

Elective 2: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914 - 1945

Question 5

Assess the extent to which internal divisions and crises within Russian society led to Bolshevik victory in 1917.

Sample 1

In March 1917, with the Tsar abdicating, a dual authority emerged – the “Provisional Government”, a body described as holding “authority without power” (Kerensky) and the “Petrograd Soviet”, holding “Power without authority”. From within the Petrograd Soviet, a group known as the Bolsheviks, consisting of just 10,000 members in February 1917, would seize control of Russia less than a year later in a relatively peaceful revolution, now numbering 250,000. That the Bolsheviks came to power in October 1917 had far more to do with the internal divisions and crises of Russian society when compared to the part of the Bolsheviks. Although the Bolsheviks were able to exploit the failures of the Provisional Government and the divisions of Russian society to great extent, it was the deep fissures of Russia’s social climate and the failures of the Provisional Government and the Tsar that made Bolshevik success possible, to a greater extent than any other factors.

The Tsar’s abdication in late February 1917 was the culmination of a period of increasingly heightened opposition to this rule. The “Winter of Discontent” over the 1916-17 winter was a key crisis in pushing the Tsar’s reign beyond the point of repair, which would allow for the dual authority to be formed. Having suffered through a record breaking winter, and with lower production leading to grain distribution effectively breaking down in Petrograd, with only 1/6 of required grain reaching the city, a continued period of riots spawned by the dissolution of the major factories saw 300,000 protestors take the street, where Red Guards refused to fire upon protestors, signifying the internal division and dissolution of Russian society with the rule of the Tsar. These underlying tensions and the desperation of the people to have the basic needs of “Bread, peace and land” as put by Lenin would be an important part of Bolshevik being achieved.

The formation of the Dual Authority in March 1917 set out an uneasy democracy, as the Provisional Government garnered the support of the intelligent and middle class, whilst the Petrograd Soviet gained the support of the soldiers and workers, who would form key support base for the Bolsheviks in their ultimate success. The division of support was furthered by numerous other political factions, notably pro-Tsarist groups who attempted to return the Romanov family to power. The reality of Russian politics as deeply divided, with no clear majority would greatly benefit Bolshevik victory, as no opposition party could adequately mobilise to stop their aggressive rise to power.

The failures and crises of the Provisional Government were key to the Bolshevik rise to power in October 1917. Having inherited all the problems of Tsarist rule, the Provisional government was faced with an unpopular yet politically sensitive war on its western borders, society chaos, a lack of control over key sects of society such as the military workers and political opposition from the Social Democrats. Relying on Western War loans to keep Russia’s economy afloat, the Provisional Government faced the sobering reality of their need to remain engaged in the enormously unpopular war with Germany, which had already claimed the lives of 15 million Russians, 1/40 of the 1917 population. In an attempt to stir up national pride one with the hope of security a moral boosting victory, the government committed 1 million men in an attempt to regain Russian territory, the June Offensive was instead an enormous failure, resulting in the death of 350,000 men and providing material for the opposition to criticise the Provisional Government, who were depicted as “fools” by the Bolshevik newspaper in mid June 1917. The June Offensive was an embarrassment to the Provisional Government, and deeply damaged their prestige. This crisis provided not only a chance for opposition to criticise politically, but for popular opinion to voting against the P.G eventually to the extent that many motivated party could seize power faced with limited opposition by October 1917.

Further failures of the Provisional Government (P.G) were seen publicly in their handling of the Kornilov affair, an internal crisis which continued to build opposition to the P.G. Now led by Alexander Kerensky, the only man to be a member of both bodies of the dual authority, the P.G faced a political and social crisis as a result of continued miscommunication with army officials, including Kornilov. The saga culminated in both the P.G, supported by left wing forces including the Bolsheviks, clashing with right wing supporters, as both parties accused the other of attempting a coup d'état. Whilst Kerensky was successful in retaining power, it came at great cost, the affair depleted the stock of the P.GS as it made them appear incompetent and reactionary, resulting in further decline in support. Furthermore, Kerensky had been forced to free and arm Bolshevik leader previously arrested as a result of the “July

SECTION TWO

Day” riots in which Bolsheviks attempted a mini coup d'état. By empowering a key opposition player, Kerensky now faced the consequences of the Kornilov crisis and the way in which it greatly contributed to Bolshevik success.

Whilst the divisions and crisis faced by Russia throughout 1917 were key to the rise of the Bolsheviks, the party itself must be given some credit for its role in developing support and taking advantage of the instability of Russia's social circumstances. Prior to Lenin's uprising in April of 1917, many left wing political groups had supported the Provisional Government. Yet Lenin, a leading Bolshevik turned the tide of public opinion against the P.G when he started his April Thesis, declaring “all power to the Soviets” and setting out the Bolshevik philosophy of “peace, bread and land.” Whilst initially controversial, Lenin's remarks were crucial to the rise of the Bolsheviks, as his strong public sentiment encouraged a wave of support for the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks ably led by Lenin and later Leon Trotsky, quickly gathered significant support rising in membership from 10,000 to 250,000 in October 1917. Still, the party was a minority in a country of 150 million, it had little support outside the urban centre of Petrograd. Thus, the ability of the party to seize control in October 1917, led by Trotsky came him, must also be attributed to the inefficiency of much of the UUSR to the politics of the day; few of the 120 million peasants were legible and only 13% of people lived in towns. Thus, the fact that the Bolsheviks succeeded, whilst of no doubt aided by the work of Lenin and Trotsky to garner popular support, must also be attributed to the political apathy of the people.

The series of crises and failures under the guidance of the Provisional Government, alongside the deep fissures of Russian society, political apathy and some Bolshevik shifts must be considered the key factors that culminated in the Bolsheviks seizing power in October 1917. Despite the notable efforts of Lenin and Trotsky to create ideological coherence with the people, it was their ability to exploit crises and division, rather than popular appeal that was most significant in securing Bolshevik victory in 1917.

