I. **Purpose and Overview of Lecture**

A. To examine Europe’s search for stability after the upheavals of 1789-1814 (brief comparison with other post-war settlements)

B. To look in particular at the settlements arranged at the Congress of Vienna

1. Examine how the diplomats there tried to set all of Europe on stable foundations—diplomatically, politically, socially, even culturally and intellectually

C. To give further perspective on the previous lectures

1. To show how the balance of power was re-established, after the attempt by Napoleon to establish a “universal Empire”

   a) This was a reassertion, in other words, of the older sense that European “liberties” were best served by many states rather than by one

D. To explore a theme that will be important for most of the 19th and 20th centuries:

   1. The clash of the forces of right and left, reaction and liberalism (or “modernization” and industrialization)
   2. How “bourgeois-liberal” desires were “contained” or set back for a while by the Metternichean system—but not vanquished

II. **Napoleon’s downfall, 1812-14**

A. The Russian campaign in 1812 was a great disaster

B. Yet Napoleon was able once again to raise an army

1. Famous clash at Leipzig, The Battle of the Nations, in 1813

2. Napoleon was defeated by combined forces of Austria, Prussia, and Russia

   a) He retreated behind the Rhine

C. At the same time Wellington’s forces were moving up from Spain, joining anti-French revolts there

D. And inside France various resentments came together,
bourgeois and noble, liberal and reactionary

E. What to do with Napoleon?
1. Metternich preferred to let him stay at the head of France
2. At this point none of the major powers seemed to care much about restoring the Bourbons
3. The British were, however, adamant: “Bony” had to go

F. Formation of Quadruple Alliance
1. Castlereagh succeeded in getting the four major powers to agree to an alliance for twenty years
   a) They would, in short, keep a collective eye on France (cf. lecture on power politics)
   b) They would enforce whatever peace terms that were agreed to at the Congress

G. Napoleon abdicated in April 1814, and was exiled to the island of Elba
1. He had apparently lost support at home, even among the imperial marshals

III. Who will replace Napoleon?

A. Louis XVIII finally emerged as the choice that least divided the four powers and the French population
   1. He was a relatively conciliatory sort, especially as compared to his brother and many of the émigré nobles
   2. He did not try to undo the work of the revolution in any fundamental way
   3. He insisted on the theory of divine royal sovereignty, yet in practice recognized popular sovereignty and the fundamental changes of the revolution
      a) All the new laws, the administration, the Napoleonic Code, etc. remained

B. Thus, it is Louis who actually signed the peace treaty, in May 1814

IV. First Peace of Paris

A. This was a reasonably moderate, non-punitive document
B. France was allowed to retain the borders it had won by 1792
C. There were no indemnities, reparations, etc.
D. Remarkably, France even was allowed to keep the works of art it had plundered from other countries
E. There were larger, more difficult issues, however
   1. How to reorder Europe, after a generation of profound change, where France had ruled in large part?
   2. Which principles were to hold?
      a) Here, too, it was obvious that a simple return to the Old Order was simply not practical, would cause chaos
      b) Still, the principle of popular sovereignty was not really acceptable to the rulers of Europe
      c) They did not think that the peoples of Europe should be consulted about what kind of government they wanted, where the boundaries between states should be drawn
      d) A more “fundamental” principle had to hold: the balance of power, one that was consistent with the interests of the victorious coalition
   3. And some issues were considered non-negotiable:
      a) Great Britain refused even to discuss issue of freedom of the seas, colonies
      b) Russia would not discuss Turkey and Balkans, Finnland
   4. Still, there was a vast area that needed to be discussed: the Germanies, Italy, Spain, Poland, etc.

V. Napoleon’s “Hundred Days,” 1815
A. These various issues were put on the agenda of the Congress of Vienna
B. It met with great pomp and circumstance, gala parties, receptions
C. Serious meetings began in Sept. 1814
D. By March 1815 the delegates had come to agreement on most important issues
E. But alarming news soon interrupted the deliberations: Napoleon had escaped
F. The reactionaries in Louis XVIII’s entourage, if not Louis himself, had alienated too many in France
1. Once again, France rallied to Napoleon, who promised to be less dictatorial than he had been, no longer expansionist

2. Great battle ensued at Waterloo, perhaps the most famous defeat in modern history

G. This time Napoleon was exiled to St. Helena, far out in the Atlantic Ocean

VI. Measures taken at Vienna

A. The Hundred Days did not in fact substantially change the agreements that had already been worked out

B. But a harsher peace was imposed on France
   1. Minor changes in frontiers
   2. Indemnity of 700 million francs
   3. Army of occupation established

C. The Hundred Days actually helped draw the Four Powers together, re-affirm the sense of a “congress of Europe,” or the common interests of the great powers
   1. They agreed to hold regular future congresses to review developments
   2. They agreed to work together thereafter to preserve peace and the specific settlements arrived at in 1815

D. The settlement at Vienna gives an insight into the principles and practical operations of the balance of power
   1. Key concern: to control France (the power that had overturned the balance of power)
   2. How to do it?
      a) Quadruple Alliance
      b) Install buffer states on France’s borders:
         (1) To the northeast: Kingdom of Netherlands (including Belgium, formerly held by Austria),
         (2) To the South: Kingdom of Sardinia (including Piedmont, Savoy, Genoa)
      c) Backing up the buffer powers were much larger powers
Prussia’s holdings were moved far to the west, to the Rhine.

