

Middle Powers in the International Hierarchy

How Perceptions Changed the Position of Middle Powers in the International Hierarchy



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Introduction

The Middle Power is a curious group of states. Throughout history, both the position of Middle Powers in international politics and the question who belongs to this group have been subject for debate. It seems that the idea of a Middle Power first started to emerge around the start of the nineteenth century. A Middle Power group was created during the Congress of Vienna in 1815. During the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the notion of the existence of a Middle Power became stronger and the term was mentioned for the first time during the negotiations. However, the Middle Power position in international politics weakened, and even ceased to exist in the newly created League of Nations. Current research seems unable to account for this seemingly contrasting information.

Keene (2013) provides a starting point to research this matter by pointing out the importance of statistics for a changing perception of international hierarchy around 1800. During the nineteenth century, further developments in the science of statistics allowed for the measurements and comparisons of completely new aspects of states. It would therefore be interesting to see if new statistical perceptions of international hierarchy can provide an explanation for the emerging, and at the same time disappearing, Middle Power in international politics. To look into this, the following research question is asked: How did developments in the science of statistics contribute to a change in the perceptions on Middle Powers between 1815 and 1919?

Significance

The focus on Middle Powers is a suitable approach to the study of the international system and its processes because it provides an unfamiliar and sometimes truer angle on the history of classifying states into groups. In this case, not only did the position of the Middle Power in the international hierarchy change, but it also seems to be the main result of the changing ideas about international hierarchy. At the same time, it seems that the focus on materialist forces of capitalism, industrialism and military competition cannot fully explain this change (Hobden & Hobson, 2002, p. 121). The focus on perceptions will create new insights on the way non-material forces relate to changes in the international system. Moreover, perceptions give insights into the ongoing historical ideas, opposed to applying current ideas on the history. This will lead to a more historicist, and therefore more accurate understanding of the cases.

Literature review

Several authors have written either about Middle Powers, historical perceptions on international hierarchy or the development of statistics. These works give an understanding of what is currently missing and how these three subjects relate to each other. This will be discussed thoroughly in chapter 1.

Definitions

Middle Powers are defined as states that are perceived as ranking below the Great Powers and above the Minor Powers.¹ Throughout history, the allocation of states into groups has always been subject for political discussion. Nowadays, middle powers are mostly identified according to their material power. However, it is possible that Middle Powers have been perceived in different ways throughout history. This definition of Middle Powers is useful for studying the perceptions on Middle Powers. However, the definition is in no way meant to provide a definite way to identify Middle Powers.

Conceptual framework

In this paper, a neo-Weberian conceptual framework is used to map the ongoing perceptions on Middle Powers in the past. According to this framework, power has multiple dimensions. The different dimensions consist of certain logics on how to perceive states. Based on these dimensions, an international social stratification is formed. The content and relative importance of the different dimensions throughout history can change. The ongoing logic of international social stratification gives insights into the perceptions on Middle Powers. In chapter 2, the neo-Weberian framework is explained in more detail together with a discussion of realist, institutionalist and constructivist explanations for the observed change in 1815 and 1919.

Research design

To answer the research question, two important international negotiations are taken as cases. The first is the Congress of Vienna after the Napoleonic war. The second is the Peace Conference of Paris and subsequently the formation of the League of Nations after the First

¹ Not all international political entities in 1815 and 1919 can properly be defined as states. However, they “were all more or less autonomous political entities and therefore hard to differentiate in functional terms” (Buzan & Little, 2000, p. 375). For this thesis, the differences between the political entities is not of concern and therefore the term ‘state’ is used to refer to all political entities.

World War. Both are postwar junctures in which a new international order was formed. By using the neo-Weberian framework to analyze both negotiations, the logic of distinguishing Middle Powers becomes clear. By focusing on the role of statistics during the negotiations, it becomes clear how it contributed to the overall logic of international social stratification. The comparison of both cases allows for an understanding how statistics changed the overall logic of international social stratification and how this in turn changed the perceptions on Middle Powers.

In practice, this means that the treaties, speeches, proceedings and secondary literature of these conferences are studied. From these works, the ongoing ideas of the formation of the new international order will be charted and assigned accordingly to the dimensions. The negotiations are presented in a chronological order to provide a clear historical narrative of the perceptions on Middle Power during the formation of the international orders. From the analysis, it seems that statistics did contribute to a change of the logic of one dimension. However, the other dimension dominated the overall logic of international social stratification for Middle Powers. Therefore, statistics does not seem to have contributed to the overall change in perceptions on Middle Powers.

Limitations

It should be noted that history is simplified in this thesis. The neo-Weberian framework uses ideal-typifications. While this is beneficial for this research, it is not all explanatory. As Lawson (2012) puts it, “ideal-typifications are not meant to represent ‘actual history’ but to act as simplified maps of historical reality with the goal of specifying causal configurations which, in turn, act as ‘portable knowledge’ in alternative cases”. Further research would therefore be needed to understand these alternative cases.

