

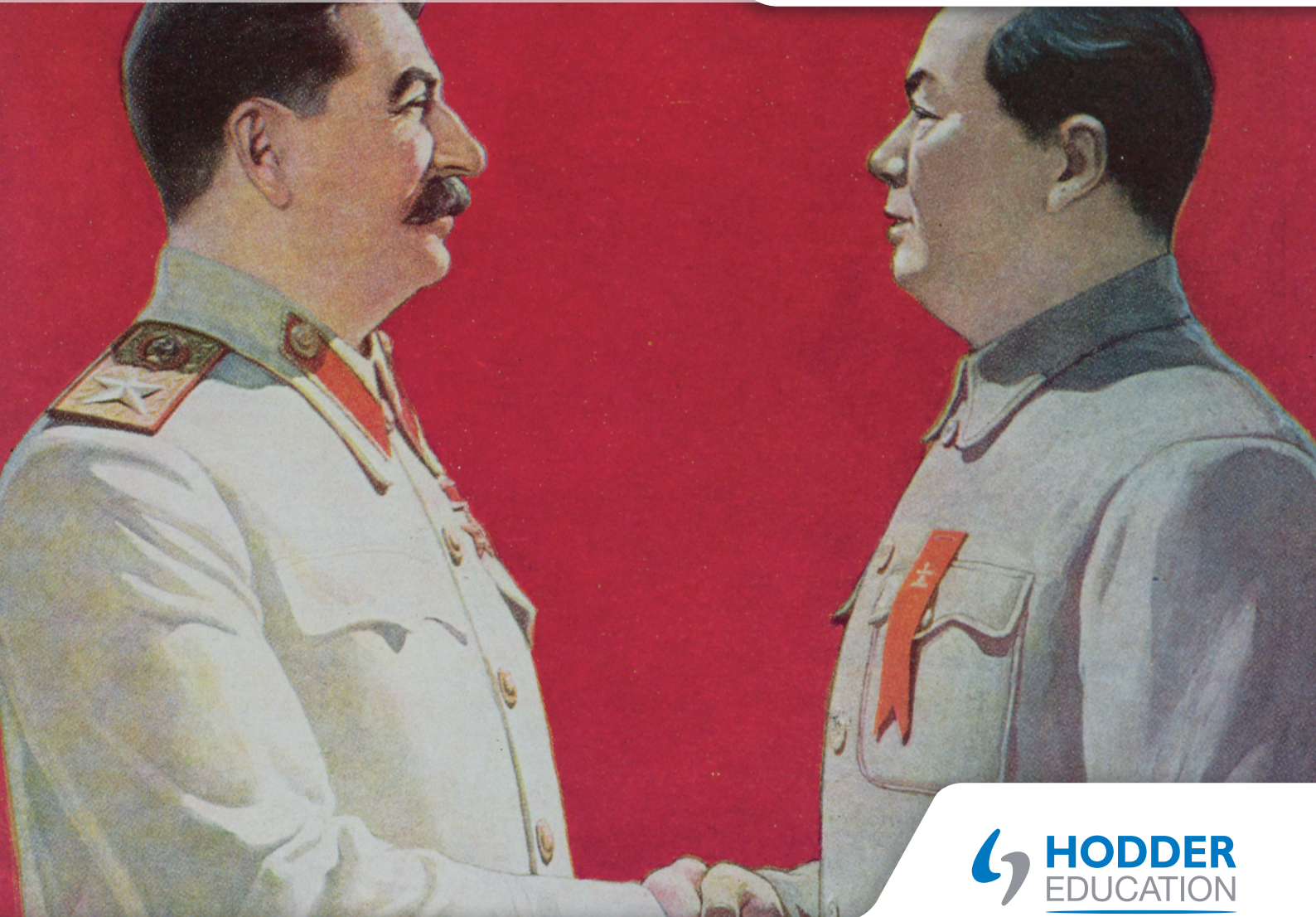
# Authoritarian States

## Study and Revision Guide

PAPER 2

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Paul Grace

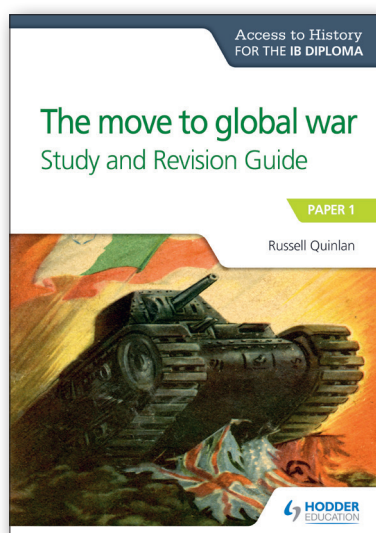


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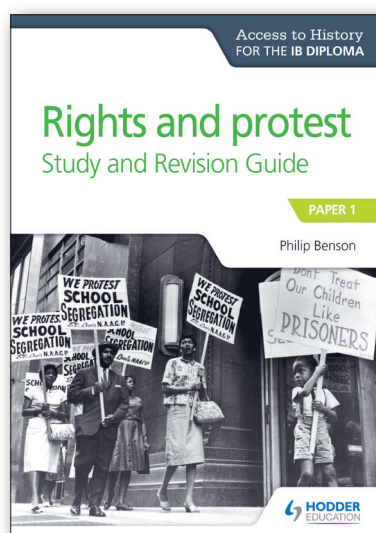
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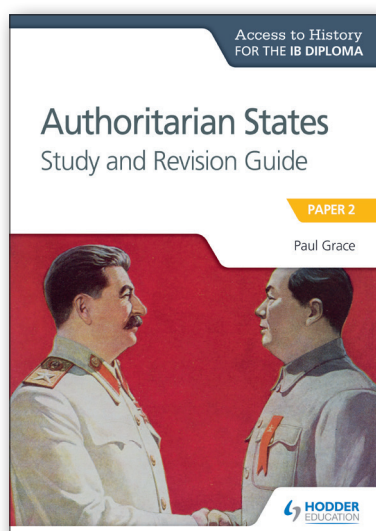


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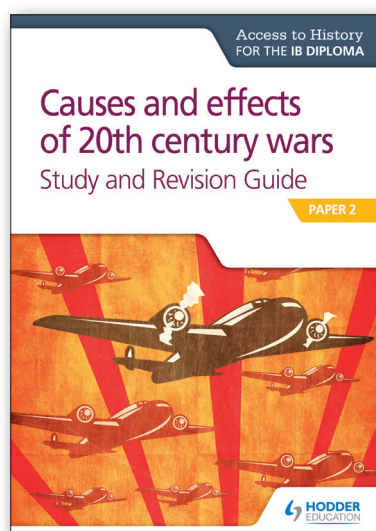


