
AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] EUROPEAN HISTORY

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

Short Answer Question 1

Question-Specific Scoring Guide

- One point for describing one piece of evidence that would support the Figes passage’s characterization of Russia’s political culture prior to the Bolshevik Revolution.
- One point for describing one piece of evidence that would support the Figes passage’s interpretation of Russia’s “new autocracy” in the 1920s and 1930s.
- One point for describing one piece of evidence that would undermine the author’s argument in the passage that the “new autocracy” in Russia resembled the old.

Scoring Notes

To meet the requirement of “describe” in parts (a), (b), and (c), the response must offer a minimally accurate description of a piece of evidence and some indication of how it relates to the task of the prompt. Although it is not necessary for an acceptable response to offer an explicit explanation of the relationship between the evidence offered and the task of the prompt, it must go beyond a mere mention or name-dropping (e.g., “Russia had a history of tyrants in the Romanov dynasty” or “then Stalin happened”).

Possible acceptable responses for part (a) (not exhaustive):

- Russia’s lack of experience with democratic institutions (though the extent to which the Duma, established after 1905, was “democratic” may be debated) prior to 1917 meant that its people were ill-prepared for the overthrow of the tsar or the Bolshevik takeover.
- The politically repressive nature of the tsarist government prior to 1917 gave democratic institutions little or no chance to develop prior to the Revolution.
- Russia’s relative lack of economic and educational development prior to 1917 meant that the Russian population as a whole was politically inexperienced and unsophisticated.
- Radicalization of the anti-tsarist opposition prior to 1917 meant that many opponents of the tsar were not interested in democratic reform.
- Russia’s leaders were oblivious to “public opinion,” especially concerning a potential withdrawal from World War I.
- Russia lacked mass-based political movements, such as those that led many other European states into war between 1914 and 1916.
- The extent of women’s political participation and electoral suffrage lagged even further behind Western Europe.

Additional notes:

- Responses that do not connect Russia’s historical experience pre-1917 to political institutions or to “democratic culture” specifically will not earn the point. For example, some responses claim that feudalism persisted in Russia until the Bolshevik Revolution, and others mention serfdom as an economic institution, without addressing the political aspects of the prompt. Merely alluding to a policy of Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, Nicholas I, or any other tsar will not earn the point, unless it is directly related to the thwarting of a “democratic culture” in Russia.
- Note that “prior to the Bolshevik Revolution” should be interpreted as any period in Russian history, including the months immediately prior to the Revolution.

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Short Answer Question 1 (continued)

Possible acceptable responses for part (b) (not exhaustive):

- The Bolsheviks' extensive use of repressive techniques — secret police, detentions, prison camps, exile to Siberia — was similar to the tactics of tsarist governments.
- Like the tsarist regimes, the Bolshevik regime failed to establish representative/democratic institutions.
- Like the tsarist regimes, the Bolsheviks controlled/censored the media.
- The cult of personality developing around Lenin (and the eventual embalming of his corpse) could be compared to the sacramental nature of Romanov monarchy.
- The expansionist drives of the tsars were now disguised as the advancement of global revolution.
- The Civil War with the Mensheviks, driven by competing visions of the future, could be compared with earlier rebellions against central authority, such as the Pugachev or Streltsy uprisings.
- Alexandra Kollontai and other female leaders of the Revolution were disappointed by the continuation of hierarchical notions of gender into the new regime.

Additional note:

Responses that do not connect Russia's historical experience pre-1917 to the "new autocracy" of the 1920s or 1930s, specifically and in political terms, will not earn the point. Some responses claim the Great Depression as a "continuity" with the economic suffering of peasants in previous centuries and do not address the lack of development of a political culture.

Possible acceptable responses for part (c) (not exhaustive):

- The Bolshevik regime's aims were more far-reaching than those of the tsarist regimes: They sought to regulate and control the economy as well as the realm of politics and government (frequent examples are the New Economic Policy and the Five-Year Plans).
- The Bolshevik regime did not rely on traditional sources of authority (religion, social hierarchies, hereditary monarchs) to justify its rule, and it claimed to abolish private property and class distinctions.
- The Bolshevik regime portrayed itself as progressive, aiming at improving/perfecting the Soviet Union, rather than preserving a (mythical) past.
- The degree of ideological purity as a marker of commitment to the Revolution constituted a new governmental priority.
- The scale of violence under the Stalinist regime marks a clear departure from repression by the tsars.
- The Duma, established in 1905 as a result of a failed revolution, may reflect the beginnings of a "democratic institution."
- Universal suffrage was enacted by the Bolsheviks, at least officially.

Additional note:

Responses that address Russia's history during the Cold War (1945–1991) or under Vladimir Putin will not earn the point, as they fall outside the chronological bounds of the passage.

Write your answer to SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1 on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box. Do not skip lines.

- a) Prior to the Russian revolution, Russia had been ruled by oppressive & anti-Western Romanov Russian Tsars. These tsars ruled with divine right & heavily monitored local councils. This absolutism allowed for no democracy and alludes to the weakness of Russia's democratic culture.
- b) From the 1920s to 30s, Lenin & his Bolshevik party triumphed over the provisional government, however, Lenin also ruled with complete authority ~~starting to~~ mirroring the system of Tsardom before.
- c) The new autocracy of Russia emphasized communism, ~~however~~ an ideology that ~~did not~~ did not go hand in hand ~~to~~ with the established hierarchy on the Russian Tsars. In this way, Russia's new government was a new breed than the government before it.