Thesis outline

Chapter 1 discusses the relevant literature in three parts, Middle Powers, historical perceptions and statistics. Chapter 2 outlines the conceptual framework based on theories of international order. Chapter 3 analyses the negotiations about the hierarchy during the Congress of Vienna. Chapter 4 analyses the negotiations about the hierarchy during the Paris Peace Conference. The conclusion will summarize and reflect on the findings.

Chapter 1: literature review

This section starts with a discussion of the literature on Middle Powers. Within this small research field, it seems that Holbraad provides a good historical account of the emergence of the idea of Middle Powers. Then the literature that looks at historical perceptions of international hierarchy is discussed. This strand of literature is relevant because it gives insight into the historical perceptions on the formation of the international order, and the Middle Power as part of the order. Lastly, the literature on statistics is discussed to get to know how it developed and how this relates to international perceptions on Middle Powers. Three main points can be taken from the literature. The first is that the idea of Middle Powers has become stronger during the nineteenth century. The second is that perceptions seem to have shaped the international hierarchy in the past. The third is that the development of statistics might have changed the perceptions of international hierarchy.

To start, the position of the Middle Power in the international order changed between 1815 and 1919. During the Congress of Vienna, a firm line was quickly drawn between the Great Powers and the other members of the international order (Holbraad, 1984, p. 20). While there was a special committee consisting of Middle Powers, they were left relatively powerless. The Paris Peace Conference followed a similar path, with a clear division between the Great Powers and the other Powers (Holbraad, p. 45). However, this time there was a clear notion that the Middle Power deserved a specific position in the institutional hierarchy. It was during these discussions that the term ‘Middle Power’ was first introduced. Still, the Middle Powers did not receive a special position in the League of Nations, making them equal to Minor Powers in the international hierarchy (Holbraad, p. 46-56).

During both 1815 and 1919 the characteristics and position of Middle Powers in the international order were politically debated. The discussions were related to the position and access criteria states to become Middle Powers in the institutional setting. Holbraad (1984, p. 42) finds two ways according to which Middle Powers were distinguished, namely by political tests or by statistical criteria. While this claim seems to hold some truth, Holbraad focusses mostly on the Middle Powers military role in international politics. By doing this he overlooks the fact that the Middle Powers, according to this logic, did not all end up as Middle Powers in the international hierarchy. It therefore seems that other considerations had a part in the perceptions on Middle Powers as well.

From the literature on historical perceptions of international hierarchy, it seems that changing ideas throughout history have shaped the international hierarchy. Keene (2005, p. 11-13) explains that ideas about sovereignty and civilization were important in the historical international political thought. It was only halfway the eighteenth century that states actually started to be graded according to their power (Keene, 2013, p. 274). The grading became a crucial element of the Congress of Vienna, and developed further over time (Keene, 2013, p. 275). Keene mentions that improvements of the science 'statistics' were required for the emergence of this discourse.² However, the ideas about sovereignty and civilization still intermingled with the overall logic of international social stratification throughout the nineteenth century (Keene 2007) (Keene, 2013) (Keene 2014). For the changed international setting between 1815 and 1919, he hypothesizes that civilization decreased in importance in the international social stratification.

While not looking at Middle Powers per se, Keene's work provides a good basis to start looking at Middle Powers. The relation between grading power and statistics seems promising. Especially his hypothesis about the decreasing importance of civilization provokes thoughts how statistics could have contributed to this development. However, it is still unclear how the developing perceptions affected the classification of Middle Powers in both 1815 and 1919, and how statistics is related to these changing perceptions. While this first point will be clarified more during the analysis of the cases, the following literature on statistics should already provide some clarifications on the role of statistics in changing perceptions.

Halfway the nineteenth century the statistical discipline changed from merely descriptive to mathematical. Around 1800, a disciplinary field called statistics came into existence that was focused on gathering state-data (Pearson & Pearson, 1978). At the same time, a different disciplinary field called political arithmetic existed that was more in line with modern mathematical statistics (Pearson & Pearson). In the 1940s and 1950s, these two disciplinary fields started to come together (Desrosières, 2002, p. 13). At the end of the nineteenth century, new methods such as regression and correlation became available that made it possible to understand how one variable related to another (Stigler, 1986) (Desrosières, p. 103). Put simply, it was a development in which both more data was gathered and the understanding of this data deepened.

Within this same period, new possibilities to compare states with statistical data made statistics more important in international politics. From 1830 onwards statistical conferences

² At this time, only a descriptive variant of statistics was available.

were held and in 1887 the International Statistical Institute was founded (Nixon, 1960, pp. 6-24). Throughout this period, the institute concerned itself with the principal branches of statistics and the subject of centralization and standardization of official statistics. However, administrative differences between states made it difficult to compare international data (Randeraad, 2011). In the beginning of the twentieth century, many international organizations that worked with statistics began to emerge (Loveday, 1921, pp. 156-157).³ After the war, these organizations were incorporated into the League of Nations (Loveday, pp. 157-159) (Coats, 1921). The developments of international statistics had therefore made it a part of international politics.