A sustained and cohesive assessment of each of the major internal divisions and crises that faced Russia in 1917 and discussion of the extent to which the Bolsheviks were able to draw on these in achieving victory in 1917. The candidate also provides an assessment of how the Bolsheviks organised themselves in response to these divisions and crises to take control in the October Revolution. Great use of historical evidence used to support answer.

Sample 2

On March 2nd, 1917 Tsar Nicholas II abdicated his throne, bringing about an end to the centuries long period of Tsarist rule. What ensued immediately after this was known as the period of Dual Power, whereby power was shared between the Provisional Government formed of remnants of the Progressive Bloc of the Duma and the Soviets which were largely comprised of elected soldiers and workers, and to which the military had pledged allegiance. The system of governance proved highly ineffectual and on the night of October 24-25, 1917, the Bolsheviks lead by revolutionary leader Lenin and organised by Trotsky stormed the Winter Palace and Moscow seizing power. This seizure of power would prove successful due to a number of factors and would issue in a transformation of Russian society into a Marxist state under centralized control. There were a number of reasons for success of the Bolsheviks that night. It was the culmination of a number of factors including several crises of the Provisional government, internal divisions and the combination of effective Bolshevik leadership and ineffectual leadership of the Provisional government. Hence, to a moderate extent, Bolshevik victory was informed by internal divisions and crises. By the time of the October Revolution the Bolsheviks had gained support, as a result of the interplay between internal divisions such as the Land Issue and crises as the Kornilov Affair and the disastrous summer offensive; external factors such as World War 1, all of which was exacerbated by the weakness of the leadership of the Provisional Government, and the strength of Lenin's leadership. Therefore, to a moderate extent internal divisions and crises worked to contribute to Bolshevik victory, acting as an immediate catalyst to the October Revolution, however ultimately the discontent caused by World War 1 and the ineffective leadership of the Provisional Government would prove more important.

Internal divisions and crises played a significant role in contributing to the Bolshevik victory of October 1917. During the months of Dual Power there were a number of divisions within society, a salient one being the division between the peasantry and the bourgeois elements of Russian society over the land issue. The Peasants sought to have land on which to labour for themselves, whilst the nobility sought to redistribute this land to the landowners. This worked to create a rift in Russian society, and its resolution was continually delayed by the weakness of the Provisional government in delaying resolving the land issue by delaying the Constituent Assembly elections. This served to create discontent with the current leaders, and therefore heightened the support directed towards the Bolsheviks, as Lenin advocated for “peace, bread, land!” in his April Theses promising the peasants that they would be granted the land they believed they deserved. This was fulfilled in October 1917, when the Bolsheviks issued the Land Decree which

granted the peasants their wish, thus utilizing internal divisions to maintain power. Hence, it was a combination of internal divisions and leadership which worked to heighten Bolshevik support, thus contributing to their eventual success. And thus, internal divisions and crises played a moderately significant role in bringing about a successful Bolshevik revolution.

Similarly, a number of crises during this time sought to heighten support for the Bolsheviks, however these crises largely emerged as a result of the failure of the government of dual power. The first of which being the disastrous Summer Offensive in June 1917. The Summer Offensive was a last ditch attempt made by the Provisional government to secure victory in the war effort, however it failed miserably leading to the death of 100 000 soldiers within a matter of days. This served to heighten discontent on the Homefront, with many believing it to be a demonstration of the weakness of the Provisional Government and it served to inflame already existing frustrations. By heightening discontent with the Provisional government, this served to heighten support for the Bolsheviks in some aspects of Russian society. This can be demonstrated by the actions of the Kronstadt sailors the ensuing July days, in which a large mass of soldiers from the Kronstadt naval base sought to stage a rebellion, marching into the city and protesting bitterly. They sought further support from Lenin, thus demonstrating that the failure of the Provisional Government, in the minds of some members of Russian society, heightened support for the Bolsheviks. However, Lenin failed to provide the support they desired, believing the time was not right for a further revolution and was ultimately forced to flee the country once more. This detracts from the significance of the crisis of the Summer Offensive in contributing to Bolshevik victory, and hence, crises only played a moderate role in contributing to Bolshevik victory. Unlike the Summer Offensive, another crisis, the Kornilov Affair played a salient role in bringing about Bolshevik victory. The Kornilov Affair was a failed military coup by right wing General Kornilov, who had been granted further power by leader of the Provisional Government, Alexander Kerensky. Kornilov attempted to seize control of Petrograd. This left Kerensky desperate, and in a final bid to protect his position he turned to the Bolsheviks for support in defeating the coup. The Bolsheviks were armed and those who were incarcerated were released, ultimately, they staged a successful counter-offensive leaving the Bolsheviks in a heroic posture as the "heroes of Petrograd", having valiantly come to its defence against the scourge of General Kornilov. This served to turn public favour towards the Bolsheviks, and indicators suggest their support rose from around 24% to 51%, as suggested by the outcome of municipal elections at the time. Lenin judged that the time was therefore right for a Bolshevik seizure of power and not long thereafter the October Revolution was staged. Hence, the Kornilov affair had a significant role in bringing about victory to the Bolsheviks in 1917, however it was ultimately the culmination of the combination of successful Bolshevik leadership on the part of Lenin in correctly timing the revolution and a weakness of the leadership of the Provisional government, particularly Kerensky in empowering Kornilov and later the Bolsheviks. Thus, it was a combination of leadership, internal divisions and crises which lead to the outbreak of successful Bolshevik revolution in October 1917, and hence, internal divisions and crises only played a moderately significant role.