End of response area for Q1

Write your answer to **SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1** on this page only. Do **NOT** write outside the box. Do not skip lines.

A) Prior to the Bolshevik Revolution, the establishment of the Duma, the Russian Parliament, supports the author's claim that attempts at democracy in Russia had been ineffectual. The Duma was established in the wake of the Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, and many Russians were vastly disenchanted with the monarchy. While the Duma offered greater participation in government for Russian men, the monarchy essentially gained control of the Duma and rendered it ineffective in pushing for reforms. Czar Nicholas II and other Russian aristocrats held a large concentration of political and economic power that was not threatened by the Duma.

B) The rise of the Kulaks during the 1920s supports the author's interpretation of a "new autocracy" in the early 1920s. Lenin enacted the New Economic Policy (NEP) after the Bolshevik Revolution to stimulate a Russian economy that was in shambles. Lenin contradicted his Marxist policies with the NEP, which brought capitalists back to the forefront in Russia. The Kulaks amassed a large amount of capital after the NEP was implemented, and once again, there was a wide gap between the wealthy and poor.

C) Stalin's totalitarian regime undermines the argument that the "new autocracy" in Russia resembled the old. Stalin's dictatorship used massive purges to kill people in opposition to Soviet policies. Stalin also sought to manipulate the Soviet people to a much larger extent, through the use of radio and media. The secret police also suppressed dissent in Russia to a much larger scale than prior to the Bolshevik Revolution.

End of response area for Q1

Write your answer to SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1 on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box. Do not skip lines.

A.) Prior to the Bolshevik Revolution, collectivization agriculture and communism did not exist. Russia was weak economically, so this resorted to communism. Russia believed by being in the terms of communism by being set equal place in society instead of a democracy, economic problems would be solved.

B.) The author stated that a new autocracy was formed. Lenin was in charge of Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution. He set plans such as collectivization trying to assist Russia economically. He promised this would benefit Russia.

C.) The "new autocracy" in Russia is a communist state. This created one equal class in Europe. This contrasts to the rich and poor before Russia was communist. Stalin put everyone on the same level of wealth.

End of response area for Q1

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Short Answer Question 1

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

a) Describe one piece of evidence that would support the author’s characterization of Russia’s political culture prior to the Bolshevik Revolution.

Responses were expected to describe one piece of evidence from Russian history that would support the passage’s characterization of Russia’s political culture prior to the Bolshevik Revolution as driven by top-down authoritarian measures that did not acknowledge popular will. This content information is addressed in the curriculum framework in Unit 3, Key Concepts 2.1.I.E (Peter the Great and Catherine the Great) and Key Concept 1.5.III.B (monarchies and nobles); Unit 6, Key Concept 3.4.II.D (the period from the emancipation of the serfs to the Russian Revolution of 1905); and in Topic 8.3, especially by Key Concepts 4.2.I.A and 4.2.I.B (covering the reign of Nicholas II and the Provisional Government of 1917).

b) Describe one piece of evidence that would support the author’s interpretation of Russia’s “new autocracy” in the 1920s and 1930s.

Responses were expected to describe one piece of evidence that would support the passage’s interpretation of Russia’s “new autocracy” in the 1920s and 1930s as possessing a similarity to or continuity with the tsarist regime. This content information is addressed in the curriculum framework in Topic 8.3, particularly by Key Concepts 4.2.I.B and 4.2.I.C, on the establishment of a communist state and its early development.

c) Describe one piece of evidence that would undermine the author’s argument in the passage that the “new autocracy” in Russia resembled the old.

Responses were expected to describe one piece of evidence that would undermine the author’s argument in the passage that the “new autocracy” in Russia resembled the old by identifying a contrast between the tsarist and Communist regimes. This content information is addressed in the curriculum framework in Topic 8.3, particularly by Key Concept 4.2.I.D.i (Lenin’s New Economic Policy) and in Topic 8.6, especially by Key Concepts 4.2.I.D.ii and 4.2.I.E (Stalin’s modernization program).

Sample: 1A

Score: 3

The response to part a) earned 1 point because it attributes the thwarting of democratic culture to the divine right and local councils (zemstva) of the Romanov tsars.

The response to part b) earned 1 point because it compares the personal rule of Lenin to that of the tsars, in contrast to the immediately preceding provisional government.

The response to part c) earned 1 point because it emphasizes the different ideological basis of the Communist regime.

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Short Answer Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1B

Score: 2

The response to part a) earned 1 point because it offers a sophisticated description of the balance of power between Nicholas II and the Duma.

The response to part b) did not earn a point because its piece of evidence does not describe a continuity between the political cultures of the old and new regimes.

The response to part c) earned 1 point because it highlights the difference in the scale of violence and innovative tactics between the tsarist and Stalinist periods.

Sample: 1C

Score: 1

The response to part a) did not earn a point because it does not address political culture and offers no piece of evidence.

The response to part b) did not earn a point because its piece of evidence is not related to the continuity of political culture from tsarist to Leninist Russia.

The response to part c) earned 1 point because it offers a piece of evidence for the attempted elimination of classes under Stalin.