

AS

History

Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917–1953

7041/2N The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Stalin, 1917–1929

Mark scheme

7041

June 2016

Version: 1.0 Final

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June 2016

Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917–1953

AS History Component 2N The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Stalin, 1917–1929

Section A

- 01** With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two sources is more valuable in explaining divisions within the Communist Party in the USSR in the mid-1920s? **[25 marks]**

Target: AO2

Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the value of the sources in relation to the issue identified in the question. They will evaluate the sources thoroughly in order to provide a well-substantiated conclusion. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will provide a range of relevant well-supported comments on the value of the sources for the issue identified in the question. There will be sufficient comment to provide a supported conclusion but not all comments will be well-substantiated, and judgements will be limited. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **16-20**
- L3:** The answer will provide some relevant comments on the value of the sources and there will be some explicit reference to the issue identified in the question. Judgements will however, be partial and/or thinly supported. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer will be partial. There may be either some relevant comments on the value of one source in relation to the issue identified in the question or some comment on both, but lacking depth and have little, if any, explicit link to the issue identified in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **6-10**
- L1:** The answer will either describe source content or offer stock phrases about the value of the source. There may be some comment on the issue identified in the question but it is likely to be limited, unsubstantiated and unconvincing. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Students must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.

In responding to this question, students may choose to address each source in turn or to adopt a more comparative approach in order to arrive at a judgement. Either approach is equally valid and what follows is indicative of the evaluation which may be relevant.

Source A: in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following:

Provenance and tone

- Stalin was not objective in this source because he was closely embroiled in the power struggle after 1924. He had allied with Kamenev and Zinoviev against Trotsky but by 1925 was turning against his previous allies on the Left of the Party
- Stalin was partly repeating Lenin's own ideas, following the 1921 ban on factions in the Party, with the emphasis on unity in the Party after any debate. However, the emphasis on discipline was also part of Stalin's own make-up, and he firmly believed in it, since he had never been democratic by nature. Stalin goes further with the emphasis on iron discipline and purging elements which he claimed were against the Party's interests
- the tone is very authoritarian, with Stalin not prepared to concede any doubt that his assertions are correct. This was partly because the source reflects Stalin's real concerns about unity, but partly also because as he was General Secretary of the Party, it was in his interest to emphasise the Party's importance.

Content and argument

- Stalin's argument is that, while there was room for debate, at the end of any debate there must be total unity of will and discipline if the Party were to carry out its role of leading the proletariat into a glorious future. There had been considerable debate about issues like NEP
- the source firmly attacks 'factionalism', the putting forward of ideas by individuals or groups in the Party which might go against the official Party line, and the forming of particular groups to pursue their 'factionalist' ideas – usually related to issues about the economy
- the argument is presented as if there can be no doubt or further room for debate. Stalin talks about unity and discipline as if these must be self-evident to any right-thinking Bolshevik/Communist. The emphasis on 'unity' was particularly strong because of the recent experience of the Civil War, when Bolshevik unity had been an important factor in their victory. As General Secretary of the Party, it was also in Stalin's interest to emphasise Party unity, showing himself as Lenin's successor, and giving himself a weapon with which to attack his rivals.

Source B: in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following:

Provenance and tone

- the record is reasonably accurate: although there was censorship, Congresses were major events and their activities were recorded
- the tone of the source is one of tension and ill-feeling. Kamenev, an ‘old Bolshevik’, was clearly worried about events. He feels that power is not being exercised as it should be
- Kamenev would have inside knowledge because he had been a member of the Politburo, but was dismissed in 1925, losing his own power base in Moscow. There is therefore a strong anti-Stalin tone coming through in his speech.

Content and argument

- Kamenev feels that the Secretariat is exercising a power it should not have, including over the Politburo. He was already fighting for his political future
- Kamenev accuses Stalin of undermining the Politburo through the Secretariat. Kamenev champions the Politburo partly because he had been a member. He was also concerned because as part of the united or Left opposition, his politics had become much weaker than Stalin’s
- Kamenev gets no further because there is disruption. Many of these delegates were already Stalin’s supporters. Stalin’s policy of Socialism in One Country had already been adopted in spite of the opposition from Kamenev and others
- it is already evident that despite protestations that Communists should be able to debate amongst themselves, it was becoming increasingly difficult, because the manoeuvring for power and influence was becoming more pronounced. Stalin’s position had strengthened, the Left was increasingly under attack and losing its influence, and so this was a decisive moment in the power struggle.

In arriving at a judgement about the relative value of each source, students may conclude that both are valuable in helping to explain divisions within the Communist Party in the mid-1920s. They differ in that Source A gives the considered views of Stalin, whilst Source B is a report of a meeting, which illustrates concern about Stalin and his views. But both sources show the increasing bitterness and tension amongst leading Communists in the struggle for power after Lenin’s death.

