédition contre Alger', *Revue encyclopédique*, 46 (1830); Constant, 'Alger et les élections'.

[61] David Todd, 'Transnational Projects of Empire in France, *c.*1815–*c.*1870', *Modern Intellectual History*, 12/2 (2015), 272–3.

Chevalier, described the population of Algeria as 'thirsty for progress' when it 'welcomed' the French army.[62] French liberals were thus unwilling to renounce the victory over Algiers, critical as they had been of the expedition's sinister domestic purposes. They now linked imperialism in North Africa to France's standing as a European Great Power. Thus, rather than dissolving the Congress System, they invigorated it with new revolutionary energy.

On the ground in occupied Algiers, new military officials with liberal inclinations took over command, with Louis Philippe appointing the seasoned general Bertrand Clauzel, who had a stronger liberal profile than his predecessor Bourmont. Clauzel had spent the first five years of the Restoration in exile in America, where he joined an agricultural colony located in present-day Alabama. He returned to France in 1820 and was elected to the chamber of deputies in 1829 as a member of the opposition, backing the chamber's infamous 'Address of the 221', which warned the Polignac government in March 1830 that the French people 'were becoming restless, because her liberties are being threatened'.[63] Clauzel arrived in Algiers on 4 September, though he had to wait almost sixty days before he received clear orders, when an official dispatch informed him of Louis Philippe's wish for 'preservation of the new conquest'. By then Clauzel had already shown himself a diligent colonial administrator, in his first days in the colony having set up a police force, established French jurisdiction to administer 'territorial justice', and introduced a customs regime that advantaged French commerce.[64] He also used his experience in America to champion a model farm that would grow exotic crops on Algerian soil. Such plans earned this military commander with liberal credentials the reputation of being 'a notorious advocate of a more territorial conception of French domination in Algeria'.[65]

[62] Michael Drolet, 'A Nineteenth-Century Mediterranean Union: Michel Chevalier's *Système de la Méditerranée*', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 30/2 (2015), 159; Osama Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity: Saint-Simonians and the Civilizing Mission in Algeria* (Stanford, 2010).

[63] *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires*, 12 Apr. 1830.

[64] Service historique de la Défense, Vincennes, GR 1/H/5, dos. 7: 'Précis sommaire du ministère de la guerre', 3 Dec. 1830.

[65] Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, 178. See also Todd, *Velvet Empire*, 100.

After 1830 Belgian liberals soon started to toe a line similar to that of their French counterparts, although their nascent state as yet had no colonial possessions. Revolutionaries in Brussels had compared themselves to the exploited Javanese and were critical of William I's expensive colonial wars, but they would not reject imperialism as such. The Belgian opposition's biggest grievance, which it shared with northern liberals, was that the king ruled the colonies alone, in secret, and without parliamentary participation, treating imperial expansion as his personal prerogative and diverting colonial revenues for his own benefit.[66] Some revolutionary actors became staunch colonial advocates after they ended Dutch rule, desperately wanting to raise Belgium's international standing and claim a piece of the imperial pie. Jean Arrivabene, from Mantua, personifies this shift from revolutionary to colonial advocate. Alleged to have been a member of the revolutionary movement for Italian independence, the Carbonari, Arrivabene found himself exiled in Belgium and became acquainted with Sylvain Van de Weyer, Félix de Mérode, and other leading opposition figures. He first started lobbying for agricultural colonies in Europe, but then founded the Compagnie Belge de Colonisation with Van de Weyer, aiming to buy colonial territories in Latin America and Cuba.[67] This endeavour eventually led to the purchase of Guatemala in 1841. The possession remained in Belgian hands for two decades but was not very profitable. Its termination inspired further colonial ambitions, always with an eye to international standing, which later resulted in Belgian acquisitions in the Congo.[68]

Britain's opposition figures used the international system less to legitimize new rounds of imperial expansion than to support their ideas for colonial reform. Their greatest bone of contention was the 'Old Corruption' of the Tory elite, with its bloated official expenses and lavish favouritism. Patronage deriving from the newly expanded colonial territories 'were succulent fruits in this cornucopia'.[69] Liberals and radicals wanted to restore the

[66] Dirk Donker Curtius, *Orde* (Arnhem, 1839), 4.

[67] *Compagnie Belge de Colonisation: Status, contrats et chartes* (Brussels, 1841); R. O. J. Van Nuffel, 'Arrivabene, Graaf Giovanni', *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek*, i (Brussels, 1964).

[68] *L'Expansion belge sous Léopold 1^er^, 1831–1865: Recueil d'études* (Brussels, 1965).

