

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE History

Candidate Exemplar Work (June 2009):

- HIS2E: Absolutist States: The Reign of Peter the Great of Russia, 1682-1725



The following responses are not 'model' answers, nor are they indicative of specific overall grades, but are intended to illustrate the application of the mark scheme for this unit. These responses should be read in conjunction with the HIS2E Question Paper, Sources Booklet and Mark Scheme.

Copies of the paper and are available from e-AQA or the AQA History Department.

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AQA GCE History Teacher Resource Bank Commentaries on June 2009 AS answers

General Introduction by the Chief Examiner

The first June examination series for the new AS specification saw some excellent examples of well prepared candidates who were able to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding by addressing the questions set directly and efficiently. Sadly, it also suggested that, whilst some candidates knew the material quite well, they struggled to apply it successfully to the questions asked. At the lowest end, there were, of course, some candidates whose knowledge let them down, but even these might have been able to achieve more highly had they thought more carefully about each question's demands.

The importance of timing for both Units needs to be stressed. In Unit 1 candidates should allow themselves approximately 12 minutes for the first part question and 25 minutes for the second. In Unit 2, they could spend 15 minutes on the first part question and 30 minutes on the second, but they are likely to need slightly longer for the source question. Good time keeping is essential in any examination. No matter how successful the answer to the first part question, an incomplete second part question will always mean a loss of marks (notes receive limited credit).

These commentaries are intended to help teachers and candidates to understand the demands of each question type and consequently to encourage students to perform at the highest level of which they are capable. Please note that errors relating to Quality of Written Communication (of spelling, syntax, etc.) have been reproduced without correction. Please note that the AQA convention for question numbering will be changing as from the June 2010 examination papers. Examples of the new format for question papers can be found elsewhere in the Teacher Resource Bank.

Unit 1

The first part of each question in Unit 1 (those questions labelled 01, 03 and 05 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks candidates to 'explain why' an event, issue or development came about. The best candidates answered this question, not only with a selection of reasons (and a minimum of three well-explained reasons was expected for Level 3/4), but also by showing how those reasons linked together. This is essential to meet Level 4 criteria and can be achieved by prioritising, differentiating between the long and short-term factors, or showing how different categories of reasons, such as political, social and religious inter-link. It is not, however, enough to simply assert that the links exist – they also needed explaining.

Candidates who only performed at Level 2 often wrote too descriptively, whilst many achieved a good Level 3 by offering a range of relevant and clearly explained reasons but failing to make any links between them. As the exemplars demonstrate, answers did not need to be long but they had to be effectively focused and directed to achieve good marks.

The second part of each question (those questions labelled 02, 04 and 06 in the new numbering style) asked for a response to a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful'. Each question stem invited candidates to offer a balanced response and this was the key to an award at high Level 3, 4 or 5. Most answers which achieved only a Level 2 or a low/mid-Level 3 mark contained too much description, were excessively one-sided or lacked depth and precision in their use of examples. Some candidates also failed to address the full question set, often

by ignoring starting or finishing dates. To achieve the higher levels, candidates needed to balance one side against another. For example, a question asking how far 'X' contributed to 'Y' demanded a consideration of the importance of other factors which also contributed to 'Y'. Sometimes questions, particularly 'how important' questions (e.g. how important was 'X' in bringing about 'Y?'), could be balanced by considering the ways in which 'X' was important as opposed to the ways in which it was not, rather than introducing 'other factors'; either approach was equally legitimate. The crucial test of an answer was, therefore, the degree to which the candidate was able to argue the issue and how well that argument was supported by accurate and precise evidence. The best answers at Level 5 managed to sustain a focus and convey convincing individual judgement.

Unit 2

The first part of question 1 (labelled 01 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks students how far the views in two given sources (A and B) differ, in relation to a given topic. Perhaps the most common error was to waste time writing a paragraph or more about the source content before addressing differences. Levels were awarded according to how well candidates identified and explained differences of **view**. This was not simply an exercise in source comprehension, so such answers received an award of only Level 1/2. Contrasting 'views' required students to go beyond the mere words of the sources or their omissions, and to assess 'how far' the sources differed required some awareness of the degree of **similarity** they contained. To meet the full demands of the question and obtain an award at high level 3/4, candidates also needed to introduce some contextual own knowledge to explain the differences and similarities identified – possibly (but not necessarily) referring to provenance when it helped the explanation, and, more often, explaining references in the sources and drawing on their contextual knowledge to account for differing views.