World War 1 continued to have a significant impact on Russian society and its economy during the period of dual power, and this served to heighten discontent and division within society. In addition to this, the ineffectual leadership of the Provisional Government and system of dual power, in continually delaying the Constituent Assembly elections and using this as justification for failing to address the issue of the war, was largely responsible for this being a contributor to Bolshevik success. World War 1 had decimated the Russian economy. Inflation was rampant with the costs of living rising 300% and wages rising only 200%, inflation in some necessities such as fuel was a high a 1200%, and this lead to immense discontent. Grain production levels had fallen to 15% of their pre-war capacity and shortages meant that many went hungry. 14 million soldiers had been deployed, almost half of which were killed or injured. This lead to widespread discontent with the war, almost universal within the proletariat was the desire for it to be brought to an end, and this only served to exacerbate the problems of the Provisional government, heightening internal division and discontent. The issue of the war was exacerbated by the poor leadership of the Provisional government, which continually delayed addressing the issue, working to inflame already existing challenges. Lenin made use of this through adept leadership, in his April Theses he argued for an end to the war, capitalizing on the discontent through the slogan "peace, bread, land", which resonated with the masses. This worked to heighten support for the Bolsheviks. Almost immediately after assuming power they issued the Peace Decree, which assured an end to the war, working to maintain support so that they could continue their victory. Hence, it was the combination of external factors such as World War 1, poor leadership on the part of the Provisional government in delaying the end to the War and adept leadership on the part of Lenin in using this as a tool to garner support, which contributed to Bolshevik victory in 1917. These factors played an immensely significant role in bringing about victory, and hence only to a moderate extent were crises and internal divisions responsible.

SECTION TWO

A number of factors were therefore responsible for the Bolsheviks claiming victory in October 1917 and assuming full leadership of Russia, most saliently, was the role of leadership in bringing about change. The leadership of the Provisional Government and the period of dual power was weak, failing to resolve the discontent which existed in Russian society through continually delaying the Constituent Assembly elections and making poor decisions which would lead to crises such as the Summer Offensive and abounding July Days and the Kornilov Affair and this was ultimately the most significant factor which led to empowering the Bolsheviks to victory. Lenin's leadership was adept in capitalizing on the conditions of discontent and correctly timing the revolution for success and external factors, namely World War I were of immense importance in creating the necessary conditions of discontent necessary to bring about further revolution. Ultimately it was the interplay of these factors which had the most significant effect in contributing to Bolshevik victory. However, the role of internal divisions and crises was of moderate significance. Internal divisions such as that between the peasantry and the government itself with respect to the Land Issue worked to create discontent which Lenin could utilize to garner further support through the Land Decree, similarly discontent was heightened by the failed Summer Offensive, and this ripened hostility towards the Provisional government, laying the foundations for Bolshevik takeover and most importantly, the Kornilov Affair played a highly significant role in acting as immediate catalyst for the October Revolution and Bolshevik victory by positioning the Bolsheviks as the powerful defenders of Petrograd. Hence, internal divisions and crises played a moderately significant role in bringing about Bolshevik victory, however of greater importance was the role of leadership and World War I.

A comprehensive response to the question. The essay's introduction establishes a clear direction with clear links to the question. There is sound analysis of each division and crises with good use of historical evidence. This response could be improved with increased focus on written expression. A good assessment of the extent to which the Bolsheviks were able to act upon these divisions and crises in order to take victory in October 1917.

Question 6

Debate the proposition:

'Stalin's cultural revolution transformed Soviet society significantly'.

Sample 1

Stalin's Cultural Revolution transformed Soviet society to a significant extent, demonstrated in the changing idealisation of women, education system and position of the Russian Orthodox Church. Stalinism was an ideology and not of ideas vented on totalitarianism, centralisation and the pursuit of communism. The impact of Stalin's ideas dramatically altered the cultural identification of Soviet society, with the overarching aim being the indoctrination and industrialisation of the USSR into an even more powerful nation. This pursuit of power meant key ideas of Leninism were undermined, transforming Soviet society, but also dictated maintaining traditions were seen as beneficial or useful, to Communism.

The Cultural Revolution changed the way Soviet women were to be idealised in Russian society. The initial decrees of Lenin exalted the position of women, enabling divorce, the right to work, abortion, and education. However, by the 1930s, the combination of empowerment had resulted in the breakdown of the family unit. There were high levels of orphans living on the street, petty crime, and women were often left abandoned by husbands due to the ease of divorce. The Great Retreat was introduced by Stalin to combat the 'wrong attitudes'. Women were idealised in the traditional role as mother and housewife, the basic unit of Soviet society. Propaganda circulated, like in 1934 May, Pravda, "When we talk of disciplining the Soviet society we talk of combating wrong attitudes about family and women." Divorce became more difficult in 1936, where both parties must agree, and abortion illegal that same year. While women as well as men were entitled to free education and work, they bore the brunt of both the domestic and public sphere in jobs. The addition of women to the workforce served Stalin's goal of industrialisation, while his propaganda ensured the indoctrination of youth starting with the example of their mothers, altering millions of lives practically and in idealisation.

Stalin's Cultural Revolution also significantly altered the education system. Disgusted by the state of schools in the early 1930s, after zealous young communists had 'revolutionized' the old ways and destroyed many 'traditional' educational institutions, Stalin enforced the return to traditional learning. Examinations returning, and uniforms were introduced. As under Lenin, people were entitled to 9 years of free education: both girls and boys. The Komsomol and Youth League continued to operate, preparing young communists for party membership on the Red Army. Mathematics, physics and technical subjects were emphasised, to churn out graduates to work in production of heavy industries and other

factions of industrialisation. Stalin who altered the history curriculum – ‘the compulsory consolidation of history events’ – in which he emerged as an architect in the October Revolution, boasting a far more significant contribution than he really had. The Cultural Revolution identified a need for upcoming supports of Stalin and communism, and thus Stalin instigated changes to youth and education to ensure this avenue of support.