[69] Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*, 214–216.

country's economic balance and curtail the taxpayer's indirect subsidies of the British elite. Retrenchment became their rallying cry. Sir Henry Parnell, who joined the Whig government as secretary for war in April 1831, had argued in his influential tract *On Financial Reform* that military spending in the pursuit of peace was particularly wasteful, given the amicable relations between the European powers. He wrote:

> Although it is right to be prepared for war, it should be borne in mind that several of the most popular and substantial grounds of war have ceased to exist. The barren nature of military trophies, and the substantial advantages of peace, have been fully exhibited in the last forty years.... every country now sees the wisdom of seeking commercial prosperity in concurrence with that of its neighbours; the discovery of the real sources of wealth has shewn the folly of wasting lives and treasure about colonial possessions ...[70]

The journalist John Wade made a similar case for finally cashing (and sharing) the peace dividend in his *Extraordinary Black Book*, another critique of 'Old Corruption'. He deplored that, after spending millions on 'fortifying Belgium against French aggression' and erecting 'splendid and costly monuments' at Waterloo, 'we cannot yet sit down in safety, without bristling on all sides with cannons and bayonets'.[71] Both authors continued their pleas for retrenchment with plans for significant colonial reform, especially in India. They wanted to abolish the obstacles that the East India Company had placed on free trade, wider European landownership, and settlement, not because they were in any way sympathetic to the lot of colonized peoples, whom Wade described in disparaging and racist terms, but to exploit further the commercial potential of the empire's possessions.[72] Parnell also moved beyond India to maintain that 'the planters should prosper and accumulate wealth, and thus add to the general stock of public wealth', while Wade had already cast an eager eye on other markets: 'Similar results may be confidently expected from the opening of the trade to China'.[73]

Thus, political contenders in France, Belgium, Britain, and even Germany all dreamed of empire. They wanted to open markets, spread 'civilization', or plant the nation's flag in

[70] Henry Parnell, *On Financial Reform* (London, 1830), 214.

[71] John Wade, *The Extraordinary Black Book*, 2nd edn (London, 1831), 333.

[72] Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*, 226; Wade, *Extraordinary Black Book*, 335, 351.

[73] Parnell, *On Financial Reform*, 253–4; Wade, *Extraordinary Black Book*, 370–71.

conquered territory. Their reformist agendas were, more than anything, about dividing the spoils of European imperialism in a different manner. But before these imperial reveries could come true, the main actors of the international system first had to prevent all-out European war.

IV

ACCOMMODATION BY THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Prince Klemens von Metternich allegedly broke down sobbing when he received the news of the July Revolution in France. 'My life's work is in ruins', he wailed to a physician who was rushed in to check on him.[74] Historians should be cautious about taking his fears as fact. What Metternich considered his life's work — the international system of deliberation that was needed to keep revolution in check, kings on the throne, and European warfare at bay — did not come to an end in 1830. Part of the system's enduring character stemmed from its ability to accommodate new imperialist ambitions and deflect European tensions overseas. Even Friedrich von Gentz, Metternich's long-time confidant and former secretary to the Congress of Vienna, concluded by December: 'I no longer have any doubts about denouncing as entirely groundless the suspicion that the [French] king secretly wishes for war'.[75] The new French regime had allayed these suspicions at the various conferences that followed the revolutions of 1830, where the Great Powers assembled to manage political change across the continent. Louis Philippe's embrace of revolutionary demands to replace 'the conspiratorial bartering of nations' with 'popular diplomacy' and a solid principle of non-intervention did not last long.[76]

By February 1831, diplomats representing the Great Powers were asserting that 'Every nation possesses their individual rights; but Europe too has its own right: that is the social order

[74] Sked (ed.), *Europe's Balance of Power*, 10–11 (editor's intro.).

[75] [Friedrich von Gentz], 'Argumente für die Wahrscheinlichkeit des Friedens (5.12.1830)', in *Schriften von Friedrich von Gentz: Ein Denkmal*, ed. Gustav Schlesier, 5 vols. (Mannheim, 1840), v, 173.

[76] H. A. C. Collingham, *The July Monarchy: A Political History of France, 1830–1848* (London, 1988), 186; Julia Schmidt-Funke, 'Imaginaires européens dans les révolutions de 1830', in Aprile, Caron, and Fureix (eds.), *La Liberté guidant les peuples*, 207–8.

which she has granted to them'.[77] The powers intervened repeatedly on the basis of this right to uphold the continent's 'social order': in Poland by Russia, February–September 1831; in the Papal States by Austria and France, March 1831 and February 1832; in Greece by Britain, France, and Russia, 1831–3; in Frankfurt by Prussia and Austria, 1833–4. Paul Schroeder noted that the Congress System was 'improved' during these years as its parties solved revolutionary crises more creatively than before and managed to shut down all ideas of territorial expansion within Europe.[78]

Although Europe's concerns over imperial interests had always been a factor within the Congress System, its engagement with imperial matters deepened significantly after 1830.[79] This had everything to do with liberal challengers' aspirations for imperial expansion, consolidation, or reform. In addition, new political elites arose and went on to change the international system. The system's senior actors increasingly drew on empire to accommodate them. They did so for two reasons. First, all the unrest of 1830 was as costly as it was dangerous, and imperial possessions had to help cushion the blows; and, second, colonies remained an important criterion for the continental ranking of powers. Both factors shaped how diplomats dealt in concert with Belgian independence and French expansionism in Algeria. These cases are hence emblematic of how the system accommodated new imperial ventures.