The developments of statistics did not only change the discipline itself, but also changed the perception on society. Statistical thinking reflected a mix of social and political views in line with liberalism (Gigerenzer, 1989, pp. 68-69). While the statistical conception of society was debated, it began to be perceived as the sum of individuals (Gigerenzer, p. 50). After 1900, statistics started to be seen as a tool for providing quantitative solutions to scientific and practical problems. These new ideas could only emerge because of the increasing amounts of data and data-analysis methods. The developments in statistics therefore enabled a change in discourse, ideas and norms.

While the conception of state and society changed during this period, it is not known how these changes had an effect on perceptions of international hierarchy. However, it is likely that the developments in statistics caused a change in discourse, ideas and norms here as well. It is therefore plausible that international thought and specifically the perceptions on Middle Powers would be transformed because of statistical developments.

While not providing a sufficient answer to the research question yet, these accounts offer some valuable insights. The current literature on Middle Powers traces the development of the idea of Middle Powers, but cannot explain the observed changes between 1815 and 1919. It seems that the research on Middle Powers should be expanded to include historical ideas to explain the Middle Power position in international politics. The development of statistics in the nineteenth century is likely to be related to the changed position of the Middle Power by changing the discourse of international hierarchy. However, a lot is still left unexplained. The next section will help to clarify the relation between Middle Powers, perceptions and statistics.

³ E.g. the International Labour Office (1901), the international Institute of Agriculture (1905), the International Health office (1907) and the International Bureau of Commercial Statistics (1912) (Nixon, 1960, p. 22).

Chapter 2: conceptual framework

To understand what ideas set the Middle Powers apart from the other Powers, it is necessary to look at theories of international order formation. These theories provide explanations for the formation of the international hierarchy and subsequently for the position of Middle Powers within the hierarchy. Three theories are relevant for this research, namely realism, institutionalism and a hard to define approach that will be called constructivism, but contains elements of post-structuralism and historical sociology as well. It seems that the realist focus on power and the institutionalist focus on democracy provide only a partial explanation. The constructivist approach provides a more complete explanation by looking at ongoing ideas to explain the hierarchy. Moreover, it is the only theory that allows for a focus on the contribution of statistics on the perceptions on the Middle Power in international politics. This section will start with a discussion of these theories and then moves on to explain the neo-Weberian framework.

The realists see the international order as a result of the distribution of power between states. Gilpin (1981, p. 10) argues that the social arrangements reflect the relative power of the states involved. When the relative power of states changes, there is a disequilibrium of power. During such a disequilibrium there will be a challenge between the new order and the old order. The victors build a new order according to their own interests that reflects the new distribution of power. Order-building is therefore seen as cyclical, meaning that it is always the distribution of power that is at the core of the change and formation of international order.

According to this theory, the position of Middle Powers in international politics depends on the amount of Great Powers in the international order. Both the Napoleonic war and the First World War are identified as a challenge between the old and the new order. The reason that Middle Powers had a relative weak position in these orders is blamed on the fact that both were multiple power systems – meaning that there were more than three Great Powers (Holbraad, 1984, p. 177). Within such a system, Great Power politics dominates the international order, while the role of the Middle Power is only minimal. Holbraad does note however, that the Middle Powers can become more important in systems with less Great Powers or when the Great Powers are divided because of conflict and rivalry (Holbraad).

This framework of looking at Middle Powers provides some interesting points. The first is that both 1815 and 1919 were significant moments of change in the international order. The second is that the role of Middle Powers was limited during both moments because of the multiple system. However, it seems that the setting in 1815 and 1919 are different. Moreover, the Middle Power position was different during both moments as well. The realist focus on

power does not seem to offer a complete explanation. Ikenberry (2014, p. 7) therefore suggests that this approach does not properly explain the macro-shifts in the global system – that is, the basic units and organizing logic of the global system.

In line with this critique, institutionalists would argue that the rise of democracy during the nineteenth century enabled the non-Great Powers to participate more in the international order. The rise of democracy caused a shift to a constitutional logic based on institutions and rules. A democratic state is more transparent, decentralized and open (Ikenberry, 2001, p. 76). Because of this, it is able to create more binding institutions and establish more credible restraints and commitments than nondemocracies (Ikenberry, p. 75). It was during the nineteenth century that most states shifted from monarchies to democracies (Ikenberry, p. 78). The development of democracy and subsequently the new kind of order would therefore enable Middle Powers to participate in the international order.

However, this is still only a partial explanation. The difference between 1815 and 1919 does not seem to constitute a shift of one logic. In 1919, power was still an important differentiation between states. Moreover, the enemies were mostly excluded from the negotiations. While democracy seems to be an important aspect in the new order in 1919, it seems that the macro-shift during the nineteenth century consisted of a shift of multiple logics.