The Cultural Revolution is lastly seen to significantly change the lives of Soviets in its change on stance in regard to religion. Communism and socialism, in Lenin and Stalin’s understanding, saw no place for religion. Stemming from Marxist Theory that religion was the ‘opiate of people.’ Initially Stalin continued the stance of Lenin and brutally supported the Russian Orthodox Church and other religious bodies. State ceremonies replaced religious ones, the wealth of the Church was put to industrialisation and sites were used for public events. However, in the onset of World War II, also named the Holy War, Stalin did not ignore a popular area of support in religion. In 1937 the census revealed 55% of people were still believers, despite the previous fifteen years. Stalin consequently met with the patriarch of the Orthodox Church, receiving his blessing. The Churches them performed a similar functioned as they had in Tsarist times. They aided Russification of minorities, proclaiming Stalin ‘the divinely appointed leader of our armed forces leading us to victory against the barbarian invaders.’ An official policy of tolerance was adopted towards Muslims and the League of the Godless was abolished. Thus, Stalin altered the religious landscape of Russia, transforming the experiences of everyday people all the while going against his official ideas – proving beyond doubt success came before consistency and communism if forced to choose.

Stalin’s Cultural Revolution significantly transformed Soviet society socially and culturally. The position of women, the education of children and reinstatement of the Russian Orthodox Church were all by-products of Stalin’s desire to industrialise and indoctrinate Russian society to outstrip the more advanced capitalist countries. While some influences of Lenin and the autocracy remained, like the use of force, terror and propaganda, the world of Stalinism is significantly distinguishable to the world of Leninism, and most certainly the old world of the autocracy. The Cultural Revolution improved the lives of many, but also dictated unmoving positions and roles for each faction of society – all in the aim to achieve the desires of Stalin.

The candidate has constructed a well-structured response of how women, religion and education changed under Stalin and were transformed to help build the Soviet Economy. They have a clearly identified thesis, and consistently link their assessment to this. However, a discussion of the ‘Cult of Personality’, terror and the arts to control Soviet society could also be included.

Sample 2

Stalin’s cultural revolution occurring from 1928 had a profound impact on Soviet society, transforming it somewhat. Stalin ruled the Soviet Union as a virtual dictator policed to imposition his own specific policies which would profoundly transform it. These policies, had a profound effect on the political, economic and social aspects of society, but most profoundly his cultural revolution transformed Soviet society. The culture influence includes that of religion, education, arts and gender. Therefore, it can be said that from 1928, Stalin’s cultural revolution ‘transformed’ Soviet society somewhat.

Lenin’s previous cultural revolutions had impacted society in many ways, with “new artforms, rights and groups emerging due to it” (R Service, History of the Twentieth Century – Pg 41). However, when Stalin rose to power in 1929 after a leadership struggle he profoundly impacted society. His ‘cultural revolution’ was the changes made within the soviet culture that had existed before. This cultural revolution was created largely due to his own personal beliefs/values. “I wish to see a culture that flourishes in the face of those before it and all others in the world today” (Stalin-quotes.com). Stalin said this in order to impose his own views. While Stalin didn’t actively disagree with many of the elements of the Leninist culture, Stalin firmly believed in “the traditional role of women, and forms targeted towards propaganda, a new role of education and a lesser significant role of religion” (Stalin: A History -Sheila Fitzpatrick, pg 49). The previous impositions of Bolshevism, profounded society in many ways – the creation of the Komsomol, new artforms and freedom to abortion, to name a few. Stalin wished to challenge these

“I believe that if are put a seed in the ground, then through the effort of watering and caring for it, this seed shall not be uprooted” (Stalin -quotes.com). Stalin’s Cultural Revolution profoundly impacted the education system within society. Bolshevism, had previously employed the Komsomol in an effort to manipulate the minds of the youth. Stalin continued this but added his own ‘twist’ on it, creating a society where attendance of the Komsomol was compulsory. A woman named Alexandra Checkoff, sent her son to the Komsomol and said, “I remember when my came home

SECTION TWO

after that first made – he was never the same again” (T Fiehn, Russia and the USSR 1915-41). The Komsomol drilled the politics and roles of the Soviet into the minds of these impressionable children. If any oppositionary groups were found out, then the Soviet government would see to it they were destroyed. Within this, a new education system was also forced. Lenin had previously introduced the ‘Decree on illiteracy’ within 1917, which emphasized that a growing literate population must be created. This policy had great successes, with a “20% increase in a literate population (T Fiehn, Russia and the USSR 1915-41). Stalin insisted to continue this and develop it farther by regarding all of society literate including those in less affluent areas. The work that Stalin conducted involved people such as Dora Elabore travelling to the troops who were fighting and teaching them skills such as how to read and write. This was often thought of as “the most significant aspect of his cultural revolution – these people would spend one week with guns, the rest with pencils (O Figes, Stalin History- page 128). By 1935, over 90% of the people within the Soviet Union were literate – a massive feat. However, the education system within Russia also began to change with Stalin tampering with history through the doctoring of photos to remove Old Bolsheviks. Therefore, these people would only comprehend the artificial history with which Stalin created. He wrote a new textbook called ‘On the History of the Soviet Union,’ which effectively suggested that Stalin was a key player in the October Revolution; a lie. Due to this, he was creating his version of a utopia where he was in control of history. Stalin also encouraged that teachers not act as teachers, with students and teachers being seen as an equal basis. This caused behavioural issues with a peer stating, “children would run around the classroom like a monkey, no installation of what’s right or wrong” (T Fiehn Russia and the USSR 1915-41, page 46). Stalin had now created the perfect system of education which effectively gave him all the powers. He also abolished all forms of examination within school – he felt they should be framed in other areas. Due to this, he had the school system impose classes that would be helpful for a slice in the 5 Year Plans - with “the intelligent individuals engaging in intellectual classes, while the physically capable were engaged in physical based education. This had transformed society because while doing Leninism, people had a system of education enforced on them and effectively brainwashed them doing so.