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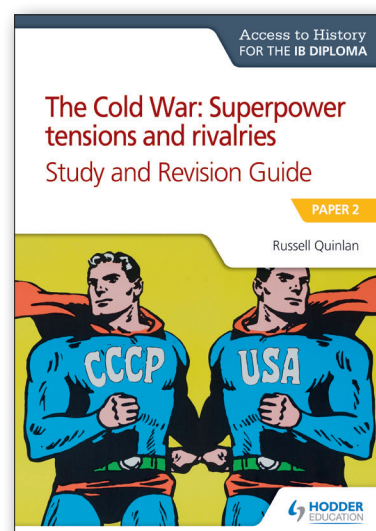
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# Authoritarian States

## Study and Revision Guide

**PAPER 2**

Paul Grace

# 1

# Authoritarian states

Revised

## Overview of authoritarian states

The twentieth century saw the emergence of a wide range of authoritarian states. In this book we will review five case studies of authoritarian states under the following leaders:

- Joseph Stalin
- Adolf Hitler
- Mao Zedong
- Fidel Castro
- Juan Perón.

It is recommended that in preparation for your Paper 2 examination you study at least *three* authoritarian states. Some questions may ask you to compare states so it is helpful to be able to draw ideas from different case studies. Essay questions on Paper 2 are focused on three areas, which will be explained below.

### ■ The emergence of authoritarian states

This section explores the factors that allowed these states to come into existence. Studying for this should focus on the relative importance of conditions and methods.

Conditions refer to the existing situation in the country that may have aided the creation and establishment of an authoritarian state. For example, the economic depression played an important role in aiding Adolf Hitler in his rise to power. The conditions identified are as follows:

- economic factors
- weakness of the existing political system
- social division
- impact of war.

Methods refer to the techniques used by a leader and political party to gain power. These techniques are the direct and controllable factors that suggest that they were actively involved in the establishment of their state. For example, Mao Zedong's ideological position was important to his popular appeal. The methods identified are as follows:

- role of leaders
- ideology
- force
- persuasion and coercion
- propaganda.

It is important to note that depending on the authoritarian or single-party state that you are studying, these factors will have differing levels of significance. When writing your essay you should be able to develop an argument that considers how certain conditions and methods contributed to the emergence of authoritarian states.

### ■ Methods for the consolidation and maintenance of power

Questions in this section are concerned with the methods used for power to be consolidated and then maintained throughout the authoritarian's rule. Consolidation refers to the immediate steps to secure power, so this might include securing borders, removing opposition groups and setting up political structures for the running of the state. Maintenance of power is a term we can use when looking at the methods used to keep the authority of the state throughout the regime's rule. The methods identified for the consolidation and maintenance of power are as follows:

- legal methods
- force
- charismatic leadership
- propaganda
- success and failure of foreign policy
- extent and treatment of opposition.

### ■ Aims and results of domestic policies

The final section is an exploration of domestic policy through the lens of social, economic, political and cultural policies. It is important to note that some of the policies can be used as evidence for the section on consolidation and maintenance of power. For example, Stalin's Five-Year Plans are an example of a domestic policy but also a method for controlling the USSR. This section also has a specific focus on the status and treatment of women and minority groups within the state. Finally, you should also consider what authoritarian rule had achieved.

## UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY

Here is a quick activity to reflect on your understanding of the different sections that you might write about on authoritarian states. Simply match up the terms to their definitions.

| Term                   | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Charismatic leadership | Methods used to secure power once an authoritarian state has been created                                                                                                                   |
| Consolidation          | Often political measures to establish and maintain power through the use of laws. These could include writing constitutions                                                                 |
| Foreign policy         | Refers to discontent or inequality in society                                                                                                                                               |
| Ideology               | A set of guiding ideas that are used by individuals and political parties. This includes fascism                                                                                            |
| Legal methods          | Policy measures outside a state including alliances, trade deals and military engagements                                                                                                   |
| Minorities             | Method used to ensure conformity to the rule of a leader. This often involves the development of a cult of personality                                                                      |
| Social division        | Groups in societies that are not dominant. They may experience repression or more inequality under specific authoritarian states. For example, religious groups and different ethnic groups |

## HISTORICAL CONCEPTS

A useful tool for understanding the case studies on authoritarian states is the use of historical concepts. If you can get into the habit of thinking about historical concepts when you engage with the content, it will help you to develop your ideas and analytical skills. Concepts are referred to in the rubric for the Paper 2 essays, so you should definitely engage with them in your writing. The concepts are listed below: have a go at writing what you understand about these concepts in relation to the study of History. Below are some notes on the concepts which you could have a look at when you have completed the activity.

Historical concepts:

- change
- continuity
- perspectives
- causality
- consequence
- significance.

**Change** A broad concept within history, this concept is used regularly. When thinking about change, you could consider the types of change that might occur within an authoritarian state as a result of policies. Examples include social, economic or political change. When evaluating, think about whether the implemented change was successful or not.

**Continuity** An underused, but useful concept. For this concept we can consider the lack of change. What stayed the same despite a governmental system trying to bring about a new direction in policy? For example, attitudes towards gender could be explored through this concept.

**Perspectives** An essential part of historical investigation is to consider what perspectives might exist on a certain situation or event. An example could be looking at the importance of existing conditions versus methods used for the rise to power of an authoritarian state. Perspectives can also include the views of different agents in the process of history, including historians, people from the time and your own interpretations.

**Causality** Causality is the bread and butter of analytical writing. This refers to developing an understanding of the reasons why something happened. Can you consider the reasons why a leader introduced specific economic policies? What were their motivations? Causality is thinking about why something happened or changed.

**Consequence** This concept explores the effects of something that has taken place. In authoritarian states this might be the consequences of propaganda or the treatment of opposition parties. What were the effects? Consequence can also be categorized in different ways, such as short-term and long-term effects or cultural and social consequences.

**Significance** We use significance when considering importance and it is very useful for developing historical arguments. For example, when considering foreign policy, what was the significance of these policies towards the maintenance of power? Could it be compared to other factors that may have had more or less impact?

# 2

## The USSR under Joseph Stalin, 1924–53

On 5 March 1953 **Joseph Stalin** died. He had succeeded **Vladimir Lenin** as the leader of the USSR in the 1920s and introduced far-reaching policies that transformed the economic and social landscape of the country. Stalin dealt with any opposition, perceived or real, ferociously and introduced policies that impacted people across the USSR.