The Belgian Revolution quickly became a pressing issue within the international system, leading to a long-running series of conferences that also touched upon imperial matters. Great Power statesmen found violence in Belgium so concerning because it threatened to undermine the central position of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in Europe's order of collective security. The Netherlands served as a 'Boulevard de l'Europe', with its string of southern fortresses, with which the duke of Wellington had planned to keep France in check after 1815.[80] Political instability in these strategic territories rekindled

[77] 'Protocol of the Conference of 19 February 1831', in *British and Foreign State Papers*, xviii (1830–1) (London, 1833), 779–85.

[78] Schroeder, *Transformation of European Politics*, 666, 710–11.

[79] De Graaf, Ozavci, and de Lange (eds.), *Securing Empire*, editors' intro.

[80] De Graaf, *Fighting Terror after Napoleon*, ch. 8.

British anxieties about the possibility of Antwerp and the Scheldt estuary becoming the staging ground for an invasion. William I, for his part, feared that losing Belgium would downgrade his kingdom to the level of a 'third-rank nation'.[81] From 4 November 1830, representatives of the first-rank powers convened the London Conference on the Belgian question to balance these interests, keep the conflict from spiralling out of control, and separate Belgium from the Netherlands in an orderly manner. Contemporaries clearly saw this conference as integral to the established diplomatic practices that defined the post-Napoleonic era.[82]

Revolutionary upheaval nevertheless brought a new cast of characters to the conferences, and, with them, new imperial ambitions entered the negotiations. Radicals and liberals representing the Belgian revolutionary authorities were invited to the London Conference, which was a true novelty in conference diplomacy. Now the head of Belgium's diplomatic mission to London, Sylvain Van de Weyer was a true personification of this type, having previously worked as a lawyer defending radicals against the rigid Dutch ministry of justice.[83] Another such newcomer was his fellow representative and lawyer Jean-Baptiste Nothomb, a well-known opposition figure from a Luxembourgeois family who had been a leader of the revolt and had co-drafted the Belgian constitution.[84] The diplomatic rise of bourgeois policy makers, bankers, lawyers, and lobbyists became particularly apparent after 1830, although it can be traced back to the opening up of international banking and loans in the late eighteenth century and throughout the Napoleonic Wars.[85]

[81] Blok, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Volk*, iv, 287, 333.

[82] *Papers Relating to the Affairs of Belgium: Protocols of the Conferences Held at London, between the Plenipotentiaries of Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia. Presented to Both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty*, 3 vols. (London, 1833), i, 290; Kenneth Bourne, *Palmerston: The Early Years, 1784–1841* (London, 1982), 332–48; William E. Lingelbach, 'Belgian Neutrality: Its Origin and Interpretation', *American Historical Review*, 39/1 (1933), 49; J. S. Fishman, 'The London Conference of 1830', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 84 (1971).

[83] Gustav Janssens, 'Sylvain Van de Weyer (1802–1874), diplomaat in dienst van koning Leopold I', in Mark Derez *et al.* (eds.), *Vrijgevochten stad: Leuven en de Revolutie van 1830–1831* (Leuven, 2006).

[84] François Roelants du Vivier, *Un Pays convoité: Jean-Baptiste Nothomb (1805–1881) et la construction de la Belgique* (Paris, 2022).

[85] Sluga, *Invention of International Order*; de Graaf, *Fighting Terror after Napoleon*,

These Belgian representatives now found themselves at the table with a curious cast of old diplomatic stalwarts (Prince Talleyrand for France, Prince Esterházy for Austria, Count von Lieven for Russia, and Heinrich von Bülow for Prussia) and a new British delegation, headed by Henry John Temple, third Viscount Palmerston.

Belgian diplomats immediately brought to the attention of the conference colonial matters that would affect the country's potential standing in the hierarchy of powers. With Belgium already having been assigned half of the Netherlands' national debt during the first stages of the negotiations, its representatives protested against this unequal division of spoils and asked in addition for half of the Dutch navy and colonial territories.[86] The Dutch delegation considered this an 'unacceptable claim'. 'For fifteen years', the Dutch statesman Anton Falck wrote, 'the fleet has served the common interests of the Dutch and the Belgians, in Europe as in the Indies … she remains with the state that brought her into the community'. The Great Powers then proposed that Belgians be granted the privilege of trading with the Dutch colonies on an equal footing. Van de Weyer found the compensation 'entirely illusory' because the civil and military administration of the colonies would remain in Dutch hands, enabling 'hindrances and continual vexations'.[87] He also had private financial interests at stake, being married to Elizabeth Bates, the only child of Joshua Bates, a senior partner in Baring Brothers. Through her, Van de Weyer would inherit an immense sum that was mostly tied to bonds in trading companies and properties in the Americas and the colonial world.[88] His role in the London Conference thus indicates how a nascent liberal class of merchants, bankers, and investors used the international system to push for imperial expansion.

Colonial matters further pressed themselves upon the London Conference when the negotiations broke down in August 1831, and imperial warfare loomed large. William I opposed the draft treaty of separation, the so-called Eighteen Articles, which

(n. 85 cont.)
326–56.

