

History route 2
Higher level and standard level
Paper 1 – Communism in crisis 1976–1989

Friday 13 November 2015 (morning)

1 hour

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Answer all the questions.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[25 marks]**.

Read all the sources carefully and answer all the questions that follow.

Sources in this paper have been edited: word additions or explanations are shown in square brackets []; substantive deletions of text are indicated by ellipses ... ; minor changes are not indicated.

These sources and questions relate to Gorbachev and his aims/policies (glasnost and perestroika) and consequences for the Soviet state.

Source A Peter Kenez, a professor of History specializing in Russian history, writing in an academic history book, *A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End* (2006).

Perestroika means rebuilding or restructuring. The concept came to be used to describe all the changes taking place in the Gorbachev period. Gorbachev and his associates were vague: on the one hand, they understood the seriousness of the problems faced by society and therefore the inevitability [certainty] of change. But, on the other hand, they continued to have faith in their political and social system. As a consequence, they were looking for a middle way: they wanted to retain a planned, state-owned economy but include the advantages of the market; they wanted to improve public life by allowing people to speak the truth, but only from the point of view of communist convictions; they wanted to restructure politics by “democratizing” it but at the same time maintain the “guiding” role of the party.

Source B Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader, in a speech to the 18th Congress of the Trade Unions of the USSR (1987).

The process of restructuring affects more and more areas of society and the interests of all social groups. And as with all truly revolutionary changes, restructuring gives new energy to some, while others simply do not like the changes that are taking place. These changes are particularly resented [opposed] by those who have got used to working without much effort. These changes are also resented by those who until now have been running the affairs of an enterprise, district, city or laboratory as if it were their own private domain, without the slightest regard for the opinion of the working people ... Restructuring should reveal Socialism’s potential and strengthen Socialism.

Source C Martin Sixsmith, a foreign journalist in Moscow during the final years of the USSR, writing in the book accompanying his British radio series *Russia*, broadcast in 2011.

Having lived through the Gorbachev years in Russia, it seems to me that Gorbachev was obliged to embark on a policy of change because of the Soviet Union's collapsing economy, but that he intended this to be only within the existing system, revitalizing the one-party state by unleashing a measure of initiative and energy. He was unwilling even to use the word "reform", referring instead to perestroika.

When his policies met resistance from the party elites he appealed over their heads to public opinion: his policy of glasnost [openness] was intended to give the Soviet people access to the information they needed, to see that what he was proposing was a good thing, and to denounce those who opposed perestroika. His aim was to mobilize society's support for his measures of economic modernization; but, contrary to Gorbachev's intentions, the people used their new empowerment to demand more radical and more rapid reform than he had contemplated.

From this point onwards, Gorbachev was no longer leading the process of change; he was being dragged along behind the speeding locomotive of public opinion, which he himself had fuelled.

Source D Peter Boettke, a professor of Economics and Philosophy, writing in an academic book, *Why Perestroika Failed: The Politics and Economics of Socialist Transformation* (1993).

Perestroika was a vague and ever-changing policy without a goal or even direction. Moreover, Gorbachev had failed to establish any political base for perestroika. After an initial two-year period of success with glasnost – freedom for most prisoners of conscience, changes in emigration and travel policy and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan – the ambiguities [unclearness] of perestroika began to undermine efforts at transformation of the Soviet system ...

The original program of perestroika did not represent a coherent agenda for economic transformation ... Moreover, perestroika possessed no strategic plan to take power from the old regime.

... From the beginning to the end, Gorbachev was quite clear that what he intended to accomplish was to modify, not fundamentally change, the Soviet system of state socialism ... As a result, perestroika did nothing to inspire trust in the population. Fundamental economic change, however, required that trust be established.

Turn over

Source E

Nicholas Garland, a political cartoonist, depicts Gorbachev (sat behind the banner with the hammer and sickle emblem) watching his policies of glasnost and perestroika in the public arena, in a cartoon in the British newspaper *The Independent* (1988).



[Source: © Nicholas Garland. Used with permission.]

1. (a) What, according to Source A, were the aims of Gorbachev and his associates? [3]
(b) What is the message conveyed by Source E? [2]
 2. Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources C and D about Gorbachev's domestic policies. [6]
 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]
 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]
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