Constructivists offer a more complete explanation by suggesting that a changing conception of power was the reason for the observed change between 1815 and 1919. Buzan (2014, p. 247) argues that developments in the long nineteenth century caused a change in the dominant mode of production – a complex package of material and social changes. This changed the material and the ideational foundations of power (Buzan, p. 251). Moreover, all kinds of developments can change the conception of power, introducing the possibility that statistics contributed to this change as well. Therefore, one has to look at the ongoing conception of power to understand the perception on Middle Powers in 1815 and 1919.

The neo-Weberian framework can be used to unravel the perceptions on Middle Powers throughout history. The conception of power in this sense is not only based on material facts, but is based on the different logics in the multiple dimensions (Keene, 2014, p. 660). Each dimension has its own different logic of stratifying states. Together the different logics form the overall logic of international social stratification, which can be understood as the distribution of power among states and the formation of groups of states who occupy similar positions within that distribution (Keene, p. 660). The dominance and the content of the dimensions can change over time, thereby creating different discourses and logics of

international social stratification. Essentially, the logics of international social stratification are the ways that states are perceived.

Keene distinguishes three dimensions of international social stratification in the nineteenth century (Keene, 2014, p. 664). The first one is ‘grading of powers’, of which the logic is based on comparing states and rank them on certain aspects. The second one is ‘civilization’, according to which the world is divided into barbarous and civilized states. The third is ‘sovereignty’, of which the logic is based on the conception of what the government of states should be like. Each dimensions can change over time in both relevance and content.

The contribution of the development of statistics on the perceptions of Middle Powers become evident by mapping the content of the dimensions. The content of the dimensions captures the ongoing logic of stratifying Middle Powers in the international order. By looking at the use of statistics during the negotiations in 1815 and 1919, it becomes clear in what way the knowledge of statistics influenced the content and importance of the dimensions and in turn how this changed the logic stratifying Middle Powers in the international order.

To summarize, constructivism offers the best conceptual framework to understand the contribution of statistics to the changed perceptions on Middle Powers between 1815 and 1919. Still, the realist and institutional theories provide some insights. Most important, both 1815 and 1919 are postwar junctures during which a new order was built. In addition, there seems to be a macro-shift during the nineteenth century. The neo-Weberian framework makes it possible to understand the logic of stratification and how Middle Powers were perceived by providing three dimensions of stratification, namely ‘grading of powers’, ‘civilization’ and ‘sovereignty’. The use of statistical knowledge in the logic of these dimensions does in turn make it possible to detect its contribution to the overall perception on middle powers.

Chapter 3: The Congress of Vienna

The Congress of Vienna consisted of a sequence of conferences after the Napoleonic wars. During these conferences, a hierarchy was formed in which the Great Powers had a central role. In the meanwhile, a Middle Power class in the international order was starting to take shape. First, the unofficial hierarchical divisions before the actual Congress are discussed. Then the negotiations during the Congress and its final hierarchy are discussed. The third part looks at the importance of the logics of ‘sovereignty’ and ‘civilization’ for the Middle Power class. The

last part looks at the importance of the territorial disputes for both the Middle Power position, as well as the importance of statistics in the overall logic. It seems that statistical data was not very important for the distinction of the Middle Powers in the international hierarchy. Moreover, both the ‘sovereignty’ and ‘civilization’ dimensions intermingled with the final stratification of Middle Powers.

The events before the Congress of Vienna

Two important treaties led to the first divisions between Powers before the Congress of Vienna. The first was the Treaty of Chaumont in 1814. This treaty led to the formation of the Quadruple Alliance between Prussia, Russia, Great Britain and Austria. While they had already come together several times, there had still been too many disagreements for an effective alliance (Webster, 1934, pp. 24-31). Only after the Treaty of Chaumont were they able to form an effective alliance and defeat Napoleon. Moreover, the Alliance was to continue for twenty years after the war, forming the basis of the Great Power group during the Congress (Webster, p. 32). The Treaty of Chaumont thus created the first division between the Great Powers and the other Powers.

The second important treaty was the Treaty of Paris in 1814. This treaty was signed after the defeat of Napoleon by the initial Quadruple Alliance, France, Spain, Portugal and Sweden. However, the countries in the Quadruple Alliance had added a secret article stating that the decisions “shall be regulated at the Congress upon the principles determined upon by the Allied Powers amongst themselves” (Webster, 1934, p. 45). The article was shown to France, but not to the Spain, Portugal and Sweden (Webster, p. 45). While the four Great Powers strengthened their position, France, Portugal, Sweden and Spain became a group of Middle Powers in the international order.

While the initial division between states seem to follow the realist logic of military power, this is only a partial explanation. The Great Powers did indeed possess most military power. Next were the Middle Powers Spain, Portugal and Sweden with a less powerful, but still substantial, military. However, when comparing numbers, there were big differences in army size, population and territory within both groups as well. This begs the question of what logic had set apart the Middle Power group from both the Great Powers and the Minor Powers.