“I believe the truest role of woman Is within the household” (Stalin, A compilation of Speeches). During Leninism, women had been granted far greater liberties with the emergence of women such as Alexandra Kollontai who worked for the government in a department of women affair. She argued that “sex should be as natural as drinking a glass of water” (T Fischer, Russia and USSR 1915-41, page 63). Women were also given the ability to think about children and wear what they wanted. The traditional role of women became decimated, with families becoming almost non-existent and women becoming “selfish” in the views of Stalin. Creches and kindergartens were also established to that women could have a greater public life. Stalin, backtracked on such a policy – believing the true place of a woman was in the household. He advocated this role through the abolishment of Lenin’s previous decrees and the arrests of liberal women such as Alexandra Kollontai. Women fiercely resisted this, however many in society had noticed the economic deficit that such liberation had caused with “no money to support creches and shared kitchens”. Due to the opposite nature of the Stalinist regime women were sent “back to the kitchen”, with society becoming far less liberal therefore, transforming Russian society significantly into the Stalin mould.

“I have no place for religion within society – it is to be religionless” (O Figes, Stalin: A History). Stalin despised religion, as he saw it as a competition for the people. Due to this, he placed heavy restrictions on religion. This was no different to the impositions on religion which had previously been employed by Lenin, with the Decree on the Separation of the Church and State in 1917, invalidating previous marriages and imposing changes that did transform religion, were the terror tactics used to oppose the clergy with “over 40 000 religious clergy arrested for crimes which hadn’t been committed” (T Fiehn, Russia and the USSR 1915-41). By 1940, there were just 1000 churches functioning in Moscow. The biggest restrictions to a religion were often to the Orthodox, Muslims, and Catholic churches, as well as Jews being persecuted. Stalin was effectively trying to create a utopia, where through his cult of personality he was viewed as a God – with propaganda being produced that proclaimed “Stalin as a father” where he would pose with minority groups. Orlando Figes views this treatment of religion as a mere tactic to “impose himself onto the people further and remove opposition”. Due to this, Stalin merely continued the religious persecution of religion – not transforming the culture, merely continuing it.

“The arts are key to developing a society where people are unconsciously influenced” (O Figes: Stalin A History). Previously in the Leninism regime, artforms such as futuristic and avant-garde art had emerged. These artforms were created with freedom of expression with writers such as Osip Mandelstam producing poetry targeted towards freedom. Films were also developed which gave greater freedom of expression. Artists explored geometric artforms and colours with this newfound freedom providing them as a basis to express themselves. Within the Stalinist rule, this freedom was forbidden, with all art being targeted towards “socialist realism”. This caused for society to have to

be constantly plied with the Soviet perspective, with agit-prop trains emerging which would propagate communist views. Artforms also re-emerged targeted towards this – with statues of Lenin being created and thus linking Stalin with him further. All literature created had to go through a specific committee in Politburo – deterring into legality. If it wasn't considered appropriate these writers were considered 'bourgeois' and liable for arrest. This prompted artists such as Meyerhold to be arrested by the government. Therefore, it can be said that Stalin transformed the art of society by perpetrating fears, rather than freedom of expression.

Stalin's 'Cultural Revolution', existing from 1928 somewhat transformed Soviet society. The previous decrees of the Bolsheviks had given greater expression and freedom in the arts and for women, this was transformed by Stalin and backtracked. The education system was somewhat transformed, using the key tactics of Lenin's but taking a further oppressive approach. Finally, the place of religion was a more continuation from Leninism. Therefore, it can be said Stalin's cultural revolution in transforming Soviet society was somewhat successful in building his utopia.

The candidate provides a sustained, coherent discussion of how religion, education, the arts and the role of women changed under Stalin's cultural revolution which is supported through the extensive use of evidence. There is a demonstrated effort to provide an analytical response to the question.

Elective 3: China 1935 - 1989

Question 9

Debate the proposition:

'The Cultural Revolution led to a complete suppression of all dissent in China.'

The Cultural Revolution was a political movement that lasted from 1966-1976 with the purpose of crushing dissent so as to reinforce the authority of Mao within the Party and guarantee him absolute power over China. Motivated by the belief that his influence had begun to recede after the 1960 New Economic Policy and the rise of the moderates within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Mao was frustrated with being treated like 'dead ancestor' or even ridiculed such as in Wu Han's thinly veiled criticism in the play 'The Dismissal of Hai Rui' and thus wanted to ideologically 'cleanse' China of all opposition so as to solidify absolute power and respect. The Cultural Revolution did not lead to a complete suppression of dissent in China. Although Mao's establishment of the 'cult of Mao' and mobilisation of the youth reflect success in the crushing of dissent, the emergence of political factions within the CCP towards the end of his leadership demonstrate that dissent was not completely eradicated.

Mao Zedong endeavoured to crush all dissenting opinions so as to reinstate his absolute authority during the Cultural Revolution and the creation of the 'cult of Mao'. The 'Cult of Mao' emerged during the Cultural Revolution and exemplifies Mao's initial success in enforcing ideological conformity and eradication of dissent. In 1964 Mao, with the aid of Mao loyalist Lin Biao, began distributing copies of his 'Little Red Book' among the youth and Red Army, and enforced compulsory study of its teachings. This served as a method of indoctrination and began the cultivation of Mao's 'god-like status' as the people came to revere and bide by his quotations. The 'Cult of Mao' is evident in its success in eradication dissent as 740 million copies of Mao's Little Red Book were published, and 1.21 billion portraits of Mao were painted between 1966-1969, tying the people ideologically to his leadership.