Any supported argument as to the relative value of the sources should be rewarded.

Section B

- 02** ‘The downfall of Tsar Nicholas II in February/March 1917 was due to popular discontent with the tsarist regime.’

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view of the years 1914 to 1917.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Answers need to make a comparative assessment of the importance of the consumer society and balance this against other domestic developments socially and politically.

Arguments suggesting that the downfall of Tsar Nicholas II in February/March 1917 was due to popular discontent with the tsarist regime might include:

- by 1917 people were increasingly dissatisfied with the regime: the War had been going very badly militarily; and conditions at home had become very bad, with inflation and shortages of food and other essentials. Strikes were becoming more frequent
- the Tsar's own reputation had suffered, especially when he took command of the army. He was increasingly regarded as incompetent and indecisive
- there was also a growing feeling that the Tsar and the aristocracy were increasingly out of touch, and discredited particularly by the scandals surrounding Rasputin
- particularly amongst the better educated, people were disillusioned with the lack of political reform. The Tsar's relations with the Duma were not good during the war – the Tsar rejected the demands of the Progressive Bloc for a government of public confidence and a greater say in running the country.

Arguments challenging the view that the downfall of Tsar Nicholas II in February/March 1917 was due to popular discontent with the tsarist regime might include:

- it is possible to overemphasise the popular hostility to the Tsar. The regime was very popular in 1914 at the start of the war, with a strong residue of traditional support for the 'Little Father.' There was less sympathy for his wife. Popular dissatisfaction with the regime in 1917 was probably no greater than in 1905, when the Tsar had survived
- there was no mass organised movement to overthrow the Tsar – it was more an unwillingness to come to his support once the crisis occurred in February/March
- there was some organised political opposition to the regime in the factories. There was also the discontent of those queuing for bread and complaining about shortages. There was discontent and occasional mutiny in the army. But how much of this was active opposition as opposed to generalised grumblings and gradual erosion of support?
- military defeat was probably crucial. Had the war been more successful, morale would have been higher and probably people would have borne the hardships better. Ultimately, it was the failure of the military and security forces to unite behind the Tsar in 1917 that ultimately forced his abdication, not popular opposition. The Tsar only abdicated when the generals withdrew their support for him.

Students may suggest that the Revolution was caused by several linked factors: a feeling that the Tsarist regime could no longer cope with the military and economic crisis; a gradual discrediting of the regime, exacerbated by the scandals; a regime increasingly seen as out of touch; a growing unwillingness of influential politicians and military leaders to support the regime; and popular discontent. No one factor alone was responsible for the crisis, which although building up for some time, still came unexpectedly for many people. The problems would have daunted any regime, and dissatisfaction was not necessarily directed at the Tsar personally. What is clear ultimately is that the Tsar's regime was ill-suited in several ways to dealing effectively with any particular crisis, because the Tsar himself was weak but obstinate, and certainly not a great war leader.

03 'The New Economic Policy was a successful economic policy in the 1920s.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16-20**
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- L2:** The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments suggesting that the New Economic Policy was a successful policy in the 1920s might include:

- both agricultural and industrial production increased considerably on the 1918–1921 period. Some peasants did particularly well and there was a big demand for their produce. The abolition of grain requisitioning had a positive impact
- smaller privately run workshops and factories often did well, and unemployment declined
- the removal of the ban on private trade led to an economic upturn. Trade between urban and rural areas was made much easier. Rationing was abolished and the return to a money economy was in many respects successful
- by the mid-1920s there had been a rapid recovery from a low base – grain production had increased from 1920 by over 25% and factory output by 200%.

Arguments challenging the view that the New Economic Policy was a successful policy in the 1920s might include:

- the larger state-owned industries were not successful. They were heavily subsidised by the State and were very inefficient
- progress was uneven. The successes in agriculture already caused a problem by 1923, with goods in short supply rising in price and the price of food flooding into the cities declining, causing the Scissors Crisis
- by the later 1920s, the reluctance of peasants to sell food for lower prices caused a crisis which had to be resolved by the re-introduction of requisitioning – the Urals-Siberian method
- many aspects of the economy were still inefficient. There was limited mechanisation and modernisation in the countryside, and much of industry was labour-intensive and inefficient. NEP was not allowing the economy to ‘take off’ after the initial recovery.

In economic terms, NEP was a mixed success. It was certainly a big improvement on War Communism – but this was also due to the ending of the Civil War and the first period of stability since the Revolution. There were economic winners and losers from NEP. From the Party and Government’s standpoint, the NEP helped stabilise Russia, but was not a long-term solution to the perceived need for extensive and efficient industrialisation and an efficient agricultural sector, both of which were necessary if the USSR were to become an economic powerhouse, regardless of any political and social objectives.