In the second part of question 1 (labelled 02 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to answer a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful' with reference to the sources as well as their own knowledge. The best answers to these questions maintained a balanced argument (as explained for Unit 1 above) and the information given in the sources was used in support of that argument. Poorer answers tried to address the sources separately – at the beginning or end of the answer, or sometimes as an asterisked afterthought. Those who omitted them altogether could not obtain more than top Level 2. Whilst the main criteria for the higher levels was the degree of argument, the precision of the evidence and the judgement conveyed, in addition to these, good source use could ensure that students were placed higher in a level than those who used the sources in a perfunctory way. Source use needed to be explicit, and the best candidates appreciated that Source C was provided to give further ideas and/or information that was of direct relevance to this question.

In questions 2 and 3 (03/04 and 05/06 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to respond to an 'explain why' question – on which comments will be found under the Unit 1 commentary above – and a short, provocative quotation about which they were invited to explain why they agreed or disagreed. The demands here were similar to those for the second part of Unit 1 (b) questions. In adopting a view about the quotation, candidates were expected to examine the opposing arguments in order to reach a balanced judgement on the extent of their agreement/disagreement.

Sally Waller Chief Examiner December 2009

GCE History HIS2E: The of Peter the Great of Russia, 1682-1725**Responses to June 2009 Questions****Candidate 1**

1 (a) Use Sources **A** and **B** and your own knowledge.

Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to Russian motives for fighting the Turks during Peter the Great's reign.

(12 marks)

Source A believes that one reason for Peter fighting the Turks was to gain a port. With the Archangel, Russia's only major port, being "frozen for six months of the year", Peter wanted access to salt water to help encourage trade and fulfill his key desire of building a navy. However Source B depicts the war as an act of revenge. The aim of Source B was for Peter to gain the support of the Balkan Christians within the Ottoman empire to help in the Pruth Campaign, meaning Peter's intentions were to appeal to the emotions of the reader.

Source A does also acknowledge the Tatar Raids as a reason for war. For many years the much stronger Tatars would attack Southern Russian territories, capturing and enslaving many Russian/Cossack peasants. Source B was written purposely for those enslaved and sympathisers of Russia, so Peter also claims the Tatar Raids as the reason for war as now the Russian army was much stronger, which was evident with its victory at Poltava in 1709, they could finally put an end to the terrorising attacks to southern Russia.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer is concisely expressed and shows a precise understanding of the views put forward in each source and never slips into line-by-line paraphrase. There is an extended explanation of a range of differences, supported by appropriate specific examples, followed by an equally secure analysis of similarities. In the conclusion, there is some differentiation in the light of own knowledge about Poltava. Though the textual evidence is not fully analysed, the answer merits a mark in Level 4 – 10 marks.

Candidate 2

1 (a) Use Sources **A** and **B** and your own knowledge.

Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to Russian motives for fighting the Turks during Peter the Great's reign.

(12 marks)

The views of Peter the Great in Source B are highly biased in relation to Russian motives for fighting the Turks during his reign compared to Source A.

Firstly, in comparison Document B talks about how the Turks had endangered and attacked the Russian churches and faith the Turks have trampled our faith into the mud. From an early age Peter's faith was a main aspect in his life. After his father Alexei had died Peter would see that Peter would have a respectable education therefore providing him with a personal tutor. The tutor that he supplied was

highly bible influenced meaning that when he would teach Peter anything it would always refer back to the church. Due to his upbringing in the church he felt very passionate about the one thing that meant a huge amount to him and with the Turks attacking his faith he felt he had to defend it and protect it hence him fighting the Turks.

Peter the Great may have made out that the Turks had done more damage than what that they have so it would mean more people were 'on his side' Peter had to be careful not to push the church away because if so it would become that the citizens would follow the church and hate him. Peter writing that he would fight them would prove to the Russians how much he cares about the Church.

Source A on the other hand talks about Peter wanting to fight the Turks to prove how strong his army was and to his mark on the map that the country is getting stronger.

In conclusion from a personnal angle Peter would have wanted to defend his faith and by doing so prove how powerful Russia has become.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer is vaguely expressed, showing an uncertain grasp of the evidence. Much of the lengthy material used in relation to Source B is very indirect to the question. The final two sentences provide only very limited attempts at comparison but are sufficient for the answer to be placed at the bottom of Level 2 – 3 marks.

