

Markscheme

May 2016

History route 2

Higher and standard level

Paper 1 – Communism in crisis 1976–
1989

7 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, was the attitude of the Soviet Union towards East Germany?[3]

- It was the most prized possession in its empire because it had been the hardest to win in the Second World War and/or it was a symbol of Soviet power.
- It was central to the Soviet Union's strategic interests.
- The Soviet Union expected to be involved when East Berlin made important decisions.
- Berlin was not a top priority for Soviet leaders on the day the wall fell and/or as East Germany was always in crisis the Soviet Union had not anticipated an immediate threat to the existence of East Berlin.

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

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

- This is a popular revolution; the fall of the Berlin Wall was welcomed as can be seen in the celebratory actions of the West Berliners on top of the Berlin Wall.
- The graffiti on the Wall says "Freedom" and represents the sentiments of Germans towards the wall and/or oppression in the East.
- The East Berlin border guards are unarmed, which could be inferred to mean that they were now passive with regard to the demonstrators.

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 the events leading up to the fall of the Berlin Wall. [6]

For “compare”

- Both sources view Gorbachev as a catalyst for change in Eastern Europe.
- Both sources suggest that the critical issue involved the demands for the right to travel.
- Both suggest that the trigger was the timing of the announcement of when travel restrictions would be lifted.
- Both suggest that Krenz was attempting to be a reformist leader.
- Both suggest that it was a popular revolution that overwhelmed the border guards and this resulted in the opening of the border.

For “contrast”

- Source C implies that Gorbachev put pressure on East Germany to liberalize and that this process had already started whereas Source D suggests that other Communist-ruled countries began to liberalize in response to Gorbachev, but not East Germany.
- Source C states that the proposed travel changes were an attempt by the East German government to rally support whereas Source D claims that they were intended to calm the situation and gain breathing space.
- Source C puts events in East Germany into a regional context whereas Source D suggests an international context.

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 B and Source C for historians studying the consequences of Gorbachev’s policies for Eastern Europe. [6]

Source B

- Origin: A conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader, and Egon Krenz, the leader of East Germany, in Moscow on 1 November 1989.
- Purpose: For the two leaders to discuss the situation in East Germany and/or to record the conversation for diplomatic records.
- Value: This is a conversation between the two leaders, who were both influential in events at that time before the fall of the Berlin Wall. The leaders are able to speak to each other directly and this may give the historian an insight into the relationship between the two leaders and indicate what they identified as the problems facing East Germany.
- Limitations: The limitations for an historian are that it is only a conversation that took place at the time rather than an outline of official policy; therefore it does not offer an insight into the consequences of Gorbachev’s policy for Eastern Europe. As the conversation is recorded, both leaders may be guarded in what they say. There may be an imbalance of power between the two leaders and therefore Krenz is being defensive and protecting his own position.

Source C

- Origin: This source is an article by David Williamson, a history teacher, which was published in 2003 in *History Review*, a British journal for students.
- Purpose: To inform students about the significance of Berlin in the Cold War.
- Value: Williamson is a history teacher who will have an understanding of the context of the period. The article was published in 2003 and therefore he may have had access to a range of primary and secondary sources. Sufficient time has passed since the end of the Cold War and this allows for the benefit of hindsight and reflection.
- Limitations: *History Review* is a British publication, therefore Williamson may have a Western perspective about the Cold War. Also, he is not a specialist historian. The article is an overview of Berlin from 1948 to 1989 and only a small part of it is focussed on the reasons for the fall of the Wall. This is an article designed for students and the content may be concise and informative rather than a discussion of research.

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. “The fall of the Berlin Wall occurred only because Gorbachev had come to power in the Soviet Union.” Using the sources and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree with this statement?

[8]

Source material

- Source A Explains that Soviet leaders did not anticipate the fall of the Berlin Wall; East Germany was always in crisis and the government did not inform the Soviet leadership of the unfolding events, therefore Gorbachev did not know what happened until the next morning.
- Source B Shows that Gorbachev was encouraging Krenz to keep up with reforms. Krenz says that the problems in East Germany have built up over the years. They both agree that Honecker had some responsibility for the current problems in East Germany. Krenz says that Honecker saw Gorbachev as a threat to his authority. Krenz assures Gorbachev that his government will resolve some issues.
- Source C Explains that Gorbachev was determined to end the Cold War and he put pressure on East Germany to liberalize. Once this process had started, the demands for further reforms grew and, to gain support, the new reformist East German government decided to relax the travel restrictions. This relaxation was announced prematurely and, facing huge crowds, the guards opened up the crossing points.
- Source D This source implies that East Germany’s government did not respond immediately to Gorbachev’s reform agenda. Honecker was sacked and the new government attempted reform. However, the last minute tactical errors are also emphasized. A mistake in the announcement regarding the timing of the lifting of travel restrictions triggered crowds to gather at the border crossings. The East German government did not want a massacre so the gates were opened.
- Source E This source portrays the message that people-power overwhelmed the East German government and caused the fall of the Wall. The border guards were passive and not prepared to act.

Own knowledge

Gorbachev

Gorbachev came to power in 1985 and introduced the reforms of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (economic restructuring) in the Soviet Union in an attempt to solve its problems. Gorbachev ended the subsidies to the satellite states, introduced the Sinatra Doctrine that gave them more autonomy and, in 1988, abandoned the Brezhnev Doctrine of military intervention. Gorbachev visited East Germany for its 40th anniversary in early October; he pressed Honecker to speed up reform in order to stabilize the country and the crowds implored Gorbachev to help them.

Other factors

East Germany faced severe economic problems and relied heavily on Soviet subsidies. Honecker resisted reform and ran a repressive state using the Stasi. The East German people were influenced by the reforms occurring in other Warsaw Pact countries such as Poland and Hungary. Between August and November 1989 increasing numbers of East Germans were escaping to the West through Hungary and Czechoslovakia when they opened their borders. Honecker left office on 16 October 1989; the subsequent government and Politburo resigned on 7 November. Throughout October and early November huge demonstrations had occurred, not only in East Berlin but in other East German cities also. Dissident groups such as “New Forum” emerged. These demanded political reforms, for example, the legalization of opposition parties and free elections.

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.