Although the cultivation of the 'Cult of Mao' began the course of Mao's erasure of political and ideological opposition to his rule and crushing dissent, the creation of the Red Guard units cemented it. Mao harnessed the idealism of the Chinese youth to utilize them as the 'vanguards' of his 'continuous revolution' goal of cleaning China of dissent to his rule. In 1966 Mao closed the schools and issued free travel passes to students, encouraging them to 'make revolution' and attack the 'Four Olds' to eradicate 'bourgeois' or 'rightist' tendencies and remnants of 'Old China'. This led to the destruction of land, ancient artefacts and literature. Mao's encouragement of violence against his adversaries led to the deaths of 500 000 people as a result of Red Guard brutality, the Red Guards being the units of Chinese revolutionary youths. Despite organisation and security unravelling due to the impulsive, chaotic and vengeful nature of the Red Guards causing China to brink on anarchy in 1969, Mao had achieved his aims. Mao sent 20 million Chinese youths to the countryside in 1969 to reinstate order and peace in China, yet the Red Guard violence had been essential to reinforcing his position of authority. Thus, the fear tactics and violent force of the youth during the Cultural Revolution supports the statement that dissent was crushed as by 1969 Mao dissenters and opposition had either been killed or intimidated into silence. The intimidation aspect of the campaign also signifies the fact that although achieving success initially, Mao was unable to completely eradicate dissent as in the absence of this fear, it later re-emerged.

SECTION FOUR: Essays

Unit 4 - The modern world since 1945

All questions are worth 25 marks

Elective 1: The changing European world since 1945

Question 12

Evaluate the changing nature and consequences of the European world order in the period 1989–2001.

Sample 1

The European world order from 1989 to 2001 changed significantly and dynamically in nature, oscillating between moments of stabilisation and destabilisation, and triggered many wide-reaching and internal consequences that extended throughout the world. The collapse of the Berlin Wall and German reunification was primarily stabilising in nature yet had logistical consequences, the formation of the European Union was stabilising and progressive in nature for the most part with various internal consequences and Yugoslavian conflict spurred by Easter bloc liberation was destabilising in nature and created horrific consequences. These aspects of European world order largely varied in nature and consequences stimulated, yet undeniably contributed to a drastically changing world arena.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall and subsequent reunification of Germany that occurred from 1989 and onwards through gruelling processes resulted in a primarily stabilised European world order, more peaceful in nature, yet had some logistical consequences: The Berlin Wall had existed as an ideological border between the West Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and East German Democratic Republic (DDR) since its construction beginning on the 15th of August 1961. The embarrassing circumstances in the west and low standards of living in the East had remained strikingly obvious, predating the Berlin Blockade of 1949. With Mikhail Gorbachev the leader of the Soviet Union in 1989 and being increasingly liberal in regard to the USSR empire's hold on satellite States, such as the Sinatra Doctrine of 1986, the collapse of the Berlin Walls simply seemed to be being circumvented. On November 1st, 1989, Günter Schabowski, East German representative, announced travel laws in place that allowed crossing the border, and the wall began to be dismantled by people power, following years of cries of "Gorby hilf uns" (Gorby, help us) for access to better living conditions. Two million people crossed the border from east to west that weekend. These events indicated a change in European order that required address, and the 2+4 talks began in 1990 in May between the few victorious allies of WWI and the USSR. Gorbachev hadn't necessarily intended the collapse of the DDR only its democratisation yet was faced with the almost inescapable dilemma of allowing its dissolution by the Western FDR. Helmut Kohl, leader of West Germany, met with Gorbachev extensively to resolve the issue, until the Soviet Union ended, and the 3 October 1990 marked German Unity Day, drastically changing European world order with the dissolution of Soviet influence in Germany. As a consequence, many logistical efforts were required – including the currency of Germany and mass migration. On the 1 July 1990 the deutschmark was introduced to replace the earlier mark, with the West saying a 1:1 conversion rate. It is estimated 730 billion was spent in efforts to dissolve East Germany. Therefore, with the dismantling of Soviet influence in Germany, European World order changed in nature to a more stable state, with some small consequences.

The formation of the European Union was stabilising in nature for the most part in terms of European world order, however created many internal consequences. Since 1951 with the Treaty of Rome establishing the European Coal and Steel community, European countries had been pioneering one cultural institutions from which to coordinate member states and ensure mutual cooperation. In 1992, continuing the ideals of the European Economic community, the Maastricht Treaty formalised the European Union, with its inner 12 member states, off shooting from its original 6 inner members. States were coordinated and cooperated in a shared market economy, establishing three pillars – economics, justice and peace. There were internal disputes, such as the validity of the UK as a member state. This developed into Euroscepticism, whereby the UK was questioned as a virtual 51st member of the United States. Other issues such as establishing the eurozone in 2002 involved changing order of member states adopting new currency to varying degrees of success. The EU hence changed the nature of European order in stabilising economic alliances and encouraging cooperation, espousing free movement, goods, services and people, and also created various logistical consequences and attitudes among member states.

The phenomenon of European bloc countries being liberated and seeking government independent at the USSR's strains contributed to a more holistic effect on the changing nature and particularly consequences of European world order, mostly evident in Yugoslavian conflict. Since 1986, Gorbachev's negation of the 1968 Brezhnev Doctrine retracted the pledge, and fear of Soviet interference in satellite states where dismantling the iron grip on these areas. The Polish Solidarity movements of the 1980's demonstrated Poland's desire for liberation, with 89% of respondents to a government survey stating approval of the movement. In 1989 Gorbachev granted free elections and solidarity won 99/100 seats in the senate and became the first non-communist government post-WWII. This gradual liberation of the E'bloc had consequences on greater world order, as there was no blueprint for transition from socialist governments.

European world order shifted dramatically in nature from 1989 to 2001, with many consequences presenting global issues. The collapse of the Berlin Wall and reunification of Germany in 1989-90 stabilized European world order, as did the creation of the EU. The liberation of E'bloc countries, whilst internally liberating, had larger destabilising effects. Hence, the nature and consequences of such changes oscillated between stabilisation and destabilisation but were definitely transformative.

Demonstrating the inter relationship between events, continuity and change, this essay has been constructed with a sustained and cohesive argument. The essay has highly developed written expression and uses historical evidence effectively.