### The establishment of the Soviet Union and Stalin's rise to power

Revised

When analysing the rule of Stalin, a consideration of Lenin's impact on the establishment of the USSR is also required. This is because the USSR as an authoritarian state came into existence under the rule of Lenin. In this section we will examine the conditions leading to the **Bolshevik Revolution** in 1917 as well as the conditions of the Soviet Union in its early years of creation under Lenin.

#### ■ Conditions in which the Soviet Union emerged

The Soviet Union emerged due to a variety of circumstances including the social conditions facing people in the Russian Empire through to the impact of war and revolution.

##### ■ Social division

- Prior to the Bolshevik Revolution, Russia was a large empire made up of many nationalities ruled by Tsar **Nicholas II**. Many of the nationalities within the Russian Empire sought independence.
- **Russification** was a policy introduced to suppress local languages and customs so that the dominant language and culture of the empire was Russian.
- The majority of people were peasants who lived in rural areas, most of whom existed in poverty. Peasants had gained more freedom after the **Emancipation of the Serfs** in 1861 but conditions continued to be difficult.
- Some industrialization had taken place in Russia, such as the development of the **Trans-Siberian Railway**. Working conditions for industrial workers were harsh, with long hours and poor living standards. Workers tended to labour in factories, in mines and on the railways.
- Protests against tsarist rule were frequent. The **1905 Revolution** was a serious challenge but was overcome by Nicholas II. He had to introduce political reforms in response to the protests, including creating a representative assembly, the **Duma**.
- A range of political groups was founded and developed in the early twentieth century, reflecting different perspectives on how the empire should be governed. These included the Bolsheviks, **Mensheviks**, **Kadets**, **Octobrists** and **Socialist Revolutionaries**.
- Tsarist rule ended with the **February Revolution** of 1917, which began as a series of protests against food shortages in the city of Petrograd (Saint Petersburg). After a few days of fighting in the city, the military joined the protesters and Tsar Nicholas II abdicated. This has sometimes been described as a 'revolution from below', reflecting the importance of social division in Russia at the time.

## REFLECTING ON LONG-TERM CAUSES

When writing about the establishment of the Soviet Union as an authoritarian state there is scope to discuss long-term causes to provide background and context to the conditions that made revolution more likely.

Complete the following table to reflect on the relative importance of the following long-term causes.

| Long-term cause                                                                                                                                                                  | Your explanation of its importance to the establishment of the Soviet Union |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Social division, for example the conditions facing the peasants and industrial workers in the early twentieth century                                                            |                                                                             |
| Weakness of political system, for example the problems with the tsarist regime and the <i>Duma</i> , the unpopularity of Nicholas II                                             |                                                                             |
| Ideological challenges to tsarism, for example the growth of political groups and opposition (Liberals, Mensheviks, Bolsheviks), the influence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels |                                                                             |

## SOURCE INVESTIGATION

Answer the questions below in relation to the sources.

### SOURCE 1

Extract from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, New York Labor News Co., New York, 1908. This book was first published in 1848.

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the middle ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

- 1 What do you think is meant by the parts of the source that have been underlined?
- 2 For what reasons would the ideas of Marx and Engels resonate with people living under the Russian Empire?

### SOURCE 2

Extract from a letter to Nicholas II of January 1917 from Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich, quoted in P.D. Allan, *Russia and Eastern Europe*, Hodder Arnold, Sevenoaks, 1983, page 1.

The unrest grows; even the monarchist principle is beginning to totter; and those who defend the idea that Russia cannot exist without a Tsar lose the ground under their feet, since the facts of disorganization and lawlessness are manifest. A situation like this cannot last long. I repeat once more – it is impossible to rule the country without paying attention to the voice of the people, without meeting their needs, without a willingness to admit that the people themselves understand their own needs.

- 3 According to Source 2, what role did social division play in the February Revolution?

## ■ The impact of war

- Russia's involvement in the First World War was an important factor leading to the February Revolution in 1917. The war lowered people's morale and led to a loss of life, and there were severe food shortages.
- For example, at the **Battle of Tannenburg** over a few days in August 1914, close to 100,000 Russian soldiers were either killed or wounded. The leadership of Tsar Nicholas II during the war was heavily criticized as he took personal responsibility for the military command.
- The Bolsheviks promised 'peace, bread and land', a popular slogan in relation to the unpopularity of Russia's continued involvement in the First World War. The Bolsheviks' position against the war helped them to gain popularity to launch the October Revolution.
- In March 1918, the new Bolshevik government signed the **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk** which took Russia out of the war. It had harsh terms and was very unpopular.
- After the Bolsheviks took power they had to defend their position in the **Russian Civil War**.
- The Russian Civil War from 1917 to 1922 was largely a war between the Reds (Bolsheviks and the Red Army) and the Whites (different anti-Bolshevik groups) who also received support from other countries including Britain and Japan. There were also the Greens, who were peasant armies who fought to protect their own local interests.
- The Reds were able to overcome the Whites and win the war. This allowed them to consolidate their control. **Leon Trotsky**'s leadership of the Red Army played a key role in winning the war.

## ■ Economic conditions

- The poor economic situation facing the Russians was an important contributory factor to the revolutions in 1917. For example, there was worker discontent over low wages and poor conditions. There was also rising inflation during the First World War which increased prices of goods.
- During the Russian Civil War, Lenin introduced the economic policy called **War Communism**. This was a harsh series of policies intended to help the Bolsheviks win the civil war. It included rationing of food and goods, outlawing strikes, nationalizing industries and the requisition of crops from agricultural workers for centralized redistribution.
- War Communism was very unpopular with peasants and there was mass resistance. It also did not yield the results that were hoped for and production declined. The problems of War Communism were a major cause of the **Kronstadt Rebellion**.
- Subsequently, Lenin introduced the **New Economic Policy (NEP)** in 1921 as a way to address these problems. It was seen to be necessary to help the USSR recover from the impact of the civil war.
- The NEP ended the requisition of grain, allowed small levels of profit-making and enterprise, and somewhat relaxed the state control over the economy.
- Disagreement over economic policy was an important division within the **Bolshevik Party** that shaped the power struggle after Lenin's death.

## ■ Weakness of political system

- The Bolsheviks took power in October 1917, overthrowing the **Provisional Government**, which had been set up after the February Revolution as a temporary government.
- A new government structure was set up: a one-party, authoritarian state under the control of the **Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU)**. The **Council of People's Commissars** and the **Secretariat** were set up under Lenin.
- The USSR was founded in 1922 after the end of the civil war.
- The new state was strongly authoritarian. Lenin made use of secret police, the **Cheka**, to deal with opposition, and religious groups were heavily repressed. Lenin made use of **purges** and **show trials**.
- **Factionalism** was banned within the CPSU. This meant that there was to be no open, free speech or criticism.
- Lenin was a believer in **democratic centralism**, which ensured that there was obedience towards the authority of the Soviet leadership. It was thought that the leadership was best placed to make the right decisions.