It seems that a statistical conception of power was not an important aspect of the division between the Great Powers and Middle Powers. Osiander’s (1994, p. 236) remarks that population was one of the most important determinant of military power since the introduction of conscription. However, this does not hold up when comparing Prussia, as the weakest Great

Power, and Spain, as the Middle Power with the largest territory and population (Kissinger, 1973, p. 157). Both were of similar size and population and both had suffered heavy losses during the war. Numbers therefore do not seem to have been important for the division between Great Powers and Middle Powers.

Instead, the Middle Powers were set apart as a group by their medium military relevance in the war. While Prussia had been able to drastically increase its military power due to administrative military reforms, Spain failed to do so (Nicolson, 1946, p. 22) (Jensen, 2007, pp. 16-17). In addition, Prussia's military contribution to the war had been crucial to the defeat of Napoleon, while Spain's was not. However, while the Middle Powers had participated in Napoleon's defeat, other Minor Powers with seemingly similar strength had not. The importance of actual victory can also be seen from the fact that Prussia and Great Britain got a stronger negotiation position within the Great Powers after being responsible for beating Napoleon during his return (Nicolson, p. 235). The logic of 'grading of powers', therefore seems to be based on the military relevance.

Furthermore, France was able to maintain some negotiation power because of the restoration of the monarchy. After the defeat of Napoleon, king Louis XVIII from the Bourbon house returned to the throne (Webster, 1934, p. 39). Even though France had been the enemy, it became apparent to some that a Bourbon France could not be excluded from taking part in the arrangements made (Webster, p. 46) (Kissinger, 1973, p. 151). In this case, the return of the monarchy in France boosted its negotiation position. Therefore, it seems that the logic of 'sovereignty' was important to the overall logic of international social stratification as well.

The discussions during the Congress of Vienna

During the Congress of Vienna, the divisions between states were not as obvious anymore as during the war. To start, none of the Great Powers had even realized until one day before the actual Congress that there should be an organizational hierarchy of some sort (Nicolson, 1946, pp. 136-137). While the Great Powers felt that they should have a central role in the negotiations, the assumption had been that all sovereign and independent states were in theory equal (Nicolson, p. 137). A division between the Great Powers and the other Power based on military relevance did not seem to have enough legitimacy.

The discussions about the organizational problem did not involve statistical data. On the one hand it was suggested that the whole Congress should be summoned, while on the other hand it was suggested that the Great Powers should merely announce their supreme direction (Nicolson, 1946, p. 138). In the end, however, it was decided that "those who have

borne the principal share in the councils and conduct of the war and by those that framed the several treaties” should take the leading role (Nicolson, p. 139). Prussia still proposed to divide the business of the Congress into Territorial Questions, Questions of Regional Interest, and Questions of General Interest (Nicolson, p. 140). Although the previous division based on military relevance remained, statistical data of size and territory was not used to compare states or as a legitimation for the classifying of states. It therefore seems that numbers were not at the basis of the logic of ‘grading of powers’ and the distinction of Middle Powers.

In the meanwhile, the initial distinction between the Great Powers and the Middle Powers was under pressure. First, Great Britain proposed to include France and Spain into the council of the Big Four (Nicolson, 1946, p. 138). The Prussians, however, wanted to reserve the right of ‘initiation’ to the Four (Nicolson, p. 138). However, when communicating this with France and Spain, France objected (Nicolson, p. 142). France argued that the Big Four possessed no historical, legal, logical or moral justification (Nicolson, p. 142). In response, the group of six was expanded to the Eight signatories of the Treaty of Paris (Nicolson, p. 142). The logic of ‘grading of powers’ therefore seemed under pressure to justify the distinction between the Great Powers and the Middle Powers.

In the end, however, statistical data became apparent in the logic of international social stratification in the final hierarchical organization. Two committees were created. First the Committee of Five, consisting of the Four and France, and second the Committee of Eight, consisting of all the signatories of the Treaty of Paris (Webster, 1934, p. 76). The Great Powers argued that France could not be excluded from the Committee of Five because of its size and population (Osiander, 1994, p. 237). An exclusion of France would undermine the legitimacy of their leadership based on power. In this case, statistical data was used to set apart the Great Powers from the Middle Powers. However, as noted earlier, the return of France’s monarchy was a prerequisite for its rise in the international hierarchy.

Civilization and sovereignty

While the logic of ‘grading of powers’ was used to legitimize the final hierarchy, both the logic of ‘civilization’ and ‘sovereignty’ were apparent during the discussions as well. The logic of ‘civilization’ is most apparent in the case of Spain. Despite its limited military power and heavy losses, including the loss of control over its colonies, it had been proposed to include Spain in the most important negotiations. It seems that Spain’s national resistance caused the emergence of the stereotype that Spain was idealistic and self-sacrificing (Payne, 2011, p. 141). This had even inspired the German’s to rise up against Napoleon after their initial defeat

(Nicolson, 1946, pp. 23-24). Moreover, since 1812, Spain got the most liberal constitution of Europe (Payne, p. 144). It therefore seems that the logic of 'civilization' was responsible for Spain's rise in the international social stratification.