Candidate 3

1 (b) Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

How successful was Peter the Great in making Russia a great European power by 1725? (24 marks)

By 1725 Peter had overcome the great might of the Swedish, made peace with the Ottoman Empire and married his son and niece into Germanic states, thus one can argue that if he hadn't made Russia a great European power, it had become a power nonetheless, a great change from the start of his reign.

Peter achieved his standing in Europe almost entirely through his military prowess, modernising Russia's army into a force that could conquer even the Swedish, as shown by the battle of Poltova 1709 and the fact that he created the Russian Fleet. Before Peter some historians have written that 'The Russians had no love for the sea', but during Peter's reign he created a fleet that, by 1724, comprised 48 warships and 800 galleys – the dominant power in the Baltic, which was very effective in raiding the Swedish coasts from 1719-1720 because Peter's flat bottomed galleys could not be caught by the larger ships-of-the-line that Sweden had because of their shallower draught. Indeed, these coastal raids put pressure on Sweden and eventually forced it to make terms in the Treaty of Nydstadt 1721, by which Source C claims that "Peter's triumph was sealed". The treaty gave Peter extensive land in the Baltic area and only ceded Sweden Finland, trading rights and Peter's promise not to interfere with internal affairs.

By removing Sweden as a great European power, Peter became one himself – the

great change in European attitudes towards Russia can be seen in “the development of links by marriage with several German royal families” Granted, he only managed to secure marital alliances with minor German states of the Holy Roman Empire, but that he managed to make any at all showed just how far Russia had come.

Even though Peter lost 2 out of 3 conflicts with the Ottoman Turks, losing to them at Azov in 1695 because of his “restlessness and desire to test his army” and to them again at Pruth when his call to “fight for the faith, for the Church” to the Balkan Christians failed to bring him enough allies and he was left with a force of barely 40,000 men surrounded by 200000 Turks, his international standing was little affected. In 1695 the West expected nothing less than losses from Peter’s army, which was exactly what happened. Even when in 1696 he managed to take Azov in a 2nd attempt, the West still paid little notice to this Russian King. By the Pruth campaign in 1711, the West had begun to see Russia as a power after he devastated Charles XII’s army at Poltava in 1709, so when he lost and had to come to terms with the Turks at the Treaty of Adrianople in 1713, his standing was little affected, because he still kept all his Baltic conquests.

Indeed, the Russian fleet is what truly made Peter become known as a European power, because before Peter there had been no fleet. After taking land at the Baltic, Peter started building up his fleet, the majority of which was made up of flat bottomed galleys, an Italian idea, which proved to be very effective, winning Russia its first naval victory ever at the battle of Cape Hango in 1714 against the Swedish. Peter’s naval power eventually became feared, and it was thought by some in the West that Peter was aiming to take over all of Northern Germany, especially after he aborted an attempt to take Sweden leaving 29 thousand Russian soldiers in Denmark.

Therefore, for Peter to go from ruler of a country where other European powers would “ignore Russian interests completely” to “a European Power” indicates that Peter was very successful in making Russia a great European power, as further proved by the fear with other European countries regarded him by the end of his reign.

Principal Examiner’s Comments

The answer begins with an excellent, concise introduction that provides a direct argument in response to the question showing judgment and differentiation. This argument is then supported by well-selected specific evidence from both own knowledge and the sources. The evidence is never described but is integrated into the answer. There is a good awareness of a range of perspectives and, at the end, a well-judged conclusion. Level 5 – 23 marks.

Candidate 4

- 1 (b) Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

How successful was Peter the Great in making Russia a great European power by 1725? (24 marks)

Peter's successes were great, but limited. His desire to modernise and make Russia a major European power could not be achieved in a single reign, but during his reign he made a start and was successful in a short space of time in forming and improving many areas such as the army and industry in order to make Russia a major European power.

The limited and varying results of his success is supported by Black in source C. It says that Peter's had failed to gain a window to the Black Sea as when he captured Azov it only gave him access to the small Sea of Azov, access to the Black Sea and mediterranean was blocked by the Turkish furtweg Kerch. But his reformation of military did enable him to defeat Sweden giving him access to the Baltic Sea making him able to trade with the west and cementing his reputation as a strong leader of strong country after his defeat of a major European power.

Although he was not as successful in the East against the Turks he established good relations in the West particularly with Britain as well as with diplomatic marriages with several German Royal families. This placing him on the diplomatic stage in Europe. It also shown Russia was becoming a power in Europe when Poland and Denmark aided Russia to become part of an anti Swedish Alliance. For the first time major European powers had asked Russia for help. Later in Peter's reign other countries in Europe grew worried about Russia which shows that Russia must have been powerful to worry other strong European powers such as Poland.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer is relevant and has a limited focus on assessment. The introduction and conclusion provide an adequate overview but there is little supporting evidence (and only one reference to the sources). Overall, the answer merited a mark in Level 2 – 9 marks.