## TRAFFIC LIGHTS

How important do you think the following were to the establishment of the Soviet Union? Use the following code: **red** = not important, **amber** = slightly important and **green** = important.

| Factor                                                                       | Red, amber or green? | Explanation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| High levels of poverty among the peasantry in the Russian countryside        |                      |             |
| Russification: spreading Russian language and culture under Tsar Nicholas II |                      |             |
| Tsar Nicholas II's command of the army during the First World War            |                      |             |
| The success of the October Revolution                                        |                      |             |
| The political systems and structure set up by Lenin                          |                      |             |
| Ideology (Marxism and Lenin's adaptations)                                   |                      |             |
| Russian Civil War                                                            |                      |             |

## WRITING PRACTICE: THE IMPORTANCE OF WAR

- Practise writing a paragraph that focuses on the importance of war for the establishment of the Soviet Union.
- Discuss the importance of the First World War and the Russian Civil War.
- You can use this template to help you to structure your writing.

War was an important factor that led to the establishment of the USSR. The First World War had a major impact on the Russian Empire

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Furthermore, the Russian Civil War

---



---

However, an alternative view is that

---



---

## ESSAY WRITING HELP

Connectives are very useful for providing structure to history essays. Try to think of examples for the following types of connectives.

|                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Contrasting        | Alternatively, however |
| Comparing          |                        |
| Emphasizing        |                        |
| Adding             |                        |
| Sequencing         |                        |
| Providing examples |                        |

- Reflect on how you might make better use of connectives in your writing.
- Think about how they can help you to bring out historical concepts (for example change, perspective) in your writing.

## ■ Methods for the establishment of the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin

As we have seen earlier, the Soviet Union emerged from the success of the Bolshevik Revolution and the victory of the Russian Civil War. This section will look at the methods used by Lenin in the early establishment of the Soviet Union as well as some of the factors that aided Stalin in his bid to take power after Lenin's death in 1924.

### ■ Ideology

#### ■ Importance of Lenin

- Lenin had a profound impact on the ideological development of Marxism. He was also a major critic of imperialism, describing it as the 'highest stage of capitalism'.
- Following Marxist theory, Lenin proposed the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' as a means of creating the conditions for the establishment of a socialist state. Lenin proposed that a **vanguard party** should take the lead in this process.
- Lenin's **April Theses** of 1917 were part of an important ideological speech that laid out his priorities for the revolution and establishment of a new state.
- Once in power, Lenin's policies reflected his ideological position, for example land reform and setting up of authoritarian measures such as the secret police.
- Lenin showed flexibility with his ideology with the introduction of the NEP due to the problems created by the Russian Civil War and War Communism.

#### ■ Importance of Stalin

- Stalin also played a key role in the ideological development of the Soviet Union. He declared himself a Marxist–Leninist and wanted to be viewed as a dedicated follower of Lenin.
- Stalin's policy of **Socialism in One Country** was a call to consolidate and modernize the Soviet Union rather than concern itself with spreading revolution worldwide.
- This position was popular as it promoted stability. It also differed from Leon Trotsky's position of **Permanent Revolution**, which advocated the need for continuous efforts to promote revolution overseas.

### ■ Role of leaders

A variety of leaders played important roles in the establishment of the Soviet Union. This section will consider the significance of Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin. You might also want to consider the roles of **Bukharin**, **Zinoviev** and **Kamenev**.

#### ■ Lenin

- As mentioned above, Lenin was a political theorist whose writings and policies guided the Soviet Union.
- He provided leadership in the setting up of the political structures of the state, Russian Civil War, economic policy and social policies.

#### ■ Trotsky

- Trotsky played both an important ideological role (formerly a Menshevik) and a practical role. He was one of the main organizers of the October Revolution. He wrote extensively on Marxist theory.
- He was commissar for foreign affairs initially and signed the unpopular Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.
- He led the Red Army successfully during the Russian Civil War. This was crucial to the survival of the Soviet Union.
- He was unable to take power after Lenin's death due to a combination of factors. One reason was his unwillingness to get involved in political infighting to secure his position.

#### ■ Stalin

- Stalin wielded political influence due to the positions he held in the party from 1917 onwards. He worked as commissar for nationalities and was former editor of **Pravda**.
- Of particular note was his position as general secretary from 1922, which allowed him to have a clear awareness of the workings of the entire administration.
- He was viewed as a bureaucratic administrator by other members of the party. Nicknames include the 'grey blur' and 'comrade filing card'.

- He had the power of **patronage**, which meant he could appoint his supporters into the party.
- When Lenin died in 1924, Stalin was able to position himself as successor in a variety of ways. These included organizing Lenin's funeral and presenting himself as a committed Leninist. He was fortunate that **Lenin's Testament** was never released as it was very critical of Stalin.

## SOURCE INVESTIGATION

Answer the questions below with reference to the sources.

### SOURCE 3

An extract from Lenin's 1902 pamphlet, 'What is to be done?', quoted in Anthony Wood, *The Russian Revolution*, second edition, Routledge, London, 1986, page 77.

An organization of workers must be first a trade organization; secondly, it must be as broad as possible; thirdly, it must be as little secret as possible ... . An organization of revolutionaries, on the contrary, must embrace primarily and chiefly people whose profession consists of revolutionary activity. ...

... In an autocratic country, the more we *narrow* the membership of such an organization, restricting it only to those who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activities and have received a professional training in the art of struggle against the political police, the more difficult will it be to 'catch' such an organization ... .

- 4 What does Source 3 tell you about Lenin's views on the role of revolutionary groups?

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### SOURCE 4

An extract from Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution & Results and Prospects*, Red Letter Press, Seattle, 2010, page 313. Trotsky's book was first published in 1931.

The completion of the socialist revolution within national limits is unthinkable. ... The socialist revolution begins on the national arena, it unfolds on the international arena, and is completed on the world arena.

- 5 How does the extract in Source 4 help you to understand Trotsky's ideological position?

---



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## STALIN, TROTSKY OR LENIN?