Question 13

Assess the significance of one key idea of the time period.

Sample 1

Peaceful coexistence was an idea that characterised Nikita Khrushchev's time in power. It entailed the harmonies and 'peaceful' engagement until other surrounding nations during the Cold War between 1953 to 1962. Despite this, its significance was only partial due to its values and principle of the idea being strayed from. Khrushchev implemented such a policy to allow breathing space for a struggling USSR economy and to achieve parity with the USA. Political tensions during this era was high and summits held within this 'peaceful coexistence' were generally more successful. However, such idea was continuously aborted during Khrushchev's time in power. The use of nationalism was crushed with force as evident in Hungary and erection of the Berlin Wall further illustrated the illegitimacy of such policy. This was furthered during the Cuban Missile crisis and arms and space race, illustrating the failure of such idea of maintaining peace. Thus, peaceful coexistence had limited impact due to consistently engaging on its policies and proving to be inefficient in achieving its aims.

Khrushchev announced peaceful coexistence in 1953 during a secret speech. This speech was a criticism of Stalin and thus a process of de-Stalinisation ran alongside peaceful coexistence. This idea was aimed at reducing tensions achieving parity with the USA building arms and achieving political stability, Khrushchev encouraged satellite states to "find their own paths to socialism" (Khrushchev, Stalin's Secret Speech, 1953) and thus a thaw in relations began. The USA, although sceptical, welcomed the idea of peaceful coexistence and could see its benefits in reducing Cold War tensions. Thus, from Stalin's secret speech the policy was initiated, and nationalist ideology began to arise. From such policy and engagement with the USA, the USSR economy had a chance to recover by engaging with capitalist expertise, trade and various summit thus Khrushchev's USSR seemed to recover and became militarily superior.

Political relations between Khrushchev and other world powers seesawed during the 1950s-60s. At Camp David and the Geneva Summit, the idea of peaceful coexistence appeared to be on track and relations as a result eased. However, the illegitimacy of this idea was proven when Eisenhower put forward an Open Skies doctrine meaning that each power knew the other power's nuclear arsenal. Khrushchev refused this and by doing so the idea of peaceful coexistence became less legitimate and had reduced impact. Furthermore, Khrushchev showed the redundancy of peaceful coexistence during the Geneva Conference of 1961 in which he bullied Kennedy into handing over West Berlin; this was reneging all ideology behind the proposed peaceful coexistence as the USSR was expansionist and aggressive, pressuring the USA. This is furthered in the erection of the Berlin Wall 1961 in which all attempts of coexisting with the USA had been neglected and a symbol of ideological division had been erected. This illustrates the very little impact of peaceful co-existence; not only did it fail to achieve its goals, it also seemed to contradict itself and even heighten cold war tensions.

Khrushchev's response to social issues also illustrates the illegitimacy and thus reduced influence of peaceful coexistence. The Berlin Wall of 1961 had already symbolised ideological divide, but events beforehand proved the ideas failure. Despite Finland, Austria and Poland being granted varying degrees of independence during 1955 to 1956,

SECTION FOUR

when Hungary attempted this they were pressed with force. Inspired by the policy of peaceful coexistence promoting self-determination Imre Nagy set out wide range reforms. However, as soon as he threatened to leave the Warsaw Pact, force from the USSR invaded, killing 2000 civilians. "Khrushchev had no real intention of allowing freedom amongst satellite states" (The Cold War Order, 2000) and this peaceful coexistence was once again made redundant.

Khrushchev's military stance and organisation were the greatest contradiction to his proposed idea of peaceful coexistence and thus limits its impact. Despite wanting to mutually cooperate, Khrushchev built nuclear arms and conventional forces so that they exceeded the USA. Furthermore, he ordered Warsaw Pact troops to arrange plans on how to wage war against NATO should one break out illustrating no intention of cooperation. Furthermore, the intensity and ferocity of space race and arms race with Sputnik of 1957 closely followed by Explorer I from the USA illustrated how neither nation would work together to achieve a mutual goal, thus showing the failure of peaceful coexistence. The greatest contradiction, however, remains Khrushchev assuring "the main thing is to argue without weapons" (1958) then placing missiles on Cuba leading to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis in which the world came to the brink of complete annihilation. From Khrushchev's orders, stance and military organisation the idea of peaceful coexistence was illegitimate and thus impact saw negligible positives.

Peaceful coexistence was an idea evident during Khrushchev's time in power, and called by many historians, peaceful competition. It was an idea designed to grant the USSR time for its economy to recover, achieve nuclear parity with the USA and achieve political stability. Despite this, it was continuously contradicted through the actions of Khrushchev and thus any positive impact is not seen. The idea was neglected in times of resurgent nationalism, in the event of Hungary 1956 uprising, and through the separation of families during the Berlin Wall being erected in 1961 its illegitimacy was yet again presented. The military stance of Khrushchev and his orders saw the final elements of this idea contradicted as the risk of all-out nuclear war and global destruction was imminent. It is argued as such idea was merely implemented by the USSR to act as a façade and smoke screen allowing them to carry out whatever policies they wished to. Whatever the case, its success as a policy is limited and brought the existence of this world close to an end, thus having extremely negative impact.

This essay has a strong introduction that clearly outlines its direction and provides relevant historical context. The candidate demonstrates a good understanding of the period, using relevant evidence to support their thesis and answer the question by assessing the idea. The conclusion is well constructed.

Sample 2

With Mikhail Gorbachev's ascent to the zenith of Soviet leadership on March 11, 1985, replacing the preceding gerontocracy within the country, the Cold War would be changed and impacted upon significantly. The impact of Gorbachev's idea of 'Perestroika and Glasnost', had a profound impact during the time period across the region. Most notably, the impact of this idea of Gorbachev's was most notably felt within the USSR itself, as well as the everlasting impact and relationships within western powers, most notably the USA. Thus, the significance of 'perestroika and glasnost' was immense throughout the period, ultimately acting as the catalyst for the end of the ideological battle known as the Cold War.