Candidate 5

- 2 (b) 'The most important motive behind Peter the Great's policy of westernisation was to strengthen his personal power.'
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. (24 marks)

Peter's westernization of Russia proved to have many good effects on the country and the Tsar himself, not least of all an increase in his power. However, I would not place the increase of his power as the, or even one of the, most important motives driving his westernization.

Undeniably, Peters reforms of government which helped centralize the rule of the country were inspired by the west and increased the reach of his power. In 1699 his development of the Ratusha, a central treasury, took the place of 13 haphazardly distributed prikazy in its capacity to bring in revenue for the state. In 1711 Peter established the Senate, initially to rule in his stead during his imminent

absence on the Pruth Campaign, but it soon became the greatly powerful nucleus of Russian government with many responsibilities including supreme court of Justice. In 1718, Peter introduced the very Swedish Collegial System – nine colleges each with different administrative functions. All three of these governmental reforms, Ratusha, Senate and Colleges were inspired by the west and could certainly be seen as an extension of Peter's policy of westernization. By centralizing the Government as all three of them did, Peter's power over his country grew, thus it is easy to link westernization with Peter's personal increase in power.

With this in mind, however, one must point out that this does not make the increase of Peter's personal power as motive behind westernization. The far more obvious motive is preparation for war. The west was where the most advancement in warfare could be found, and Peter's warring desires obviously sought to emulate modern Western military ideas. This is obvious and evidence of it can be found throughout Peter's reforms – from his copying of western techniques in the new military manual of 1702 to his use of foreign officers in the Russian army. I would say that military advancement was a far greater motive behind Peter's westernization of Russia.

Another great motive for Peter's westernization was his own, insatiable, personal curiosity. This is obvious in his decision to join the Great Embassy for 18 months and travel round Europe, during which he wore western clothes and took part in western craftsmanship (where he cultured his maritime fascination in Dutch and British shipyards). Peter's love of the west is evident in some of his less practical (and frequently, more bizarre) social reforms, such as making nobles shave off their beards and dress in western fashion, making Russian women mix more with men and, bizarrely, trying to make the population speak Dutch.

I would definitely say therefore that military considerations and Peter's own fascination with the west were much more important motives behind his westernization than the increase of his personal power. In fact it could be argued that Peter merely made the Tsar's power more efficient rather than greater. I would challenge the idea of a "policy of western

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer has a sustained focus on the question and provides a balanced argument, especially in the analysis of Peter's motives in the third paragraph. A range of relevant factors is covered, supported by secure and well selected evidence. The conclusion is direct and effective. Overall, this solid and competent answer merited a mark at the top of Level 4 – 20 marks.

Candidate 6

- 3 (a) Explain why Peter the Great reformed the Russian Orthodox Church.
(12 marks)

The Russian Orthodox Church was a highly conservative force in Russia, resistant to his reforms and resentful of their enforcement. This would not have been too much of a problem if it were not for the fact that the church influenced so many of his people, who he was trying desperately to shape into, cultured civilians, and the church was busy calling Peter “the antichrist” and preaching that it was a sin to obey Peter. This meant he could not convince his people to trust and follow him, so he had to reform the church, placing key figures in charge who knew change was necessary. The Archbishop of Novogorod preached that the people should obey Peter as they would their father, to convince his people he should be obeyed.

Peter also believed strongly in his own absolutism and traditionally the patriarch was seen as the Tsars equal, so he abolished the patriarch so he was the sole Ruler.

Peter also knew that church funds could be put to better use as well as the function of monasteries. Monks could be paid 10 roubles per annum and any surplus went to the government. Monasteries with less than 30 monks were closed down and turned into parish churches or schools and no man under 50 was allowed to take monastic vows. They were to make themselves useful for the state instead.

Peter knew that peasants were quietly rebelling and knew that he could use the church to control this. He made it law that confessions of a criminal nature should be reported by priests so that proper retribution could be administered to those who disobeyed him.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer is well informed but tends to slip into description at times and the explanations offered are somewhat implicit. A sound range of reasons is provided however. Overall, the answer merited a mark at the middle of Level 3 – had it been more direct, its depth of knowledge might have justified a mark in Level 4. Level 3 – 8 marks.