- Read through the statements below and decide whether they refer to Stalin, Trotsky or Lenin.
- Also write a comment on the significance of the factor.

| Example                                                                                   | Lenin? | Stalin? | Trotsky? | Significance? |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------|----------|---------------|
| Proposed Socialism in One Country as an ideological position on revolution                |        |         |          |               |
| Made the decision to introduce the NEP after the Russian Civil War                        |        |         |          |               |
| Proposed the need for a vanguard party to lead the revolution and build a socialist state |        |         |          |               |
| Played a crucial role in both the October Revolution and the Russian Civil War            |        |         |          |               |
| Held positions of power that allowed him to place supporters into the party               |        |         |          |               |
| Was against both the NEP and Socialism in One Country                                     |        |         |          |               |

### ■ The use of force

- Force played a role in the establishment of the Soviet Union; the **Red Terror** during the civil war years was a brutal repression and killing of supporters of the tsarist system.
- Lenin's secret police, the *Cheka*, carried out much of the terror, using extreme methods of torture and execution.
- Concentration camps were set up for those opposing the regime and there were also purges and show trials, such as the **1922 Moscow Trial of the Socialist Revolutionaries**.
- Any opposition, for instance peasant resistance in the countryside, was dealt with harshly.
- Religious groups were repressed under Lenin. Many Church leaders were arrested or killed.

### ■ Persuasion and coercion

- Persuasion and coercion played an important role in Stalin's acquisition of power after the death of Lenin.
- He was able to fill the party with his supporters due to his position as general secretary from 1922 onwards. Previously, he had also held positions of people's commissar for nationalities, liaison officer between the **Politburo** and **Orgburo**, and head of the workers' and peasants inspectorate.
- Stalin positioned himself as Lenin's successor, delivering a speech at his funeral.
- Stalin successfully isolated and removed his opponents. He supported Kamenev and Zinoviev when they were in conflict with Trotsky. He then turned on all three of them in 1927, leading to their dismissal from the party.
- Stalin was able to time his opinions on certain policies such as the NEP in a way that was favourable to him, understanding the mood of the party.
- After the defeat of the left, Stalin worked to remove the right opposition of Bukharin, **Tomsky** and **Rykov** as a means of introducing the policies of **collectivization** and **industrialization**.

### ■ Propaganda

- *Pravda* became the official newspaper of the CPSU. It was used to promote the party's achievements and ideology.
- The October Revolution was regularly glorified in propaganda, as was the role of Lenin. A cult of personality developed around Lenin.
- Bolshevik propaganda was used during the civil war to help with the war effort, for instance the use of posters and **agitprop** trains that had revolutionary images to support the Reds.
- Censorship was widespread in literature and the arts to remove anti-Bolshevik ideas.

## SUMMARY NOTES

Create a revision table summarizing the factors that led to the establishment of the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin. Use the framework provided below.

| Factor                       | Explanation and examples |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Economic conditions          |                          |
| Weakness of political system |                          |
| Social division              |                          |
| Impact of war                |                          |
| Role of leaders              |                          |
| Ideology                     |                          |
| Persuasion and coercion      |                          |
| Propaganda                   |                          |
| Force                        |                          |

## CHRONOLOGY ACTIVITY

The following events are all relevant to Stalin's rise to power after Lenin's death:

- Lenin's Testament not being read out to the members of the CPSU.
- Stalin's backing away from the NEP and launching an attack on Bukharin and the right wing of the party.
- The formation of the united opposition of Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev against Stalin and the right wing of the party.
- Stalin was seen as the clear frontrunner for the Soviet leadership.
- Trotsky criticized Kamenev and Zinoviev in his **Lessons of October**.
- Expulsion of Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev from the party after accusations of factionalism.

Check your understanding of the events leading to Stalin's rise to power by going through the sequence and placing them in the correct order.

| Year           | Event |
|----------------|-------|
| 1924 (May)     |       |
| 1924 (October) |       |
| 1926           |       |
| 1927           |       |
| 1928           |       |
| 1929           |       |

## FURTHER PRACTICE QUESTIONS

The following questions can also help you to revise the establishment of the Soviet Union and the rise to power of Stalin.

- Examine the importance of persuasion and coercion in the rise to power of one authoritarian ruler.
- 'Socially divided societies provide the ideal conditions for the establishment of authoritarian states.' To what extent do you agree with this statement? Refer to two different authoritarian states in your answer.

## Stalin's consolidation and maintenance of power, 1929–53

Revised

By 1929, Stalin had emerged as the sole leader of the Soviet Union. He had successfully removed any challenges to his bid for power from both the left and right wings of the CPSU. In the years following, he introduced policies to consolidate and maintain his control over the Soviet Union.

### ■ Methods for the consolidation and maintenance of power

#### ■ Legal methods: political

- Politically, the structures of the Soviet Union had been established before Stalin took power.
- These included the status of the CPSU and the outlawing of any other political parties, as well as the organization of the party and legislative apparatus.
- One major political change that Stalin introduced was the 1936 constitution.
- The constitution provided for democratic participation of men and women over the age of eighteen. However, in elections they were only able to vote for candidates approved by the party.
- Article 125 of the constitution stated that citizens of the USSR had the freedom of speech, a free press and the right of assembly. However, as seen by the treatment of opposition, and by the use of authoritarian policies, these freedoms never really materialized.

#### ■ Legal methods: economic

- Stalin wanted to transform the Soviet Union; this fitted with his policy of Socialism in One Country. He wanted the USSR to catch up with the developed nations of the West.
- Stalin proposed to do this through mass industrialization and collectivization by way of a series of Five-Year Plans. Part of the motivation for this was to move away from the NEP.

#### ■ Collectivization

- Large areas of land were to be farmed collectively under this process. One type of collective farm, the **kolkhoz**, would comprise between 50 and 100 households.
- Collectivization meant that the state took control of the land and the peasants then farmed it. The state took centralized control of grain production and distribution.
- Stalin identified the **kulaks** as a group who needed to be removed as a class. The **kulaks** were a group of richer peasants who had benefited under the NEP. Among other things, they were accused of hoarding grain.
- **De-kulakization**, therefore, was a policy that accompanied collectivization. Many people were attacked violently or killed in this process. There were also mass deportations of **kulaks** during the early 1930s.
- The collectivization process was successful in its intention of bringing peasant farms under state control. By the early 1940s, the process had led to the collectivization of almost all of the Soviet Union's farmland.
- There was significant resistance to collectivization from the peasants, who felt that their lifestyles were threatened. Resistance came in many forms, both peaceful and violent, but grew increasingly violent through actions such as arson attacks.
- The consequences of collectivization were devastating for the peasants. Their way of life had been completely transformed; there was mass starvation in the 1930s. Millions died in the famines in Ukraine and Kazakhstan, seen as a direct result of the upheaval in the countryside.
- Many peasants left the countryside to work in the mass industrialization projects being established.