[86] *Papers Relating to the Affairs of Belgium*, i, 399–400, 440–41.

[87] Southampton University Library, Special Collections (hereafter Soton), MS61/WP1/1242, no. 15, 31, 38.

[88] Janssens, 'Sylvain Van de Weyer', 139–49.

granted the Belgian throne to Leopold of Saxe-Coburg along with the contested province of Limburg. He instigated a new campaign into Belgium, which prompted a French military intervention and a Franco-British blockade to force Dutch troops out of the besieged citadel of Antwerp.[89] British officials worried that the hostilities would upend the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, which delineated colonial spheres of influence in the Strait of Malacca and initiated standing forms of imperial co-operation in fighting purported pirates.[90] They were also anxious that the Dutch might turn to maritime raiding themselves, unleashing privateering warfare across the Indonesian archipelago in retaliation for an embargo placed on Dutch ships.[91] Although the Admiralty specified that this embargo was not a declaration of war, it also ordered merchants returning from the East to assemble in convoy at the island of St Helena 'as a guard against every risk on their passage up [the] Channel'.[92] Vice-Admiral John Gore, commander-in-chief of the East Indies and China station, went on to protect trade 'against any aggressions on the part of the Dutch', ordering all his 'disposable force' to watch Java and the adjacent seas.[93]

Gore's precautions proved to be unnecessary. Although the government in Batavia had received orders to place British ships under embargo, it warned the resident merchants well in advance and merely suggested that they move their vessels to Surabaya. The colonial authorities did not deploy privateers or make any preparations for hostilities against Britain, already having on their hands the revived Padri Wars in north-western Sumatra, where the belligerents had recently killed 400 European troops.[94] Gore suggested that the colonial authorities treat the blockade of Holland as 'a measure entirely local, and not likely to be of long continuance', as it was 'under no consideration intended to extend to the Colonies of either

[89] On Franco-British co-operation in these military efforts, see Soton, MS62/PP/MM/BE/33–48: Confidential communication by Talleyrand, 2 Nov. 1832.

[90] H. R. C. Wright, 'The Anglo-Dutch Dispute in the East, 1814–1824', *Economic History Review*, 3/2 (1950).

[91] Gerald S. Graham, *The Politics of Naval Supremacy: Studies in British Maritime Ascendancy* (Cambridge, 1965), 51–6.

[92] TNA, ADM 1/3919: Admiralty to Board of Control, 5 Nov. 1832.

[93] TNA, ADM 1/211, no. 98: Gore to Admiralty, 19 Apr. 1833.

[94] TNA, ADM 1/212, no. 23: Dunn to Gore, 27 July 1833.

Nation'.[95] The governor-general of the East Indies, Johannes van den Bosch, wholeheartedly agreed to 'prevent the existing breach of friendly political relations in Europe from extending to these seas'.[96] On an earlier occasion, van den Bosch, who had been a prisoner of war in England in 1810–12, noted that he saw co-operation with Britain as beneficial to free trade and the expansion of industry, being in no way 'detrimental to our interests'.[97] Neither he nor Gore wanted to upset established modes of trans-imperial co-operation over the issue of Belgium. In this colonial realm, the international system helped to keep the potential disruption of revolution at bay.

British anxieties about the trade routes between the East Indies and China disappeared completely when the London Conference resumed its mediating work after the Dutch forces finally surrendered Antwerp on 23 December 1832. A royal proclamation announced the resumption of friendly relations between Britain and the Netherlands on 29 May 1833, which naval commanders and colonial officials in the Indonesian archipelago received with joy when they heard about it some four months later.[98] William I conceded, but stubbornly refused to sign the Articles of Separation until 1839, when he acceded to the Treaty of London and bitterly stepped down as king. Belgium did not get its share of Dutch colonies or naval might, but received its independence under a Great Power guarantee of perpetual neutrality. Thus, the London Conference managed to balance the Belgian delegation's wishes with broader imperial interests, obtaining a 'qualified success for collective security'.[99]

The handling by the Great Powers of the July Revolution and the French occupation of Algiers shows how the international system also informed imperial expansionism in a more indirect manner, beyond conference diplomacy. Algiers was not a sideshow to the system, even if it never became the topic of a

[95] TNA, ADM 1/211, no. 113: Gore to van den Bosch, 3 May 1833.

[96] TNA, ADM 1/212, no. 23: [van den Bosch] to Gore, 31 May 1833.

[97] Nationaal Archief, The Hague, 2.21.059, inv. nr. 244: van den Bosch to Elout, 26 Dec. 1830.

[98] TNA, ADM 1/212, no. 9: Gore to Admiralty, 23 Sept. 1833.

