

Q: "Prince Metternich is regarded as the incarnation of restoration and reaction." Why?

Explicating Metternich ~~System~~ Era

Metternich ^{era} is known for his attempts in restoring conservative order in Europe and his reaction to revolutionary ideas of liberalism and nationalism. The period of 1815 to 1848 is known as Metternich's era because he had introduced policies for Europe that favored his interests in Europe. Metternich system of 1815 was aimed at preserving Vienna settlements and consolidating Austrian hegemony across ^{Central} Europe.

Expounding Why Prince Metternich is regarded as Incarnation of Restoration

Following aspects clearly show why Metternich is regarded as incarnation of restoration.

a- Restoration of Habsberg Rule in Central Europe

Metternich was the most influential player at Congress of Vienna and according to

Henry Kissinger "Metternich gained the best interests at Congress of Vienna and established Austrian hegemony on Central Europe." "By restoring Habsberg rule in Central Europe during Congress of Vienna, he became the incarnation of restoration."



Figure: Large AUSTRIAN EMPIRE ESTABLISHED BY METTERNICH in 1815 - ED

Advocate of restoring legitimate crowned rulers in Europe

Metternich believed that restoring legitimate crowned rulers in Europe was the only way to preserve Vienna settlements and continue his hegemony in ^{central} Europe. For this purpose, he asserted on the restoration of Bourbons in France, Spain, Naples; restoration of Pope in Papal states and House of Orange in Holland during Congress of Vienna. That is why he is known as incarnation of restoration.

c- Favor of Conservative Order

Metternich favored preservation of conservative order in Europe for preventing the ~~suppression~~ ^{eruption} of revolutionary ideas of liberalism and nationalism in his Empire. ~~As there was a balance of power in Europe that Metternich feared more than ideas of revolution because Austria was a multi ethnic empire~~ ^{Napoleonic regime had disrupted} so he favored Holy Alliance that was established in 1815 for maintaining the status-quo established by Congress of Vienna in Europe. That is why Metternich is known as incarnation of restoration.

d. Restoration of Austrian rule in German states and Italian states

Metternich had successfully restored Austrian control over German states as well as Italian states. Because through his diplomacy Austrian Empire acquire influential position in Parma, Modena, Tuscany, Lombardy, Venetia in kingdom of Italy and strong position in German Confederation, under congress of Vienna. That is why he is known as incarnation of restoration.

e. Restoration of Balance of Power in Europe

Metternich restored balance of power in Europe that was disoriented by Napoleonic regime in which Napoleon led France toward aggression and established Confederation of Rhine, Kingdom of Westphalia and Italy. He contained France to the East by consolidating his control over Italian Peninsula while preserving Vienna settlements. He had also balanced the ^{influence of} Bourbons in Kingdom of Italy. Thus, he is known for restoration of peace in Europe because of his efforts and diplomacy in restoring Balance of Power in Europe.

Elucidating Why Metternich is known as Incarnation of Reaction

According to A.J. Taylor, "Metternich is a symbol of resistance against revolution." Following aspects clarify why he is known as incarnation of reaction.

a- Suppression of revolutionary movements in Europe

Metternich was key architect of Congress System and he used it to suppress the revolutionary movements in Europe. That is why he is known as incarnation of reaction. Its best example is Congress of Laibach of 1821 in which he intervened militarily in Naples to crush the revolution.

b- Censorship and restriction on the Press

Metternich imposed censorship on Press to suppress revolutionary ideas that challenged his hegemony in Central Europe. Thomas Carlyle explained this environment as: "Speech is silver, silence is golden; but press-censorship is glistening mintage and even better." That is why he is known as symbol of reaction.

c- Suppression of Political Activists

Metternich suppressed political activists, particularly those advocating for constitutional reforms and national unity. For instance, Metternich suppressed the efforts of Ypsilanti during Greek war of Independence. That is why he is known as incarnation of reaction.

d- Opposition to Zollverein Expansion

Metternich opposed Zollverein expansion^{in 1834} as it was a threat to Austrian hegemony in German Confederation. So, his efforts to oppose Zollverein led by Prussian validates his resistance and reaction to attempts that could challenge his dominance in Europe. That is why he is regarded as incarnation of reaction.

e. Attempts Made by Metternich in 1848 to Resist ^{German} Revolution

Metternich, with the support of other conservative leaders, intervened militarily in German states to suppress revolution of 1848. He successfully contained revolutionary forces of German states due to military defeats faced by revolutionary forces. That is why he is known as symbol of resistance to revolution.

Concluding Thoughts

Metternich is regarded as an incarnation of restoration and reaction due to his efforts made between 1815 and 1848 to preserve balance of power in Europe and to counter revolutionary ideas that could disintegrate his multi-ethnic Austrian Empire. Although he used repressive measures to suppress the revolutionary ideas in German Confederation

and kingdom of Italy, he still continued to preserve Austrian hegemony in Central Europe from 1815 to 1848.