**Significance of Themes and Events -**

**Stalin’s Rise to Power**

Source Analysis 2: Transfer of Power

| **Theme/Event/Idea** | **Extent of significance (limited/moderate/high)** | **Significance** |
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| Socialism in One Country vs Permanent Revolution | High significance | Shows Stalin’s willingness to concede Marxist ideal of permanent revolution in favour of Socialism in One Country: suited Stalin, as permanent revolution was unpopular overseas, and S.O.C. appealed to nationalist sentiments of Russians. Conceded ideology mainly to counter Trotsky’s unpopular alternative - wasn’t pursuing Communism, but was pursuing power grab. |
| Centralised vs Collective leadership | Moderate significance | Fears of centralisation helped to eliminate Stalin’s opposition: eg. fear of Trotsky becoming dictator of the party as Napoleon had done after French Revolution, couldn’t have Trotsky as he was a divisive leader. Abhorred factionalism: allowed dismissal of Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev. |
| NEP vs Rapid Industrialisation | High significance | Indicated the lengths to which Stalin was willing to go to preserve his power.  Eg. NEP: agreed with it at first in a strategic alliance with Bukharin to eliminate Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev. Then, changed ideology to rapid industrialisation (that of Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev) to eliminate Bukharin and the right, claiming that Bukharin wasn’t ‘Communist enough’.  S.O.C. strengthened Stalin’s support: investing more money within Russia for Russians, rather than overseas as Trotsky proposed - Jewish international conspiracy. |
| Legacy and influence of Lenin | High significance | Left a power and ideological vacuum: Communism had not been Marxism, it had been Leninism, and now Leninism had lost its figurehead in the power vacuum of Lenin. Stalin stepped into that vacuum - he continued Lenin’s legacy and thus Leninism for some while. Yet he soon changed to Stalinism: dictatorship and centralisation. Under Lenin, the ideological basis of ‘Communism’ had been based almost purely upon leadership (evidenced in the deification of Lenin after his death, 3.5 million people came to visit his body in 3 days despite freezing temperatures). Stalin managed to transfer this to himself, replacing ideology with leadership and charisma. |
| Lenin’s death | Moderate significance | Death came at a convenient time: Lenin hated Stalin, would have brought him down if lived longer.  Lenin had begun the democratisation of the party eg. expansion of Central Committee from 12-100 people, which would have reduced Stalin’s dictatorial power - but he died in time, and Stalin reduced power from 12 to 3 (triumvirate) to 1 by 1927. |
| Lenin’s funeral | Moderate significance | Trotsky not invited to funeral - damaged his reputation.  Stalin made himself a key figure and the natural successor to Lenin: made a speech in tribute to Lenin, thereby transferring support for Lenin to himself. Carried casket. |
| Ideology | Limited significance | Primary focus of Stalin was not Communist ideology, rather it was staying in power. See below |
| Concessions of ideology | Moderate significance | Indicated the lengths to which Stalin was willing to go to preserve his power. Conceded Marxist ideal of permanent revolution in favour of Socialism in One Country: suited Stalin, as permanent revolution was unpopular overseas, and S.O.C. appealed to sentiments of Russians. |
| Elimination of opposition | Moderate significance | 1. *Alliance with Zinoviev and Kamenev (triumvirate): slander Trotsky in 1924 and exile him in 1928, cover up Lenin’s will* 2. *Alliance with Bukharin 1925 re: NEP, put Stalin supporters in the Politburo, dismiss Zinoviev and Kamenev alongside Trotsky (United Opposition - factionalism) in 1925* 3. *Dismantled NEP in favour of rapid industrialisation, dismissed Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky in 1929*   Ambivalence and political manoeuvring allowed Stalin to eliminate and discredit the left and the right, leaving himself as the only viable option as leader for years to follow. No other viable options: Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev posed a factionalist threat, while Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky supported the unpopular NEP - capitalist notions. |
| Trotsky | Significant: his failures and weaknesses allowed Stalin to come to power when Trotsky appeared to be the obvious choice - which damaged him | Trotsky was divisive, arrogant and confrontative, didn’t like to compromise - fear amongst members that he would split the party, weakening its power. Fear of factionalism ie. United Opposition of Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev.  Trotsky was a Jew: distrusted, thought he was part of conspiracy in other nations. Heightened by his support for permanent Revolution.  Left out from Lenin’s funeral: damaged his reputation.  General: didn’t know how to play the political game. Fears that he would become the ‘Red Napoleon’ - dictatorship would emerge like it had in France. |
| Stalin’s leadership ie. Cult of Stalin | Significant | Significant in aiding transfer away from pure Communist ideology, particularly its adaptation in Leninist Communism. Cult of Stalin allowed Stalin to assert himself as rightful leader of USSR, and successor of Lenin - despite the fact that Communism idealised the withering away of the state. Thus, personality cult allowed Stalin to exercise total autocratic powers by himself. |
| Lenin’s testament | Limited significance | Had the potential to upend Stalin’s quest for the leadership, but he found out about it and had it read to Central Committee first, rather than being released. Contained incriminating material on Kamenev and Zinoviev, and helped to bolster Trotsky - thus, it was seen as a threat by the Central Committee, who chose not to reveal it. Meant that knowledge never got out - by the time Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev attempted to release it to the press in 1925, was too late as Stalin had already seized power. |
| Propaganda | High significance | Allowed Stalin to characterise himself as the natural successor of Lenin, and thus to ensure support for himself and his plans as ‘Lenin’s will’. Facilitated creation of the Cult of Stalin as a direct result of the Cult of Lenin. |