[99] Matthew Rendall, 'A Qualified Success for Collective Security: The Concert of Europe and the Belgian Crisis, 1831', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 18/2 (2007).

multilateral conference, although the July Monarchy had inherited the previous regime's promise to organize such a meeting.[100] The new French ministers at first maintained that it would be 'expedient to concert with the powers interested in the commerce of the Mediterranean'. The British and Austrian ambassadors in Paris were still preparing for this conference as late as August 1830, but events in Belgium soon became more pressing.[101] Come October, the French authorities informed their representatives in Constantinople that the conference idea was suspended. They also announced the king's wish to 'establish ourselves solidly in Algiers'.[102] Although the conference on Algiers did not convene, it is telling that French officials had tried to legitimize their expansionist agendas through this tested practice of the international system.[103] They also sought European approval by forcing the neighbouring 'Barbary regencies' of Tunis and Tripoli to renounce privateering, Christian slavery, and tributary payments (all of which went to prove France's 'disinterested' agenda).[104] The fact that the conference on Algiers came to nought should not blind us to the importance that North Africa held for the system's endurance after 1830.

Great Power statesmen came to see French expansion into Algeria as stabilizing collective security on the continent, while ministers in Paris felt this colonial possession was crucial to the nation's ranking in the continental hierarchy of states. Metternich and Palmerston both noted that imperial campaigns in Algeria could redirect French bellicosity away from Europe, if only because the removal of troops from North Africa would be a strategic liability. They also concluded that the July Monarchy could not renege on its conquest without causing domestic unrest, potentially sparking another revolution.[105] Still, the

[100] Schroeder, *Transformation of European Politics*, 709–10.

[101] TNA, FO 27/413: Stuart de Rothesay to Aberdeen, 23 Aug. 1830; Miroslav Šedivý, *Metternich, the Great Powers and the Eastern Question* (Pilsen, 2013), 432.

[102] Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Paris, 133CP/261, fos. 263–4: Molé to Guilleminot, 26 Oct. 1830.

[103] De Lange, 'Congress System and the French Invasion of Algiers'.

[104] Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, 11CP/413, fos. 82–8: Latour-Maubourg to Sebastiani, 7 Dec. 1830; National Records of Scotland, GD51/2/1087/82: Malcolm to Melville, 25 Sept. 1830.

[105] Šedivý, *Metternich, the Great Powers and the Eastern Question*, 432–3; TNA, FO 27/516: Palmerston to Granville, 29 Apr. 1836.

Great Powers demanded restraint (usually at British behest) whenever French expansionism threatened to encroach upon Morocco or Tunis.[106] Officials of the July Monarchy, for their part, referred to France's status as a first-rank power when they tried to justify their colonial presence in Algeria. They told the Ottoman Porte that the conquest was the rightful outcome of an unequal conflict between 'a power of the first rank and a government of pirates'.[107] From the Ottoman point of view, sovereignty over the territories of the regency of Algiers remained in the sultan's hands; this Ottoman position never changed. Regardless, the July Monarchy further pursued a policy of colonial consolidation following two government commissions of inquiry in 1834. The commissioners' report again used the argument of status, concluding, 'to abandon our conquests would be to offend the nation in its legitimate pride'.[108]

Ambassadorial conferences or, in case of Algeria and the Ottoman empire, looser forms of multilateral diplomacy provided the crucial infrastructure for managing collective security between empires during these pivotal years. Various principles supported the diplomatic framework, including 'mutual consultation and collective decision-making', the 'creation of buffer states', 'delineation of interests and areas of involvement', 'intervention by multilateral action', 'pacific settlement of disputes', and 'communication and provision of advance notification'.[109] The aim was always to protect imperial interests and keep Europe tranquil, but beyond the continent, in the colonies themselves, the system's continued existence only enabled more expansion, warfare, and exploitation.

[106] Cemal Atabaş, 'The Question of Tunisia's Status Quo and the Firman of 1871', *Belleten*, 87/309 (2023).

[107] Centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes, 166PO/E/159: Memorandum remis au Reis-Efendi, 14 Aug. 1830; Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivi, Istanbul, İ.DUİT 139/21 (20 B 1246), 4 Jan. 1831.

[108] Cited in Pitts, 'Republicanism, Liberalism, and Empire in Postrevolutionary France', 277–8.

[109] Mark Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy after Napoleon* (London, 2013), 361–2; Harry Hearder, *Europe in the Nineteenth Century, 1830–1880* (London, 1988); Eric D. Weitz, 'From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions', *American Historical Review*, 113/5 (2008); Paul W. Schroeder, 'Did the Vienna Settlement Rest on a Balance of Power?', *American Historical Review*, 97/3 (1992).

V

IMPERIAL CONSEQUENCES: A FAULTY VALVE?

Looking back on the first decade of French expansion in Algeria, an anonymous British correspondent noted: 'France has found in the African War a safety valve against internal commotions'.[110] Colonies and imperial campaigns could release societal pressures in this metaphorical line of reasoning so characteristic of steam technology in an industrializing era. If anything, it is a euphemistic metaphor, which disregards colonial agency and the brutal consequences of relieving such 'pressure'. Still, contemporaries believed that colonies could absorb the tensions of revolution that lingered on after 1830. The international system had helped to maintain peace on the continent and accommodated new imperial ambitions. If modes of imperial rule moved towards more direct territorial control during the 1830s, then the importance of the enduring continental peace cannot be underestimated.[111] Stability allowed the European powers to pursue their imperial agendas. European imperialism, bolstered by the international system, gradually transformed in the aftermath of 1830. This can be illustrated through three practices: colonial resettlement, expansionist warfare, and (abortive) attempts at imperial reform.