Spain's final exclusion from the top negotiations on the other hand, can be attributed to both the logic of 'sovereignty' and 'civilization'. For the logic of 'sovereignty' it was important that the hierarchical social set-up was legitimate (Osiander, 1994, p. 209). The legitimacy of the highest political office-holder was derived from social standing and legality of accession (Osiander, p. 209). With the restoration of the monarchy in Spain, the liberal constitution was repudiated, the Inquisition was re-established and Spain became an autocracy (Payne, 2011, p. 144) (Phillips & Phillips, 2015, p. 279). Following this, Spain was excluded from the Great Powers and its objections to the Final Act of the Congress were ignored (Nicolson, 1946, p. 243). While none of the Middle Powers had much influence on the Final Act, Spain's descend on the international social stratification can be credited to its changes on civilizational and sovereign aspects.

The final division between the Middle Powers and the Minor Powers seemed less based on the actual power distinctions like with the Great Powers. While the three Middle Powers all had a relative big territory and population, they were too weak to have a significant role in the overall balance of power. What had set them apart from the other Powers was the fact that they had participated in the fight against Napoleon. Moreover, they all scored relatively high on the 'civilization' and 'sovereignty' dimension. Other Powers of relative size and population who 'failed' on these dimensions, such as Saxony and Naples, became victim to the territory interests of the Great Powers. While the Middle Powers did not have an influence in the important negotiations about the restoration of Europe, their territories were not harmed and they had a standing on their own in international politics. It therefore seems that a 'sufficient score' on the dimensions of 'civilization' and 'sovereignty' were prerequisites for the position of Middle Powers in the international hierarchy.

Hostility over the territorial disputes and the importance of statistics

A short burst of hostility between the Great Powers during the territorial disputes changed the importance of Middle Powers. Prussia, who had felt left out during the negotiations, threatened to go to war. Following this event, Great Britain, France and Austria signed a secret treaty of alliance in the case Russia and Prussia would attack (Webster, 1934, p. 114). More important, Austria allied with several smaller German states (Kissinger, 1973, p. 165). This case follows Holbraad's realist account in which the importance of Middle Powers is the result

of the amount of and the relations between Great Powers in the system. It seems that the kind of power system does indeed contribute to a changing role and maybe even changing perceptions on Middle Powers.

At the same time, statistics gained importance during the territorial disputes. The measurements of territories and estimation of population figures by a statistical committee proved crucial to solving the allocation of territory between the Great Powers. (Osiander, 1994, p. 168). However, its measurements of population and territory were only used for the disputed territories, and it remained absent in the overall logic of international social stratification. While territories itself were graded on their size and population, the state was apparently seen as consisting of more than just size and territory. Even though statistics was becoming more important, it was not used as a way of grading states.

It is interesting to note that some states opposed a more complex statistical assessment of territories. France argued that the purely 'enumeration of souls' bore no relation to the actual human value of the territories transferred (Nicolson, 1946, p. 147). However, Prussia opposed to this (Webster, 1934, p. 90). This would suggest that Prussia was aware that its relatively weak negotiation position would be harmed by the switch to a grading based on measurements (Kissinger, 1973, p. 157). However, the statistical discipline at the time, which originated in Prussia, focused just on simple population figures (Zande, 2010). Moreover, statistical methods did not allow for measuring aspects more complex than population (Webster, p. 91). Therefore, it is hard to understand the definite reason for Prussia's opposition.

To summarize, the perceptions on Middle Powers seemed to be based on the logics of all three dimensions. Statistics had a minor role in the distinction between the Great Powers and the Middle Powers as it was only used to legitimize France's Great Power status. The Middle Powers were mostly distinguished by their medium relevance during the war. Still, their role in the overall balance of power was small. It therefore seems that the esteem in the dimensions of 'civilization' and 'sovereignty' were important for the position of the Middle Powers in the international order. While they did not have significant power in the international negotiations, their territories were unharmed in contrast to other Minor Powers.

Chapter 4: The Paris Peace Conference and the League of Nations

In 1919, countries from all over the world came together to restore the damages and make agreements to prevent a new war. Statistical data had become available on a wide scale and the understanding of this data had deepened. Moreover, the idea of the existence of a Middle Power had become stronger. However, it seems that a logic of statistical comparisons was overshadowed by other logics in the final international social stratification, leading to a hierarchy without a specific Middle Power class in the new institutional hierarchy. This section starts with the hierarchical developments at the Paris Peace Conference. Then it continues to the negotiations about the organizational set-up of the League of Nations. Lastly, the role of statistics during non-hierarchical negotiations is discussed. Before beginning, it should be noted that the logic of social stratification had grown more complex than in 1815. Therefore, only the relevant aspects of the different logics for the Middle Powers are discussed.

