

Markscheme

November 2015

History route 2

Higher level and standard level

Paper 1 – Communism in crisis 1976–1989

6 pages

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For the attention of all examiners: if you are uncertain about the content/accuracy of a candidate's work please contact your team leader.

1. (a) What, according to Source A, were the aims of Gorbachev and his associates? [3]

- To find a middle way: to introduce change to solve problems but within the existing political and social system;
- They wanted to maintain a state-owned economy but with some elements of a market economy;
- They wanted to give people freedom of speech, but wanted them to express communist views;
- They wanted to introduce some democracy to politics but maintain the influence of the “party”.

Award [1] for each relevant point up to a maximum of [3].

(b) What is the message conveyed by Source E? [2]

- Gorbachev’s “policies” are encircled and/or threatened by popular unrest, strikes and protests;
- Perestroika and glasnost appear weak and/or they cannot deal with the challenges in the USSR;
- Forces have been released into the arena that cannot be restrained;
- Gorbachev and other onlookers look concerned and/or angry and/or unable to help.

Award [1] for each valid point up to a maximum of [2].

2. Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources C and D about Gorbachev's domestic policies.

[6]

For “compare”

- Both suggest a lack of political support and/or opposition;
- Both suggest that attempts were made to address economic problems;
- Both suggest a failure to gain public support for his policies;
- Both suggest that change was to be limited and/or within the existing system;
- Both suggest policies gave people more freedoms;
- Both suggest reforms generally failed to achieve aims.

For “contrast”

- Source D mentions an initial period of success, whereas Source C focuses on limitations and/or failures;
- Source C suggests that Gorbachev unleashed public demands for further reform, whereas Source D suggests the public were uninspired by his policies;
- Source C suggests that there were aims to his policies, whereas Source D seems to imply no particular focus or goal;
- Source C suggests that Gorbachev's policies failed as he lost control of the situation, whereas Source D suggests his policies were inherently flawed.

Do not demand all of the above. If only one source is discussed award a maximum of [2]. If the two sources are discussed separately award [3] or with excellent linkage [4–5]. For maximum [6] expect a detailed running comparison/contrast.

3. With reference to their origin and purpose, assess the value and limitations of Source A and Source B for historians studying Gorbachev's domestic policies. [6]

Source A

Origin: The book was written by Peter Kenez in 2006. He is a professor of History.

Purpose: To provide his readership with an academic analysis of the history of the Soviet Union.

Value: The author is a professional academic and he has expertise in Russian/Soviet history. This would enable him to offer a credible analysis of the period. He may offer objectivity, has the benefit of hindsight and may have had access to sources from the Soviet Archive that was opened in the 1990s.

Limitations: The title of the book suggests a broad approach and therefore may lack depth on the period. It may not represent the opinion of the time.

Source B

Origin: A speech by Mikhail Gorbachev, leader of the Soviet Union at the 18th Congress of the Trade Unions of the USSR in 1987.

Purpose: To encourage support for his policies of "restructuring" and to explain why there had been limited progress towards improving the economic situation in the Soviet Union.

Value: It is a speech given by the leader of the Soviet Union, and by the man that had initiated reform. It gives an insight into the view put forward by the leadership at the time of perestroika. It reveals how Gorbachev justified the failings of his policies.

Limitations: Gorbachev is attempting to gain support for his policy. He may be shifting blame and/or responsibility for its initial failings. It lacks hindsight. It lacks objectivity.

Do not expect all of the above. Ideally there will be a balance between the two sources, and each one can be marked out of [3], but allow a [4/2] split. If only one source is assessed, mark out of [4]. For a maximum of [6] candidates must refer to both origin and purpose, and value and limitations.

4. Using the sources and your own knowledge, examine the reasons why Gorbachev's domestic reforms had not achieved their aims by the end of 1989. [8]

Source material

- Source A This source suggests that Gorbachev and his associates sought a middle ground between capitalism and communism and this was not sufficient to redress the severity of the situation in the USSR. Their policies could be seen as contradictory.
- Source B Gorbachev argues that his policies were not working due to resistance from the groups who had benefited from the old ways, those who were lazy or indifferent and those who had used their power for their own personal gain.
- Source C This source suggests that the policies were too limited because Gorbachev attempted to reform within the existing system. In addition, his policies were resisted by the Party elites. It then argues that Gorbachev attempted to use public opinion to defeat resistance within the party but he lost control of the situation as the public demanded more radical reforms.
- Source D This source mentions how Gorbachev did not have a political base of support for his reforms. It indicates that perestroika was not a coherent plan for economic change. He wanted only limited change and there was no plan to destroy the old regime completely. Gorbachev failed to gain the trust of the people.
- Source E This source shows how Gorbachev's reforms were too weak to take on the problems in Soviet society. Forces have been released into the arena that cannot be restrained. It suggests the reforms would be destroyed by riots, strikes and protests. It suggests that Gorbachev seemed unable to effectively respond to the challenges his policies faced.

Own knowledge

Own knowledge may include: details of the problems with early economic reforms such as the anti-alcohol campaign that began in 1985 and led to a fall in government revenue; the policy of glasnost and the relaxation of censorship that led to criticism of reforms and a loss of credibility due to the Chernobyl disaster; details of resistance from Nomenklatura; details of the struggle between anti-reform Communists and reformers (could include the role of the Russian Orthodox Church and the early role of Yeltsin); divisions between the reformers; a fall in the standard of living, a rising number of strikes and protests including a wave of strikes from July 1989; the failure of Gosagroprom and other economic problems in agriculture; the falling membership of the Communist Party between 1988 and 1989; the impact of low gas and oil prices; the rise of Nationalist sentiment; Instability in the Eastern bloc undermined Gorbachev's credibility at home (comments on events in the Eastern bloc should be linked to the domestic situation in the USSR).

Do not expect all of the above, and accept other relevant material. If only source material or only own knowledge is used, the maximum mark that can be obtained is [5]. For maximum [8] expect argument, synthesis of source material and own knowledge, as well as references to the sources used.