Officials tried to cushion the effects of revolution through migration, whether voluntary or not. In Britain, the judicial authorities dealing with suspects of the Swing Riots condemned hundreds of people to the penal colonies in Australia.[112] The government of France used Algeria to resettle unwanted elements, albeit by less forceful means. Paris had attracted large numbers of agitators and demobilized fighters from the revolutionary hotbeds of Spain, Italy, Poland, Germany, and Belgium whom officials saw as a potential menace to public tranquillity. Many of them ended up in Algeria.[113]

[110] Soton, MS62/PP/MM/AL: Confidential memorandum on the present state of Algiers, 20 Jan. 1847.

[111] Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*, 236–8.

[112] Fabrice Bensimon, 'Royaume-Uni: Captain Swing, réforme et radicalisme', in Aprile, Caron, and Fureix (eds.), *La Liberté guidant les peuples*, 183–4.

[113] Gavin Murray-Miller, *Revolutionary Europe: Politics, Community and Culture in Transnational Context, 1775–1922* (London, 2020), 127.

French elites also started to fear, after 1830, that demographic growth and urbanization were turning the cities into sources of political unrest. One pamphleteer argued that colonial settlement was necessary to deal with the 'frightening mass of agitated, hungry individuals'.[114] The estimated European population in Algeria almost doubled from 3,483 in 1833 to 6,592 in 1837, supported by both ongoing military intervention and state-funded schemes to encourage colonial settlement.[115] Administrators on the ground did not necessarily welcome these new arrivals, who came mainly from Spain, Italy, and Malta. They saw them as a source of moral corruption and an obstacle to 'progress' in the colony. One report complained, 'instead of bringing useful industry or hands trained in agricultural work, they import only vices'. It went on to state that the crime rate in Algiers exceeded that of a French town twice the size.[116] Still, the great deluge of European settler colonialism that historians date to the second half of the nineteenth century had its first stirrings in these critical years after 1830.[117] Resettlement was one of the revolution's imperial consequences, and as such the growth of settler colonies cannot be separated from the persistence of the international system.

Second, the fact that the Great Powers managed to avoid mutual conflict on the continent allowed them to pursue wars of imperial expansion with greater vigour. The creation of special colonial armies in France and the Netherlands illustrates this post-revolutionary focus on expansionist warfare.[118] As early as August 1830, General Étienne Gérard suggested granting colonial military commissions to the fighters of the barricades to prevent further revolutionary agitation in France, and Louis Philippe founded the French Foreign Legion in March 1831,

[114] Cited in Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, 200–203.

[115] *Tableau de la situation des établissements français dans l'Algérie* (Paris, 1838), 297; Todd, *Velvet Empire*, 106–8.

[116] Archives nationales d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, GGA1E86/1: Lesquier to Drouet, 7 Feb. 1835; GGA1E86/2: Lesquier to Drouet, 12 May 1835.

[117] C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914* (Malden, MA, 2004), 439.

[118] Douglas Porch, *The French Foreign Legion: A Complete History* (London, 1991), p. xix; Petra Groen, 'Een nieuwe koloniale mogendheid', in Petra Groen *et al.* (eds.), *Krijgsgeweld en kolonie: Opkomst en ondergang van Nederland als koloniale mogendheid, 1816–2010* (The Hague, 2021).

intending to clear the metropole of unruly foreigners. In 1832 Belgian, Dutch, and German soldiers of the Foreign Legion served in the first campaigns from the city of Algiers into the Mitidja plain, at Maison-Carrée (El Harrach) and Si Mustapha.[119] However, the presence of these foreign fighters with a revolutionary past sometimes caused diplomatic tensions. Spanish troops in the French colonial service announced in 1832 that their ultimate aim would be the 'liberation' of their homeland, which Ferdinand VII claimed was 'an act of hostility against the territory of Spain'.[120] For the Dutch authorities, the loss of Belgium provoked the revival after 1831 of the Padri Wars on Sumatra, with William I seeking martial glory and international stature thereby to compensate for the insults suffered at Belgian hands.[121]

Synchronous attempts at colonial reform are a third aspect of the imperial consequences of the revolutions of 1830. Opposition figures had focused much of their political dismay on matters of empire and called for sweeping changes in imperial governance. Subsequent years proved that, once they had gained power, these new liberal rulers did indeed implement reform, but not to the advantage of the colonies. After the loss of Belgium, William I instigated a large overhaul of colonial finances. This loss had been a critical blow to the economic cycle of the 'colonial complex' as he had envisioned it, in which agricultural exports generated money from the colonies, to be invested in the protected Belgian industries, whose products (mostly textiles) would be sold back to the colonies, with the revenue funding Dutch infrastructural and military projects.[122]

After the revolution, William switched to an even more ruthlessly exploitative economic programme in the East Indies, based on forced labour and the compulsory production of crops for export. This 'cultivation system' was intended to increase the exploitation of Indonesian resources and make the colony contribute directly to the Dutch treasury. On Java, the system exacerbated the lot of the peasantry as it lowered resilience

[119] Porch, *French Foreign Legion*, 2–4, 14–16.