The Paris Peace Conference

At the start of the Conference, two hierarchical divisions were made. The first hierarchical division was again between the Great Powers and the other Powers based on military power. In January 1919, the leaders of the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan⁴ held a preliminary meeting to converse about the set-up of the Conference (Temperley, 1920, I, p. 247). They decided that the five Great Powers should have a central role (Nicolson, 1933, p. 114). President Wilson stated in a speech that they were “a single overwhelming, powerful group of nations who shall be the trustees of the peace of the world” (Temperley, 1920, III, pp.58-59). Clemenceau had been more straightforward and argued that their military power allowed them to take their elite position (Holbraad, 1984, p. 47). Either way, the distinction was based on their superior strength in wars and therefore it seems that the logic of ‘grading of powers’ was at the root of this distinction.

Comparing statistical data had some importance for distinguishing the Middle Powers from the Minor Powers. During the preliminary meeting, it was decided that Belgium, Serbia and Brazil were Middle Powers (Temperley, 1920, I, p. 248). For Belgium and Serbia, the main reason seems to be their fierce resistance against the Central Powers during the war (Holbraad, 1984, p. 45). Brazil’s position, as a neutral, seems mostly based on its size, population and

⁴ Japan is an interesting case. It was not fully part of the Great Powers, but definitely not part of the Middle Powers as well. However, a discussion of Japan’s position in the international social stratification is out of the scope of this research.

central role in South-America (Holbraad, p. 46).⁵ While measurements were important in Brazil's case, Belgium and Serbia were seen as Middle Powers for a different reason. It therefore seems that two ideas of grading, war-effort on the one side and measurements on the other competed within the 'grading of power' dimension.

However, the other logics of international social stratification intermingled with the Middle Power position within the hierarchy as well. For one, the division between the Middle Powers and the Minor Powers was under pressure because of notion of equality of states. President Wilson had proclaimed that all states were equal in the international order (Osiander, 1994, p. 258). Still, a distinction was made by the number of Plenipotentiaries each state was allowed to bring to the plenary sessions (Temperley, 1920, I, p. 248). The Great Powers got five each, Serbia, Belgium and Brazil got three each and the other Powers got two or one each (Temperley, p. 248). This difference was only symbolic since all decisions during the plenary sessions must be unanimous instead of depending on votes (Temperley, p. 248). While the Great Powers held a similar position as during the Congress of Vienna, the notion of equality seems to have reduced the Middle Power position to level with the Minor Power position.

Furthermore, the logic of 'civilization' and 'sovereignty' could alter the position of a state in the institutional hierarchy. The major political leaders repeatedly mentioned the barbarity of war and military in their speeches (Temperley, 1920, III, pp. 51-98). Germany and the other Central Powers, as the barbarous initiators of the war, were therefore excluded from the negotiations. Moreover, liberalist values, self-determination and democracy had become increasingly important in the logic of international social stratification (Osiander, 1994, p. 257). Next to the grading, states therefore had to adhere to the ideas of the logics of 'civilization' and 'sovereignty' as well to become a Middle Power.

The League of Nations

The structure of the international hierarchy changed with the creation of the League of Nations. This international organization was meant to be a negotiation forum consisting of states to prevent a new war. It consisted of an assembly in which all the states were represented, and an executive committee called the Council. After some negotiations, it was decided that the Council would exist of five permanent seats for the Great Powers, and four non-permanent seats, which were to be rotated among the other states (Myers, 1926). While the Great Powers still had a majority, they had given up some of their initial elitist power. The creation of non-

⁵ The official documents of this meeting were not available for this research. However, the literature suggest that Brazil was indeed admitted to the Middle Power group on the basis of size and population.

permanent seats therefore allowed other powers to participate in the negotiations on the highest level of the international order.

During the creation of the League of Nations, the distinction between Middle Powers and Minor Powers had become problematic. Initially there was a strong sense that there should be a Middle Power position in the institutional hierarchy of the League of Nations. The term 'Middle Power' was first mentioned and President Wilson had initially suggested that the states were to be divided into three classes, with the secondary class consisting of states "ranking next after the great powers" (Myers, 1926, p. 691). When submitted to experts however, the comment was made "nothing can be imagined as much more likely to cause discord than an attempt to have some thirty or forty states classify themselves into "powers ranking next after the great powers" and "minor states." (Myers, p. 692). It therefore seems that previous logics of distinguishing the Middle Powers had ceased to exist in the negotiations.

The Middle Powers lost their position in the international order because of conflicting logics. The old logic of distinguishing Middle Powers had mostly been based on the strength in wars. However, since war was seen as barbarous, this logic was losing credibility. After all, if war were barbarous, a classification on military power would be an uncivilized way of classifying states. While the Middle Power position ceased to exist, the Great Powers remained in their elite position. This seems to be because the distinction between Middle Powers and Minor Power is only of little importance and therefore easily overshadowed by other logics of international social stratification. There is relatively little negotiation power in both of these classes. Therefore, with both the idea of equality and the illegitimacy of the main grading tool, Middle Powers were not able to keep their position in the international hierarchy.