#### ■ Industrialization

- Stalin carried out several Five-Year Plans while he was leader of the Soviet Union.
- The Five-Year Plans involved a series of targets for industrial production.
- The first Five-Year Plan saw a significant increase in the production of coal and iron.
- Industrial areas expanded rapidly to try and reach these targets. The development of the city of **Magnitogorsk** for steel production is one such example.
- Major industrial projects were completed during the first Five-Year Plan, including the White Sea–Baltic Canal and the Dnieprostroi Dam. Forced labour often was used to carry out these projects.
- Workers were encouraged and given incentives to work as hard as possible on these projects. **Aleksei Stakhanov** was used as a role model as he had managed to extract 102 tonnes of coal in six hours, a record amount. This created unrealistic expectations for workers.

- Industrialization continued through the Five-Year Plans prior to the Second World War. There was a great deal of evidence that these were successful in developing the Soviet Union's industrial base and increasing production.
- The major problem of both industrialization and collectivization was the human cost. Living conditions were very difficult for workers throughout the Soviet Union. Safety was very poor for industrial workers and hours were long. The famines in the countryside are further evidence of the human cost of these policies.

## THE IMPACT OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

Consider Sources 5–7 below. How can you use them to explain the following?

- The success and failure of Stalin's economic policies.
- The importance of economic policies towards Stalin's consolidation and maintenance of power.

### SOURCE 5

Industrial output during the first three Five-Year Plans, quoted in Michael Lynch, *Bolshevik and Stalinist Russia: 1917–64*, Hodder Education, London, 2015, page 102.

| Product                       | 1927 | 1930 | 1932 | 1935 | 1937 | 1940 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Coal (millions of tonnes)     | 35   | 60   | 64   | 100  | 128  | 150  |
| Steel (millions of tonnes)    | 3    | 5    | 6    | 13   | 18   | 18   |
| Oil (millions of tonnes)      | 12   | 17   | 21   | 24   | 26   | 26   |
| Electricity (millions of kWh) | 18   | 22   | 20   | 45   | 80   | 90   |

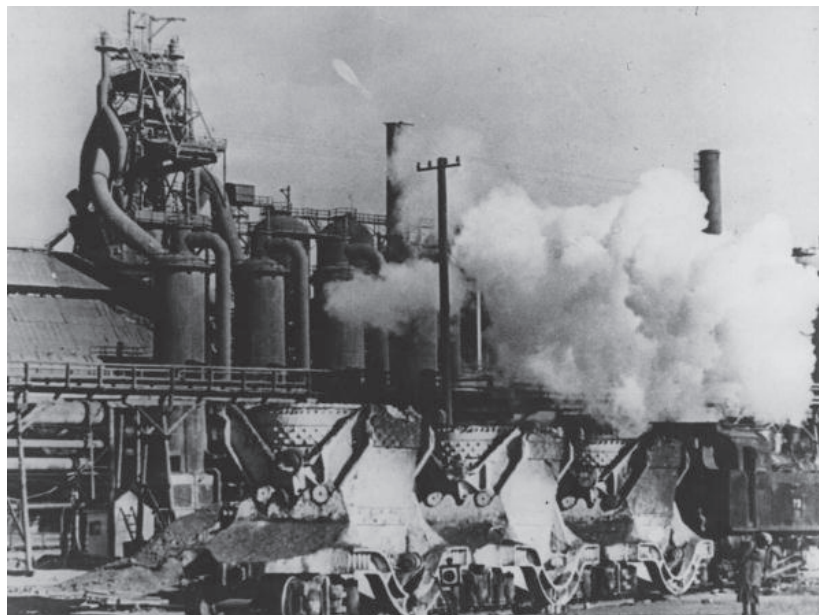
### SOURCE 6

Extract from David Evans and Jane Jenkins, *Years of Russia, the USSR and the Collapse of Soviet Communism*, Hodder Education, London, 2008, pages 288 and 289. Gosplan was the name for the Soviet state planning committee.

Soviet claims and statistics relating to the Five Year Plan lost credibility because they were influenced by the needs of propaganda and by the inflated returns provided by Gosplan. Yet, even though we know that the Plans often failed to reach their targets and were affected by confusion, waste and inefficiency, there is no doubt that Stalin's industrialisation of the Soviet Union was a remarkable achievement ... Stalin had changed the face of the Soviet Union. It was now a country of factories, iron and steel works, hydro-electric dams and much improved systems of transport and communication ... On the other hand it might be argued that millions had died and the people forced to endure hard labour, shortages, reduced living standards and the loss of their personal liberties in order to create a better life for future generations of Russians.

### SOURCE 7

Blast furnace built during the first Five-Year Plan at Magnitogorsk by a combination of 'shock workers' and forced labour.



## ■ Force and the treatment of opposition

- Stalin made full use of purges to remove any opposition to his authority.
- An early Stalinist purge was the **Ryutin Affair** in 1932. Ryutin had written in opposition to Stalin, describing him as the 'gravedigger of the revolution' and calling for a halt to the economic policy of collectivization. He and his supporters had tried to organize resistance but were caught, put on trial and expelled from the party. Ryutin was later executed in 1937.
- Stalin used a range of methods to enforce control, including the increased use of the secret police: the **NKVD** (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs).
- Numerous labour camps were set up across the Soviet Union. These **gulags** were holding facilities for any opposition figures and prisoners under Stalin.
- The murder of **Sergei Kirov** was a turning point in the mid-1930s. Kirov was a popular member of the CPSU and was potentially someone who could have launched a successful bid to oust Stalin from power. His death was beneficial to Stalin as it took away this challenge. There are suggestions that Stalin may have arranged his death.
- After the murder, a series of moves by Stalin intensified the purges and increased his power over the party. This included the arrest, imprisonment, execution and exile of thousands of party members. Stalin was then able to appoint his most loyal supporters in important positions of power.
- Many members of the party did not oppose these purges as they were loyal to Stalin and wanted to advance their own careers.

## ■ The Great Terror

- The purges intensified in the late 1930s. This time has become known as the **Great Terror**.
- Various show trials were held during this time. The trial of Kamenev and Zinoviev in 1936 saw Stalin removing old rivals on the left of the party. In 1938, the trials of Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy saw him take on the right of the party. The public nature of these trials had a strong impact on Stalin's control over the Soviet Union.
- The military was heavily purged in 1937, with officers especially targeted.
- The Great Terror also affected people across different sectors of society. An atmosphere of fear was created, with the secret police carrying out many mass killings and with millions sent to work in the **gulags**.
- The purges continued during the Second World War and into Stalin's final years in power, such as the **Doctors' Plot** in the early 1950s.

