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Q2 The period 1815-1848 in Europe is characterized as a struggle between the "Forces of Continuity" (conservatism) and the "Forces of Change" (Liberalism and Nationalism). Analyze the significant events and movements that ultimately let to the triumph of change in the Revolution of 1848?

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Instructions

1. Give numbering to headings
2. Do not write lengthy paragraphs. Write medium sized paragraphs with headings.
3. There should be around 15 headings for 20 marks question.
4. Draw figures/diagram/flowchart where needed.
5. Start new question from fresh page.
6. Each answer should start with introduction and end with Conclusion.
7. Give more weightage to expressedly asked part/s of the question.
8. Change colour scheme for references to give them more visibility.
9. Manage time well.
10. Wide page borders are discouraged. Should be reasonable.
11. Avoid writing wrong references.

Introduction

Answer The period 1815-1848 in Europe is rightly described as a struggle between continuity and change, because the conservative order established after Napoleon constantly clashed with rising liberal, nationalist, and social forces. Although conservatism dominated the early decades, cumulative political, ideological developments ensured that change ultimately triumphed in the Revolutions of 1848.

1. Faces of Continuity (1815-1830)
a) Congress of Vienna (1814-15)
The Congress of Vienna symbolized Continuity:
- Restored old monarchies (Bourbons in France, Habsburg dominance in Italy)
- Rejected popular sovereignty and nationalism
- Established the Concert of Europe to suppress revolution.

Metternich's system aimed at stability, legitimacy, and balance of power, but it ignored the political aspirations of people.

b) Metternich System and Repression:
- Holy Alliance justified intervention against revolutions.
- Secret police networks crushed liberal-nationalist groups.
- Carlsbad Decrees (1819) censored press and universition.
- These policies maintained order but deepened resentment, planting seeds of revolt

2 Ideological Forces of Change:

a- Liberalism
- Demanded constitutional government, civil liberties, and rule of law.
- Supported by middle classes, professionals and students.
- Opposed absolutism and aristocratic privilege.

Liberalism challenged political continuity by demanding reform instead of restoration.

b- Nationalism
- Inspired by French Revolution.
- Sought nation-states based on shared language and culture.
- Particularly strong in Germany, Italy, Poland and Hungary.

Nationalism undermined multinational empires like Austria and Ottoman Empire.

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5 Immediate Causes and the Revolutions of 1848

- The collapse of continuity came in 1848, when multiple factors converged:

a) France as the Spark

- Overthrow of Louis Philippe
- Proclamation of the Second Republic
- Introduction of universal male suffrage

b) Spread Across Europe.

- German states: Frankfurt Parliament demanded unity and constitution

- Austrian Empire: revolts in Vienna, Hungary, Bohemia
- Italian states: uprisings against Austrian control.

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Why Change Triumphed

- Although many revolutions failed in the short term, continuity was irreversibly broken because:
- Absolutism was delegitimized.
- Serfdom abolished in much of Central Europe.
- Constitutionalism became unavoidable.
- National unification of Italy and Germany followed in later decades.

Conclusion:

Europe witnessed a prolonged struggle between restoration and reform between 1815 to 1848. The Congress of Vienna temporarily imposed continuity but it failed to accommodate liberalism, nationalism and social change. Repeated revolutions, economic crises, and ideological maturation ensured that by 1848, the Conservative order collapsed under its own rigidity.

(B) Day:
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Q4 "The great alliances have always been the most fertile cause of war." (Benjamin Disraeli).
Discuss how the formation of pre-war alliances, such as the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance, created a framework of mistrust and inevitability that triggered World war 1?

Introduction:

The formation of pre-First World War Alliances, particularly the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente, transformed Europe from a balance of power system into a rigid, mistrust-driven bloc structure. While alliances were initially defensive, their secret diplomacy, military commitments, and war plans created an atmosphere in which a localized crisis almost inevitably escalated into a general war in 1914.

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1. Origins and Nature of the Alliance System:

(a) Triple Alliance (1882)
Formed between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.
Objectives:
- To Isolate France
- Secure Germany's eastern and southern flanks
- Provide Austria-Hungary support in the Balkans

Although this alliance was defensive in theory, it encouraged rectless behavior, especially by Austria-Hungary which were confident of German backing

2. Alliance System and Growth of Mutual Mistrust

a) Polarization of Europe:

- Europe split into two hostile camps.
- Diplomatic flexibility declined.
- States viewed international relations through the lens of enemy blocs.

This polarization replaced Co-operation with suspicion, making compromise increasingly difficult.

b) Fear of Encirclement.

- Germany feared strategic encirclement by France and Russia.
- Russia feared isolation and German-Austrian dominance.
- France sought security against German aggression.

Each power believed war was preferable sooner than later, reinforcing fatalism.

3- Militarization and War Planning:

(a) Alliance-Driven Arms Race
- Military build-ups justified by alliance commitments.
- Naval race between Britain and Germany intensified rivalry.
- Standing armies and mobilization timetables became central to security.

b) Rigid War Plans
- Schlieffen Plan (Germany): quick defeat of France, then Russia.

- Plan XVII (France): offensive against Germany.

- Russian rapid mobilization plan.

Then plans left little room for diplomacy once mobilization began.

5. Alliance Commitments and the July Crisis (1914):

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand triggered a chain reaction:

1- Austria-Hungary, backed by Germany's "blank cheque", declared war on Serbia.

2- Russia mobilized to protect Serbia.

3- Germany declared war on Russia and France.

4- Britain entered war to uphold Belgian neutrality and support the Entente.

The alliance system turned a regional dispute into a Continental War.

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Conclusion:

The pre-war alliance system did not merely divided Europe; it institutionalized mistrust, militarized diplomacy and automated escalation.

The Triple Alliance and Triple Entente locked the Great Powers into rigid commitments, ensuring that when crisis struck in 1914, restraint was impossible. While alliance were not the sold cause of World War I, they provided the structural framework that transformed tension into total war.