The rise of nationalism in Europe

Competency-Based Questions

Q1. Frédéric Sorrieu's 1848 print depicted a "utopian vision"of the world. Why is it referred to as a "utopian" vision, and what core political sentiment was he trying to convey through the imagery of peoples marching together?

Q2. *"Napoleon had, no doubt, destroyed democracy in France, but in the administrative field he had incorporated revolutionary principles."* Justify this statement with three logical arguments.

Q3. Imagine you are a merchant traveling from Hamburg to Nuremberg in 1833. Explain how the formation of the *Zollverein* in 1834 would solve the specific economic hurdles you faced during your journey.

Q4. Duke Metternich once remarked, *"When France sneezes, the rest of Europe catches cold."* Analyze the historical context of this statement with reference to the developments of 1830.

Q5. Nationalism did not come about only through wars and territorial expansion. Culture played a vital role. Examine how "Romanticism" as a cultural movement targeted the minds of people to develop nationalist sentiments.

Q6. The unification of Germany was a process led from the top down by the state, rather than a popular revolution from below. Evaluate the role of Otto von Bismarck and the Prussian machinery in achieving this.

Q7. While Italy and Germany both unified in the 19th century, Italy's political fragmentation presented unique hurdles. Explain how Giuseppe Mazzini and Count Cavour approached the problem of Italian unification differently.

Q8. The formation of the nation-state in Britain was not the result of a sudden upheaval or revolution, but of a long-drawn-out process. Analyze the steps that led to the dynamic where English culture dominated the British Isles.

Q9. Why did artists in the 18th and 19th centuries personify nations as female allegories like Marianne and Germania? What was the deeper psychological impact of these allegories on the general public?

Q10. By the last quarter of the 19th century, nationalism lost its idealistic liberal-democratic sentiment and became a narrow creed with limited ends. How did this shift directly transform the Balkan region into a geopolitical "powder keg"?

Source-Based Questions

Source 1: Ernst Renan on 'What is a Nation?'

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

"A nation is the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice and devotion. A heroic past, great men, glory, that is the social capital upon which one bases a national idea. To have common glories in the past, to have a common will in the present, to have performed great deeds together, to wish to perform still more, these are the essential conditions for being a people... A nation is therefore a large-scale solidarity, its existence is a daily plebiscite..."

Sub-questions:

1. What, according to Ernst Renan, forms the "social capital" of a national idea? **(1 Mark)**
2. Define the term 'Plebiscite' as used in the passage. **(1 Mark)**
3. Why does Renan consider a nation to be a "large-scale solidarity"? Explain based on the text. **(2 Marks)**

Source 2: Friedrich List on the Economic Union (*Zollverein*)

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

"The aim of the Zollverein is to bind the Germans economically into a nation. It will strengthen the nation materially as much by protecting its interests externally as by stimulating its internal productivity. It ought to awaken and raise national sentiment through a fusion of individual and provincial interests. The German people have realised that a free economic system is the first condition for a aroused nationality."

Sub-questions:

1. What was the *Zollverein* and when was it formed? **(1 Mark)**
2. According to Friedrich List, what is the "first condition" for awakening a nation's national identity? **(1 Mark)**
3. How does the passage suggest that economic policies can overcome internal political divisions? **(2 Marks)**

Source 3: Wilhelm Wolff on the Silesian Weavers' Revolt (1845)

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

"In these villages (in Silesia) cotton weaving is the most widespread occupation… The misery of the workers is extreme. The desperate need for jobs has been taken advantage of by the contractors to reduce the prices of the goods they order… On 4 June at 2 p.m. a large crowd of weavers emerged from their homes and marched in pairs up to the mansion of their contractor demanding higher wages… A group of them forced their way into the house, smashed its elegant window-panes, plundered it… The contractor fled with his family…"

Sub-questions:

1. Identify the core economic grievance that led the Silesian weavers to revolt against the contractors. **(1 Mark)**
2. How did the contractors take unfair advantage of the weavers' situation? **(1 Mark)**
3. Analyze how this revolt reflects the larger socio-economic crisis (Hunger and Hardship) faced by Europe in the 1840s. **(2 Marks)**

COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS ANSWERS

Answer Key

Answer 1

- **Meaning of Utopian:** A "utopian" vision means a vision of a society that is so ideal that it is unlikely to actually exist. Sorrieu depicted distinct nations at a time when unified nation-states like Germany did not yet exist.
- **Core Sentiment:** He wanted to convey the idea of universal democratic and social republics, showcasing the inevitable triumph of nationalism over absolute monarchies.
- **Symbolism:** By showing people of all ages, classes, and nations marching together, he emphasized solidarity, shared identity, and fraternity among the peoples of Europe.

Answer 2

- **Standardization:** Napoleon introduced the Civil Code of 1804 (Napoleonic Code), which established equality before the law and secured the right to property.
- **Administrative Efficiency:** He simplified administrative divisions, abolished the feudal system, and freed peasants from serfdom and manorial dues.
- **Economic Boost:** He introduced uniform laws, standardized weights and measures, and a common national currency, which facilitated the smooth movement of goods and capital.

Answer 3

- **Removal of Tariff Barriers:** Before 1834, a merchant had to pass through 11 customs barriers to travel from Hamburg to Nuremberg, paying a 5% tax at each. *Zollverein* abolished these inner tariff barriers.
- **Currency Uniformity:** The union reduced the chaotic number of currencies across the German states from over thirty down to just two.
- **Economic Integration:** It created a unified economic territory, binding the German states together economically and indirectly strengthening national sentiments through economic unity.