## ■ Charismatic leadership and the dissemination of propaganda

- Propaganda was used to promote Stalin's authority and his policies. A cult of personality was created.
- He was often pictured next to Lenin to give him the clear position as the rightful successor.
- Trotsky's historical reputation was weakened and he was sometimes removed from photographs along with other prominent Bolsheviks from early Soviet history.
- Artistic styles heavily promoted **socialist realism**, which could be understood by the public and would promote the values and policies of the party.
- Stalin described writers as 'engineers of the human soul', seeing them as significant to shaping the thoughts and culture of the Soviet Union. Such propaganda books included *How the Steel was Tempered* from 1932 and *The Great Conveyor Belt* of 1934.
- Censorship was enforced. For example, many influential writers, film-makers and artists were curtailed under Stalin if they were seen as too liberal or too encouraging of free speech.
- Propaganda was everywhere, including architecture, sculpture, film, music and literature.
- The cult of personality around Stalin evolved after the success of the Second World War. He was often pictured wearing white clothes and viewed as the saviour of the people.

## MIND MAP ON STALIN'S USE OF FORCE AND POWER

Force and terror played an important role in Stalin's consolidation and maintenance of power. There were a wide range of purges and measures that were used to control the party and more broadly the people of the USSR. Create a mind map to show the different ways that Stalin used force once in power. You can use Sources 8 and 9 to help develop the details on your mind map.

### SOURCE 8

A map showing the location of *gulags* in the USSR.



### SOURCE 9

Extract from Jacques Rossi, *The Gulag Handbook: An Historical Dictionary of Soviet Penitentiary Institutions and Terms Related to the Forced Labor Camps*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington, DC, 1985. This extract describes the conditions in a *gulag*.

During their non-working hours, prisoners typically lived in a camp zone surrounded by a fence or barbed wire, overlooked by armed guards in watch towers. The zone contained a number of overcrowded, stinking, poorly-heated barracks. Life in a camp zone was brutal and violent. Prisoners competed for access to all of life's necessities, and violence among the prisoners was commonplace. If they survived hunger, disease, the harsh elements, heavy labor, and their fellow prisoners, they might succumb to arbitrary violence at the hands of camp guards. All the while, prisoners were watched by informers – fellow prisoners always looking for some misstep to report to Gulag authorities.

## ■ Stalin's foreign policies

### ■ Early foreign policy

- After the upheaval of the Russian Civil War, early Soviet policy focused on recovery from the war and building peace. As the only communist state in the world, the USSR was quite isolated.
- The Soviets were able to make treaties with Germany during the 1920s and received diplomatic recognition from Britain and France.
- **Comintern** had been set up to aid communist parties around the world. It was very active in the 1920s, as seen by its involvement in China. Comintern took on a more radical approach in Germany and encouraged the communists to challenge the Social Democrats, effectively causing unrest to an important opposition group to the Nazis.
- As Stalin consolidated his power, he wanted to reduce the role of Comintern as well as focus more on domestic concerns. His policy of Socialism in One Country was a reflection of this.

### ■ Foreign policy before the Second World War

- Relations between the Soviet Union and Germany grew tense after the rise to power of Hitler in 1933. Stalin realized that he needed to build alliances in Europe. Despite this, the USSR still signed a trade deal with Germany in 1934.
- In September 1934, Stalin was able to secure the Soviet Union's membership of the League of Nations. This was part of a wider move towards **collective security** at the time. Stalin was also able to make diplomatic progress, with security pacts with both France and Czechoslovakia in 1935.
- The Soviet Union involved itself in the Spanish Civil War, reflecting its concerns about the growth of fascism in Europe. Furthermore, the **Anti-Comintern Pact** of 1936 between Germany and Japan was a clear signal to Stalin of the need for alliances.
- The **Munich Agreement** of 1938 was an accord between Britain, France and Germany that allowed Hitler to take over the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia. The USSR was excluded from the negotiations. This was an example of appeasement that concerned Stalin and can be seen as a reason for his agreeing to the **Nazi-Soviet Pact** in 1939.
- An unexpected move during this time was the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact that sought to divide territorial interests in Eastern Europe between Germany and the USSR. Explanations for this move by Stalin can be apportioned to his lack of solid alliances in Europe as well as territorial and security interests. The signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact brought Hitler and Stalin together for two years, during which time Stalin was able to regain lost territory from the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and both countries divided Poland.
- Despite the signing of the pact, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. Stalin was brought into the Second World War.

## CONCEPT FOCUS: SIGNIFICANCE

One of the history concepts that can be used in your essays is significance. Within the study of History, this refers to explaining the relevant importance of an event or action. For this concept, consider the reasons why historians would place more emphasis on certain evidence, essentially viewing some pieces of evidence as more significant than others.

### ■ The Second World War and afterwards

- The Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany gave Stalin a huge popularity boost at home. Stalin's cult of personality expanded rapidly as a result of the war.
- The Soviet Union was severely affected by the war, with more than 20 million casualties.
- Stalin's international profile was transformed as a result of the war, as a member of the **Grand Alliance** and his role during the **Yalta Conference** and **Potsdam Conference**.
- Stalin sought to strengthen the position of the Soviet Union internationally after the war and was instrumental in the **Sovietization of Eastern Europe**. This process saw many Eastern European countries become communist and was a major source of tension between the Soviet Union and the USA.

## FOREIGN POLICY ESSAY PLAN

**Discuss the ways that foreign policy contributes to the maintenance of power for authoritarian states. Refer to two authoritarian states from different regions in your response.**

Create an essay plan for the question above. Think about the main points you will include and remember to explain the significance of the examples provided:

- This essay question is asking you to explore foreign policy in two different authoritarian states.
- When you have a question like this it is essential that you write about leaders from different regions.
- As both Stalin and Hitler are from the same region, you would not be allowed to write about these two leaders in this response.
- However, it would be acceptable to write about Stalin and Mao (or indeed Castro and Perón) in the response.

## ELIMINATE IRRELEVANCE

**Read through the following paragraph from a student answer to the above essay question. Cross out any sections of the paragraph that seem irrelevant and not focused on the question requirements.**

Foreign policy plays a crucial role in the maintenance of power for authoritarian states. Even in the twenty-first century we can see that successful foreign policies can have a positive impact on how different countries fare. Stalin's foreign policy had different priorities at different stages of his leadership over the USSR. Early on, with the policies of industrialization and collectivization, Stalin prioritized domestic development rather than an expansionist foreign policy. Factories were built across the Soviet Union and a major focus was on the development of heavy industry. However, as fascism became increasingly popular across Europe, Stalin increasingly realized the need for collective security and sought stronger alliances.

## Stalin's domestic policies: aims and results

Revised

As well as the massive changes brought about by industrialization, collectivization and the purges, a variety of social and cultural policies sought to remould Soviet society in line with Stalin's ideological principles.