This would suggest that the Middle Power group only exists in the international hierarchy when the logic 'grading of powers' is dominant. Both during 1815 and the beginning of the negotiations in 1919, the Middle Power was distinguished from Minor Powers. However, with the weakening of the logic of 'grading of powers' and the overshadowing of the other logics, the Middle Power position ceased to exist. Only when the Middle Power group already exists, it is possible for the logics of 'sovereignty' and 'civilization' to interfere with the positioning of certain states into the different groups. The idea of a Middle Power therefore seems to be a mostly grading related.

Grading of civilizations

While not apparent during the organizational discussions of both the Paris Peace Conference and the League of Nations, a new logic of grading was appearing with the help of statistics. With the creation of the League of Nations, one of the first negotiations of international organizations to be incorporated was the International Statistical Institute together with other organizations that relied on statistical information. Work was being done to standardize and organize the statistical methods on international scale. In 1919 and 1920, the statistical committee published statistical data on economic and financial situations, budgets and budget estimates, national debt figures and trade values of the most important states for debates on these topics (Loveday, 1921, pp. 158-159). The new available data therefore made it possible to grade states on new aspects.

This new content of the 'grading of powers' dimensions was not only focused on the so-called hard power, but also on the extent to which states were civilized. Developments in statistics enabled for a precise measurement of the economic and social conditions of states. It was reasoned that the scores on indicators of economic and social conditions could give insights into the political stability (March, 1921, p. 629). A political unstable state would be more prone to war and was therefore more barbarous. In this sense, these indicators made it possible to scale every state from civilized to barbarous. This dimension therefore began to take the form of a grading of civilizations.

To summarize, even though statistics was more sophisticated and data was increasingly available, the perceptions on Middle Powers were mostly based on different logics. Brazil seems to be the only Middle Power that was graded on its size and population. During the Paris Peace Conference, the Middle Power position was only slightly different from the Minor Power position and in the League of Nations, the Middle Power was equal to the Minor Powers. The cause for this seems to be the becoming barbarous of grading states on strength in wars. With no clear idea how to grade Middle Powers, the logic of 'sovereignty' and 'civilization' overshadowed the logic of 'grading of powers'. While not being used during the formation of the hierarchy, it seems that a logic of a grading of civilizations was emerging.

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to answer the following question: How did developments in the field of statistics contribute to a change in the perceptions on Middle Powers between 1815 and 1919? More specifically, Keene's neo-Weberian framework was used to analyze the role of statistics on Middle Power perceptions during the negotiations about the formation of a new international order in 1815 and 1919. The analysis of both cases shows that the statistical developments led to a minor change in grading Middle Powers. However, with the becoming barbarous of war in 1919, military strength was not seen as a legitimate way of grading. This led the 'grading of powers' dimension to diminish in importance in the overall logic of international social stratification. Despite the statistical developments, new grading mechanism, such as the grading of civilizations, did not become part of the logic of 'grading of powers' during the negotiations. Moreover, the 'sovereignty' and 'civilization' dimensions overshadowed the overall logic of distinguishing Middle Powers in 1919, causing it to lose its position in the international hierarchy. Due to the unimportance of the 'grading of power' dimension, statistics did not have an actual contribution to the change in the perceptions on Middle Powers.

The results seem to contrast Keene's prediction that the logic of 'civilization' has decreased in importance over the nineteenth century. If anything, this logic seems relatively more dominant in the overall logic of international social stratification of Middle Powers. Especially if you take into account the weakness of the 'grading of power' dimension in the case of Middle Powers. However, since Middle Powers seem to follow a different logic than the Great Powers, it could still be that this hypothesis holds for the Great Powers.

It should also be noted that the power system seems to contribute to the perception on Middle Powers as well. As Holbraad's analysis of Middle Powers shows, the importance of Middle Powers in international politics is dependent on the amount of Great Powers in the international system. As observed from the short burst of hostility during the Congress of Vienna, this does indeed seem to contribute to the role of the Middle Power in international politics. However, because both cases were a multiple system, this thesis has not been able to get a better understanding how the international social stratification of Middle Powers functions in different power systems. It would therefore be interesting for future research to look at different power systems and see if this changes the logic of stratifying Middle Powers.

The discussion of Middle Powers brought up some other interesting other results as well. It seems that the Middle Power is more prone to be perceived according to the logics of the 'sovereignty' and 'civilization' dimension than the Great Powers. This can be attributed both

to the relative unimportance of Middle Powers in terms of military power compared to the Great Power and the relative big difference in institutional power between Great Power group and the other Powers compared to the Middle Power group and the Minor Powers. Most important, the Middle Power seems to be perceived differently than other Powers. This thesis was able to unravel part of these perceptions, but more research is needed to get a better understanding of this curious group of states.

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