Who's Afraid of the French Revolution? Austrian Foreign Policy and the European Crisis 1787–1797

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Abstract

Historians of the French Revolution and the revolutionary wars have tended to pay relatively little attention to the central role played by the Habsburg Monarchy during this era. This article seeks to reassess both Austria's importance as the continental corner-stone of the anti-French coalition and, conversely, the importance of the French Revolution for the history of the Habsburg Monarchy. The author argues that Vienna assessed the Revolution and its impact almost exclusively from a foreign-political point of view, seeing the international turmoil as a chance to realize long-standing plans of territorial streamlining that would make the Habsburg Monarchy into a stronger and more self-sufficient great power.

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