### ■ Cultural policies

#### ■ Literature

- Stalin sought to impose strict controls on writers in the Soviet Union.
- He once described writers as the 'engineers of the human soul', reflecting his feeling that they can have a transformative effect on the lives of people.
- Socialist realism was promoted in literature. Works needed to be easily understandable to the masses and to promote suitable role models.
- A famous work from the era was *How the Steel was Tempered* by **Nikolai Ostrovsky**.
- Close control and censorship prevented free speech in writing. Many writers were persecuted under Stalin's regime, including **Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn**, who later wrote *The Gulag Archipelago*.

#### ■ Theatre and film

- Film production was strictly controlled under Stalin. During the Five-Year Plans, films that promoted industrialization were encouraged. During the purges and Great Terror a large number of films were censored.
- A similar situation is seen in theatre. A notable theatre director at the time, **Vsevolod Meyerhold**, opposed socialist realism. Despite being a high-profile name in theatre, he was arrested in 1938 and executed.

#### ■ Painting, sculpture and music

- There were two main aims of painting and sculpture: to promote socialist realism and to strengthen the authority of Stalin.
- A famous sculpture was *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman*, made in 1937 by **Vera Mukhina**.
- Images of the family were discouraged in painting and the emphasis on the collective and work was prioritized.
- Stalin also promoted socialist realism in music, preferring a loud and positive-sounding melody, usually played in a major key. Once again, it was to be simplistic and able to have a mass appeal.

## THE ROLE OF PROPAGANDA

Consider the following examples of propaganda and reflect on how they would contribute to Stalin's maintenance of power.

| Example of propaganda                                                                                                          | Explanation of significance |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Poster showing Stalin steering a ship with the flag of the USSR in the background                                              |                             |
| A painting showing a group of farm workers eating food together. The painting is called <i>A Collective Farm Feast</i>         |                             |
| A photograph of Lenin addressing troops in 1920. Both Trotsky and Kamenev have been edited out of the picture                  |                             |
| A sculpture called <i>Worker and Kolkhoz Woman</i> (see Source 10)                                                             |                             |
| A book called <i>Energy</i> by Feodor Gladkov, published in 1932, that tells of the heroism of a group of construction workers |                             |

### SOURCE 10

A famous sculpture of 1937 called *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman* by Vera Mukhina, photographed in Moscow, 2016.



## ■ Social policies

### ■ Treatment of religion

- Religion was heavily repressed from the outset of the Soviet Union.
- The **Russian Orthodox Church** was the main religion targeted by the CPSU. There was resistance in the countryside, where religious traditions were more deep-rooted and held as sacred to people's lives.
- During the Great Terror the attacks on religion intensified. A large number of priests and religious figures were arrested. The vast majority of churches were closed down.
- Stalin's cult of personality worked to deify him as a god. Subsequently, a new type of religion could be observed in the Soviet Union. A similar state of affairs was seen in other authoritarian states in the twentieth century such as Mao's China and **Kim Il-Sung** in North Korea.
- Islam was also repressed and discouraged under Stalin, with mosques and religious schools closed down.
- The Soviets also tried to ban Muslim women from wearing veils in a policy called **hujum**, seeing it as a restriction to gender equality. This policy largely failed.
- During the Second World War, attacks on religion lessened in an effort to get the whole of the Soviet Union behind the war effort. Religion was used to spread messages of nationalism and collective effort in the war.

### ■ Education under Stalin

- Education under Stalin was more traditional than the changes introduced by Lenin.
- School was compulsory until the age of fifteen.
- Government-regulated textbooks were used in classes, and there was an emphasis on testing and examinations.
- As well as learning about traditional subjects, students learned ideological theory and the teachings of **Karl Marx**.
- Some students continued after the age of fifteen; these were the students who would go on to take the elite positions in society.
- Outside school, campaigns trained illiterate adults how to read and write.
- The education system helped to grow a group known as the **nomenklatura**. Its members were the elite who ran the country. These were usually the children of party members who went on to higher education, reinforcing the power of this group.

### ■ Treatment of women

- As in education, Stalin was more conservative in social policy regarding women's rights than Lenin. This was known as the **Great Retreat**.
- Under Lenin, a variety of socially progressive laws had been introduced that sought to give women more rights over marriage, work and the family.
- Stalin looked to promote family values and also to discourage divorce and sexual freedom. He wanted a 'reconstruction of the family on a new socialist basis'.
- The **1936 Family Code** (the third family code since the revolution of 1917) made divorce more difficult; homosexuality was made illegal and abortion was discouraged.
- Trotsky strongly criticized the Great Retreat in his book **The Revolution Betrayed**.
- During the Second World War, an increase in birth rate was encouraged with a system of incentives and punishments. Women who had many children were celebrated, abortion was made illegal and taxes were higher for families with fewer children.
- The Great Retreat meant that the role of women's rights was placed behind the needs of the Soviet Union during both the Five-Year Plans and the Second World War. Many of the progressive changes that appeared in the early years of the Soviet Union were reversed.

### ■ Treatment of minority groups

- Stalin wanted to discourage nationalism and independence movements within the different Soviet republics.
- There were mass deportations of minority groups under Stalin, often to the more remote areas of Siberia or Kazakhstan. The people deported were typically from areas which Stalin saw as a threat to the unity of the Soviet Union. This was an example of **ethnic cleansing**.
- The scale of the deportations increased during the Second World War.

## ESSAY PLAN

### To what extent did Stalin achieve authoritarian control over the USSR?

Look at the essay question above. It asks you to consider the extent of Stalin's authoritarian control over the Soviet Union. In the table there are a range of factors. For each one, explain how this could be used within an answer to this question. Now create an essay plan for this question. How would you structure a response to this question? Is there scope to bring in perspectives? Historical comparison? Will you make reference to any of the history concepts? Reflect on how your response would change if you were writing about a different authoritarian state. What would be the significant similarities and differences?

| Factor                                                                                                           | How could this be used in your response? | What examples could you use to develop this point? |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| The development of a command economy with far-reaching industrial and agricultural policies                      |                                          |                                                    |
| The development of a cult of personality and the widespread use of propaganda                                    |                                          |                                                    |
| Purging of political opposition, use of a secret police and prison camps                                         |                                          |                                                    |
| Stalin's ideological position, including Socialism in One Country and democratic centralism                      |                                          |                                                    |
| The Great Retreat, social policies that sought to reinforce more traditional values in education and family life |                                          |                                                    |

# Authoritarian States

## Study and Revision Guide

### Paper 1

*Series editor:* Andy Dailey

This sample chapter has been taken from **Access to History for the IB Diploma Study and Revision Guide: Authoritarian States** 9781510432369

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