Austria was given most of northern Italy, east of Piedmont (a new kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia).

E. Other concerns and claims
1. A number of the smaller states in Italy and Germany were re-established, with significant changes, however.
2. Many of the kingdoms created by Napoleon were allowed to survive.
   a) Still, there were now 39 states, bound into a very loose German Confederation.
   b) This was not a recognition of nationalism, or the desires of the peoples involved.
   c) Rather, the states were established according to the lights of the Four Powers, with stability (via the balance of power) and control paramount in their minds.

VII. Competition and rivalry among the Four Powers
A. It was hardly the case that the great powers easily agreed on all things.
B. Key area of friction: Poland
   1. It had previously been partitioned between Austria, Russia, and Prussia.
   2. Napoleon had reformed it into “Grand Duchy of Poland”.
   3. Alexander of Russia wanted to undo the “crime” of the partitions: A Kingdom of Poland would be reconstructed and he would be the king.
   4. The other powers were not enthusiastic about this plan.
      a) Prussia was willing to accept it only if it got Saxony.
      b) And that Metternich would not accept, since it would make Prussia too strong.
      c) He also did not want Alexander to have Poland, since that would give the Russians too much influence in central Europe.
      d) Castlereagh shared these apprehensions, both as
regard to Prussia and to Russia

5. Matters got to the point that the Four Powers were considering warfare as the only solution
   a) Talleyrand was able to use this opportunity to get France back as active participant the diplomatic scene:
   b) A secret treaty was negotiated between France, England, and Austria

6. The final compromise:
   a) Alexander got a reduced Poland (“Congress Poland”, approximately what was the Grand Duchy of Napoleon)
   b) Prussia received only about two-thirds of Saxony (the Saxon king retained the rest)

VIII. Evaluation of the Congress of Vienna

A. It was one of the major settlements of European history, and Europe lived in its shadow for most of the following century

B. But for much of the nineteenth century it was not very popular with historians or the general public
   1. What they increasingly objected to were its repressive aspects, its failure to consult the peoples involved
   2. Similarly, the Metternichean system, which followed the settlement, was hated for its attempt to stamp out any dissent, any criticism, any suggestion of liberalism

C. However, those reactionary aspects were more due to the actual leaders of the restoration than to the settlement at Vienna itself
   1. Especially due to Metternich and his role of “policeman of Europe”

D. Revealingly, twentieth-century observers have been more favorably inclined toward the settlement at Vienna
   1. They have been impressed with how it seemed to assure a century without any general European warfare
      a) Subsequent organizations, like the League of Nations, or even the United Nations, could not really claim so much
   2. They have been impressed as well with how
“enlightened” the settlements were in terms of setting aside vengeance, of looking in a hard-headed way to real issues, trying to find compromise that all could accept

3. These aspects in particular made for favorable comparisons with the settlements reached in 1919
   a) Then popular passion, vengeance, short-sightedness were more the rule -- and another war followed within twenty years

IX. Re-evaluations of Metternich

A. Even this personification of reaction has undergone a certain re-evaluation by twentieth-century historians

B. He was an arch-villain to many nineteenth-century authors, but he emerges as something of a hero in Henry Kissinger’s book on the Congress Vienna

C. And in a larger way, the principles of conservatism, especially as a fundamental criticism of the idea of rapid social revolution, have gained more widespread respect in modern times, especially after the Nazi period and even more after the fall of the Soviet Empire
   1. Metternich’s distance from nationalist passions, his hatred for war, belief in stability, distaste for anti-Semitism and other varieties of ethnic hatred—these all make for favorable comparisons with later leaders
      a) Even his detestation of the principle of a free press may be said to have found at least some support among a population disgusted with the antics of “the media”
   2. The Bolshevik Revolution and then Stalinism have provided even more powerful arguments that the French Revolution unleashed a “madness” in the revolutionary passion

D. On the other hand, Metternich was, no doubt about it, a figure about who is not easily understood by ordinary Americans in the early 21st century
   1. He possessed an extraordinary sense of the rightness of his position, his actions to repress liberals and revolutionaries
   2. He wrote in 1819: “I cannot help telling myself twenty times a day: How right I am and how very wrong are all
the others.”

3. On another occasion: “For some years I have made a singular observation: It is that men who are diametrically opposed to me die. The explanation is simple: These men are mad and the mad die.”

E. Still, we can now see that he was fighting a losing battle against “progress,” against liberalism, nationalism, and the revolutionary mystique

F. Once again the issue of Great Historical Forces is posed:

1. European society was changing dramatically, in its very structures, the nature of its social classes, the size of its cities, the way that people made a living, the very numbers of Europeans who survived into adulthood

2. And, finally, these kinds of changes were very difficult to reconcile with a static vision of the world, one that fears change

G. The next lectures will deal with these forces for change