Answer 4

- **Dominance of French Influence:** Metternich meant that political political shifts or revolutions in France invariably triggered chain reactions across the rest of the European continent.
- **The July Revolution (1830):** The spark of the July Revolution in Paris overthrew the Bourbon kings and installed a constitutional monarchy under Louis Philippe.
- **The Domino Effect:** This event immediately ignited a revolution in Brussels, which led to Belgium breaking away from the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, proving Metternich's theory correct.

Answer 5

- **Rejection of Pure Reason:** Romanticism criticized the glorification of reason and science, focusing instead on emotions, intuition, and mystical feelings to build national unity.
- **Vernacular Language:** Romantics emphasized local languages and folklore (e.g., Grimm Brothers collecting fairy tales) to recover an ancient national spirit and reach illiterate audiences.
- **Art and Music:** Art, poetry, and music were used to shape a collective heritage. For instance, Karol Kurpinski celebrated Polish national struggle through his operas and traditional dances like the polonaise.

Answer 6

- **Bismarck as the Architect:** Otto von Bismarck, the Chief Minister of Prussia, bypassed parliamentary consensus and engineered the unification process using the Prussian army and bureaucracy.
- **Military Strategy:** He led Prussia through three wars over seven years—against Denmark, Austria, and France—all of which ended in Prussian victories.
- **Proclamation of Empire:** The process concluded not with a democratic treaty, but with the proclamation of the Prussian King, William I, as the German Emperor at Versailles in January 1871.

Answer 7

- **Mazzini's Ideological Approach:** Giuseppe Mazzini sought unification from the grassroots level. He formed secret societies like *Young Italy* and believed in a democratic, republican Italy formed via popular uprisings.
- **Cavour's Diplomatic Approach:** Count Cavour, the Chief Minister of Sardinia-Piedmont, was neither a revolutionary nor a democrat. He relied on elite, top-down statecraft.

- **Tactful Alliances:** Cavour engineered a shrewd diplomatic alliance with France, which allowed Sardinia-Piedmont to defeat the Austrian forces in 1859, a feat military force alone couldn't achieve.

Answer 8

- **Act of Union (1707):** The Act of Union between England and Scotland resulted in the formation of the 'United Kingdom of Great Britain', allowing England to systematically impose its influence on Scotland.
- **Suppression of Distinct Identities:** The Catholic clans of the Scottish Highlands were systematically suppressed, forbidden to speak their Gaelic language or wear their national dress.
- **Subjugation of Ireland:** Ireland was deeply divided between Catholics and Protestants. The English helped the Protestants establish dominance, and after a failed revolt by Wolfe Tone, Ireland was forcibly incorporated into the UK in 1801.

Answer 9

- **Concrete Representation:** Abstract ideas like liberty, justice, and the republic are difficult for ordinary citizens to visualize. Allegories gave these abstract ideas a concrete, human form.
- **Symbolism of Values:** Marianne in France wore the red cap and tricolor, representing liberty and the republic. Germania wore a crown of oak leaves, symbolizing heroism.
- **National Cohesion:** These figures became symbols of national unity. Seeing them reminded the public of their shared identity and inspired a sense of duty and maternal loyalty toward the motherland.

Answer 10

- **Ethnic and Geographical Complexity:** The Balkans was a region of immense geographical and ethnic variation (inhabited by Slavs) under the loose control of the decaying Ottoman Empire.
- **Spread of Romantic Nationalism:** As romantic nationalism spread, the various Slavic nationalities broke away from the Ottoman Empire, asserting independence based on historical identity.
- **Imperialist Rivalry:** This internal instability turned the Balkans into a battlefield where major European powers (Russia, Germany, Britain, Austria-Hungary) clashed to extend their own imperial control, directly leading to World War I.

CASE STUDY

Answer Key & Marking Scheme

Answers for Source 1 (Ernst Renan)

1. **Social Capital:** According to Renan, the social capital of a national idea is formed by a heroic past, great men, shared glory, and a history of common endeavors, sacrifice, and devotion.
2. **Plebiscite:** A plebiscite is a direct vote by which all the people of a region are asked to accept or reject a specific proposal (in this context, their daily desire to remain part of that nation).
3. **Large-scale Solidarity:** Renan calls it a solidarity because a nation relies on a collective agreement. It is built on having performed great deeds together in the past and having a shared, common will to perform more great deeds in the present and future.

Answers for Source 2 (Friedrich List)

1. **Zollverein:** The *Zollverein* was a customs union formed in **1834** at the initiative of Prussia to abolish tariff barriers and reduce the number of currencies.

2. **First Condition:** Friedrich List states that a **free economic system** is the first and foremost condition for an aroused nationality.
3. **Overcoming Divisions:** The passage notes that economic policies fuse "individual and provincial interests" together. By creating a unified economic zone, protecting trade interests externally, and boosting internal productivity, it binds people together materially, which weakens narrow regional loyalties in favor of a national identity.

Answers for Source 3 (Silesian Weavers)

1. **Core Grievance:** The core grievance was the drastic reduction in the prices/wages paid to the weavers for the goods they ordered, leading to extreme poverty.
2. **Exploitation:** The contractors exploited the weavers' desperate need for employment to slash their wages, knowing the workers had no other livelihood options.
3. **Larger Crisis of 1840s:** This revolt highlights the widespread distress across Europe in the 1840s, a decade marked by massive population growth, lack of employment, rural migration to overcrowded cities, and severe food shortages. The weavers' desperation shows how economic inequality and industrial shifts pushed the working class to violent popular uprisings.