Gorbachev issued his reform and idea initially in the USSR itself, as he attempted to repair the Soviet state from a position of despair. His idea of perestroika and glasnost literally meant 'restructuring' (perestroika) and 'openness' (glasnost), which were both desperately needed in the USSR because as Gorbachev remarked, he had inherited "a superpower sick with social breakdown, a corrupt communist party, and a society full of alcoholism." This was extremely significant in the USSR as immediately Gorbachev exposed the long-held secret of the 1940 Katyn Polish massacre by Stalin's NKVD, as well as destroying vineyards across the nation to repair 'alcoholism' which was costing the USSR \$3b per year. The 'restructuring' of the economy began immediately through Gorbachev's idea, as the nation was on the verge of bankruptcy due to 'Brezhnev stagnation', which had led to growth rates of -1.3% in 1983. As a result, the Five-Year Plan from 1986-1990 was implemented, which targeted 25% growth in the economy, as well as the 1987 'Decree on State Enterprise' and 1988 'Law on Cooperatives', which both encouraged greater privatisation of the economy and a decentralisation. The significance of Perestroika and glasnost was further emphasised in 1986 after the Chernobyl disaster, which led to a steady flow of misinformation, prompting Gorbachev to comment, "we need glasnost like we need air." Thus, great social reform was seen extremely significant to the USSR, resulting in 20 000 political dissidents being replaced, including the infamous Andrei Sakharov, 50 000 Red Army troops were removed from Europe, censorship was replaced, and free speech encouraged for the first time since 1917 and jamming on BBC broadcasts were lifted. Nevertheless, 7.4 million working days were still lost in 1989 and as Gorbachev remarked,

"when we started we did not understand the depths of the problems we faced." As a result, the economy and USSR was beyond repair, with Gorbachev's idea so significant they ultimately led to the collapse of the USSR in December 1991. Thus, historian Gaddis remarked, "in the end Gorbachev gave up an empire, an ideology, a country in preference to using force," highlighting the extreme significance of perestroika and glasnost in the USSR.

Furthermore, the significance of perestroika and glasnost extended into eastern Europe as it led to the collapse of the 'buffer zone' in 1989. The USSR was spending \$40b annually propping up eastern European communist regimes and thus the calls for autonomy were growing louder in eastern European states under Soviet rule. Under perestroika and glasnost with the idea of greater openness, Gorbachev denounced the Brezhnev Doctrine in December 1982, commenting "a force and the threat of force cannot be and should not be an instrument of foreign policy... freedom of choice is a universal principle, and it should know no exceptions." As a result, great autonomy and reform was seen in eastern Europe throughout 1989, known as the "Year of Miracles", significant impact of perestroika and glasnost. A multiparty democracy was established in Hungary in early 1989, before the Polish Solidarity movement won 99 of 100 seats at the June 1989 election leading to Lech Walesa becoming the first democratically elected leader of Poland as Walesa remarked on this achievement, "these are the final nails in the coffin of communism". Furthermore, the 'Velvet Revolution' in Czechoslovakia swept aside the communist government, before in November 1989, Gunter Schabowski opened east German borders, leading to the collapse of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1990, an extremely significant ramification of perestroika and glasnost. As historian Schlesinger remarked, in East Germany "the national revival is engendered in perestroika and glasnost", as Gorbachev's idea led to German reunification in 1990, assisting with Helmut Kohl's 'Ten Point Plan' for reunification and 'Two + Four Treaty'. Thus, as historian Gaddis remarked, "Gorbachev made it clear to the people and government of eastern Europe that the door was now open," and as such perestroika and glasnost led to the fall of the 'buffer zone' in Eastern Europe.

Perestroika and glasnost was also extremely significant in terms of the impact that it had on Soviet-American relations during the 1980s. Reagan in 1983 had introduced his SDI program, which as Gaddis remarked, led "to the reaction, the in the Kremlin approaching panic," as Reagan reintegrated the tensions of the arms race. Thus, Gorbachev's new political thinking that came with perestroika and glasnost was hailed in the west, becoming as Gorbachev remarked, "the time is ripe for abandoning views on foreign policy which are influenced by an imperial standpoint." Perestroika and glasnost thus prompted Gorbachev to seek arms disarmament with the US, after the USSR was spending 40% of their GDP on arms, with \$40b alone spent in Afghanistan. As a result, the leaders met at Geneva in 1985 and Reykjavik in 1986, however no ground was made until December 1987 in Washington, when Reagan and Gorbachev signed the INF Treaty. The treaty led to 3000 intermediate range missiles being removed from Europe by June 1988, as arms reduction was seen as Gorbachev commented on the INF Treaty "it is a breakthrough which allowed us for the first time to look over the horizon." At the 1989 Malta Conference the two powers formally met to bury the Cold Eat "at the bottom of the Mediterranean" and with the START Treaty of 1991, both of which occurred due to perestroika and glasnost, the Cold War had officially ended. As Gaddis remarked, "Gorbachev wanted to save socialism but would not use force to do so. It was his particular misfortune that these goals were incompatible and to save one meant abandoning the other", thus the perestroika and glasnost had improved east-west relations, ultimately ending the Cold War also.

Thus, the significance of the idea of perestroika and glasnost was monumental during the time period. This reform of Gorbachev changed entire relations within the USSR, in eastern Europe and with relations towards the west, ultimately ending the ideological battle and thus the Cold War. As Gorbachev remarked on 25 December 1991, "an end has been put to the Cold War, the arms race and the insane militarisation of our country. The threat of a world war is no more," leading to the hammer and sickle lowered over the Kremlin for the last, all largely due to the idea of perestroika and glasnost.

This essay reflects excellent use of supportive evidence used in conjunction with high level language to support a sustained and sophisticated argument. The candidate has demonstrated a strong understanding of the period.