[120] Centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes, 22PO/1/68: Report by Rovigo, 5 Sept. 1832; d'Afalia to Sebastiani, 8 Oct. 1832.

[121] Jan Luiten van Zanden and Arthur van Riel, *Nederland, 1780–1914: Staat, instituties en economische ontwikkeling* (Amsterdam, 2000), 128, 137–48.

[122] *Ibid.*, 176.

against famine and epidemics.[123] In a letter to the Dutch East India Company, Governor-General van den Bosch remarked, 'The interest of the [indigenous] populace itself must be the foundation of our system … we cannot let ourselves be guided by a spirit of greed and avarice'. However, his implementation of the cultivation system had such a significant impact on the balance of trade (bringing in 19 per cent of the Dutch national income, which would increase to 31 per cent after 1850) that William I ennobled him in 1835.[124] This intensifying exploitation of the colonies resulted directly from the revolution of 1830, and from the London Conference that kept the Dutch empire intact.

In Britain, a new Whig government emerged from the tumult of the revolutionary year with promises of significant colonial reform that hinged upon retrenchment, abolition of slavery, and the liberalization of trade. None of these aspirations turned out as planned. The Tory opposition feared that the Whigs were 'a party driven to the dismemberment of empire', but after 1830 the establishment quickly realized that the metropole's hold over colonial domains could never slip: otherwise 'the entire edifice might collapse, and with it the nation's power and prestige'.[125] In India, as Christopher Bayly argued, reform promised more than it delivered. The termination in 1833 of the British East India Company's old monopolies on the China trade were concurrent with the imposition of new ones on salt and opium.[126]

Colonial unrest also hampered reform. The enslaved population of Jamaica rose up in revolt during the Christmas Rebellion of 1831–2, following rumours that emancipation was imminent. The local planter elite declared martial law and executed 312 people in a brutal bid to restore their exploitative

[123] Schrikker, 'Restoration in Java', 138; Angelie Sens, '1830: Het Kultuurstelsel', in Lex Heerma van Voss *et al.* (eds.), *Wereldgeschiedenis van Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2018).

[124] Van den Bosch to Elout, 26 Dec. 1830; Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, *Women, Work and Colonialism in the Netherlands and Java: Comparisons, Contrasts, and Connections, 1830–1940* (Cham, 2019), 91–5.

[125] Taylor, 'Empire and Parliamentary Reform', 301–2; Hilton, *Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People?*, 566–7.

[126] Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*, 237; Jon E. Wilson, *The Domination of Strangers: Modern Governance in Eastern India, 1780–1835* (Basingstoke, 2008), 157–60.

order. Shortly afterwards, the Jamaican Assembly threatened to disobey the reformist orders of the Privy Council, whereupon the newly appointed Whig governor, the earl of Mulgrave, abolished it. Fearing a Caribbean insurrection, the authorities in London agreed to pay massive compensation to the planters of £20 million (half the annual revenue from their plantations) when the Abolition of Slavery Act passed in 1833. They also imposed lengthy periods of 'apprenticeship' that further delayed the full liberation of the enslaved.[127] Ireland provides another example of the Whigs' rather traditional imperialist inclinations. Although Irish support had helped to carry the Reform Bill in 1832, the Grey ministry only increased troop numbers, police powers, and political prosecutions when the Tithe War brought unrest to Ireland in 1830–6.[128] Little came of retrenchment when, like the planters, Irish tithe-holders also received compensation (a total of £1 million), while the deployment of troops and warships hardly helped to lower military and naval expenditure.[129] Concerns of security and the reinforcement of vested interests hence trumped ideals of liberal reform across the British empire.

Thus, the after-effects of 1830 informed a turn towards further exploitation and territorial control across the Dutch, French, and British empires. The stability of the international system meant that these powers could direct funds and resources towards such imperialist endeavours. Yet, if they expected that this would be a safety valve for mounting pressures, they would eventually be proved wrong.

VI
CONCLUSION

In November 1834, Lord Palmerston could look back upon an eventful first four years as foreign secretary. He took stock of the diplomatic situation in a letter to his brother: 'Portugal is settled; Spain is safe; Belgium cannot be ruined'; 'some good long

[127] Tom Zoellner, *Island on Fire: The Revolt that Ended Slavery in the British Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 2020).

[128] Jay R. Roszman, *Outrage in the Age of Reform: Irish Agrarian Violence, Imperial Insecurity, and British Governing Policy, 1830–1845* (Cambridge, 2022), 51–66.

[129] Taylor, 'Empire and Parliamentary Reform', 310–11.

holiday', he wrote, ought to be his reward.[130] Palmerston's sense of ease was as misguided as it was myopic.

Tranquillity for Europe's powers came at the cost of violence, exploitation, and hunger in the colonies: those were the consequences of Palmerston's 'settlement'. At the end of 1834, France's brutal wars of expansion into the hinterlands of Algeria were only just beginning. Old elites of the Ottoman regency, such as Mustapha Bou Mezrag of Titteri and Ahmed Bey of Constantine, had opened fronts of military resistance against the French that would only be crushed with unrelenting warfare. The emir Abd al-Qadir followed in their footsteps after French attempts to use him as a local intermediary broke down in 1839, leading to devastating counter-insurgency campaigns in which colonial troops looted and massacred entire communities. Estimates reckon that as many as 850,000 of Algeria's inhabitants perished in the subsequent fighting and famines between 1830 and 1875.[131] British imperial expansionism also intensified through the annexation of South Australia (1836), Aden (1839), and Hong Kong (1843), which followed upon land wars, massacres, and naval expeditions, as well as the First Opium War (1839–42).[132] In Indonesia, the Dutch waged a relentless series of campaigns as they resumed the Padri Wars from 1831 to 1837.[133] Lauren Benton has argued that the consequences of trans-imperial co-operation were precisely these endless 'small wars' against indigenous populations.[134]

This article has tried to show that Lord Palmerston's problematic sense of post-revolutionary calm, as well as the changing reach and appearance of European imperialism, depended on the continuation of the international system. The revolutions of 1830 could become a transformative imperial

[130] Cited in Bourne, *Palmerston*, 407.

[131] Kamel Kateb, 'Le Bilan démographique de la conquête de l'Algérie (1830–1880)', in Abderrahmane Bouchène *et al.* (eds.), *Histoire de l'Algérie à la période coloniale, 1830–1962* (Paris, 2012).

[132] Hilton, *Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People?*, 565–6; Miles Taylor, 'The 1848 Revolutions and the British Empire', *Past and Present*, 166 (2000), 148.

[133] A. C. M. Kappelhof, 'The Dutch and Radical Islam in Nineteenth-Century Sumatra: The Padri War (1821–1837), the Aceh War (1873–1903) and their Aftermaths', unpubd MS, Huygens Institute for the History of the Netherlands, The Hague, 2011.

[134] Lauren Benton, *They Called it Peace: Worlds of Imperial Violence* (Princeton, 2024).

episode, with new expansionist projects, more direct territorial control, and (albeit troubled) attempts at reform, precisely because the old diplomatic frameworks proved to be flexible and lasting. The multilateral conferences and their body of legally binding protocols continued to support trans-imperial co-operation, even as new elites with new imperial ambitions were demanding a seat at the table. Although the revolutions had broken out within a context of imperial crisis (shaped by the absence of troops in the metropole, dismay about taxation, and metaphors of colonial oppression), they eventually boosted European imperial expansion and strengthened established forms of trans-imperial co-operation. These forms of trans-imperial co-operation also survived the later upheaval of 1848, which therefore should not be considered a major imperial rupture. As Christopher Clark argued in his study of that later revolutionary year, the major underlying transitions were taking shape after the 1820s.[135] The revolutionary events of 1848 did not shatter the imperial edifice of co-operation and expansion that had emerged over the preceding decades.

So, what connected the conservative elites and their political contenders around 1830? At the height of revolutionary unrest, conflicting ideas about domestic politics may have pitted these groups against each other, but a shared imperial outlook based on a deeply hierarchical understanding of international relations soon proved to be a meeting ground. A situation of compromise thus gradually emerged as the new constitutional monarchies of Belgium and France were inserted into the collective security arrangements. Diplomats and bankers at conference tables brokered this compromise, inspired by a joint interest in security, continental stability, and imperial co-operation. Elsewhere in Europe, the picture was more mixed as revolutionaries in Poland, Italy, and the Rhineland found their hopes crushed when their aspirations for liberal constitutionalism, national regeneration, or independence failed to be accommodated by the system. Instead, the first-rank powers of Prussia, Russia, and Austria asserted their dominance in these spheres of influence.[136] Still, even repressed revolutions fed into the

[135] Clark, *Revolutionary Spring*.

[136] Kurt M. Hoffmann, *Preußen und die Julimonarchie, 1830–1834* (Berlin, 1936), 150.

imperial transformations after 1830 as revolutionaries went into exile, became settlers, or joined foreign colonial armies.

Contemporaries of both a conservative and a liberal stripe not only believed that imperial projects could help to ease the lingering tensions of revolution; they also simply wanted a piece of the spoils. This appetite had helped to trigger the revolutions of 1830, loomed large in reformist ambitions, shaped diplomatic demands within the international system, and inspired official conduct during subsequent years. Together, these four aspects linked these revolutions to empire. As a result, the liberal politician, the *ancien régime* prince, and the modern manufacturer found each other in the mutual desire to use the system of European collective security to accelerate a project of trans-imperial co-operation and colonial expansion. Revolution and empire were not two separate waves crashing into one other, to borrow a metaphor from Sujit Sivasundaram.[137] Rather, at the historical moment of 1830, the two merged into a single crest that reached tidal proportions as the nineteenth century progressed.

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[137] Sujit Sivasundaram, *Waves across the South: A New History of Revolution and Empire* (Chicago, 2021).

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