

Marker’s commentary

The response is largely analytical with some overall judgement. Some contextual knowledge is employed but the response needs more specific illustration/ explanation to add depth. The response deals with the impact of the Fundamental Laws and Stolypin's land reforms but not his repression.

Level 3

3	11–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some analysis of, and attempt to explain links between, the relevant key features of the period and the question, although descriptive passages may be included. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included to demonstrate some understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, but material lacks range or depth. • Attempts are made to establish criteria for judgement and to relate the overall judgement to them, although with weak substantiation. • The answer shows some organisation. The general trend of the argument is clear, but parts of it lack logic, coherence and precision.
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Exemplar script G

Between 1906–14 there was limited change to Russia under the Tsarist regime. The Fundamental Laws of 1906 ensured the Duma was purely a sitting body with no real power and Stolypin’s policies of repression ensured there was little peasant unrest or opposition from revolutionary parties. This viewpoint can, however, be challenged by the very presence of the Duma and the legal freedoms of speech and association which were introduced after the October Manifesto.

The Fundamental Laws of 1906 were created to reduce the powers of the Duma as far as possible, according to the wording of the October Manifesto. This principle in itself demonstrates the Tsar’s unwillingness to undergo any major constitutional changes in Russia. Article 87 of the Fundamental Laws stated that the Tsar could make laws whilst the Duma was not in session. This was extended by his privilege to dissolve the Duma if and when he pleased. This, as a result, severely restricted the power of the Duma in making laws in order to introduce changes in Russia. This argument can be substantiated by the fact that the Fundamental Laws in making defence and foreign affairs the sole concern of the Tsar, had already limited the Duma to making laws. This demonstrates how the restrictions placed on the Duma through the Fundamental Laws, ensured that they would have very little power in government and would be unable to enforce long-term changes to Russia under the Tsarist regime in this period.

This viewpoint can, however, be challenged by the very existence of the Duma. Some would argue that the presence of an elected national legislative body demonstrates a significant change in Russia and how it was governed. Nicholas himself and his attitude towards the Duma would suggest he saw the Duma as a significant change because he refused to meet the Duma when asked; he thought its very existence was an affront to autocracy. There were also four Dumas in total across this period, the latter two of which lasted for the five year term. The third Duma, in fact passed 200 pieces of legislation. This would, therefore, suggest that the Duma had more of an impact, to the extent that it made legal changes and caused Nicholas to feel threatened. However, the ability of the regime to control who was elected into the Duma such as Stolypin’s amendment of the 1905 law would suggest otherwise. More right-wing conservative Duma’s would naturally agree with the Tsar and implement few changes that opposed him.

Stolypin’s repression of revolutionary parties and repression in the countryside suggests there was little change in Russia under the Tsarist regime in this period. By 1914, revolutionary parties were said to be weakened and demoralised. Most leaders such as Trotsky, who had been exiled and escaped abroad, were following events in Russia from western Europe. The Bolsheviks had also been involved in

'expropriation' and were therefore associated with criminal activities. This meant there were few changes as a result of revolutionary parties, who had been repressed by Tsarist authorities. Stolypin also introduced Field Court Martials that repressed peasant unrest in the countryside. More than a thousand people were killed and Stolypin exiled thousands to Siberia to the extent that the trains that transported them became known as 'Stolypin's wagons'. This demonstrates, through the success of Stolypin's repression, that the regime kept its authority throughout this period. As a result, Russia saw little change between 1906–14.

Others would argue that the fact that other political parties were legalised and there was a free press, demonstrates significant improvement in the individual rights of Russian citizens. Previously, before 1906, other political parties had been deemed illegal, meaning the Social Revolutionaries and Social Democrats (who then divided into the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks) had to exist discreetly underground. This was enforced by repression through the use of the Okhrana and other Tsarist forces. By 1914, however, there was essentially a free press and political parties remained legal, according to the terms of the October manifesto. This shows a significant improvement in the opportunity for other political parties and opposition to seek change in Russia. However, this viewpoint can be criticised as Stolypin's repression meant there was little opportunity to utilise these legal privileges.

In conclusion, there was limited change to Russia under the Tsarist regime in the years 1906–14. Whilst some would suggest that the very existence of the Duma demonstrates significant constitutional change in Russia, the role of the Duma was suppressed to such an extent that it meant there was no limit to the Tsar's authority. The Duma, as a result, was manipulated to create a right-wing, conservative body and given little opportunity to introduced any legal changes. Also, whilst political parties were legalised and there was a free press, Stolypin's repressive policies ensured there was no opportunity for opposition to challenge the regime. Nicholas remained firmly an autocratic leader and, with the help of Stolypin, regained authority after the 1905 revolution and prevented any significant change before the eve of World War 1.

Marker's comment

The response discusses a good range and depth of key issues. The focus on change is sharply analytical, measures used to examine change are made explicit and extent is discussed. There is a good awareness of the nature and the significance of the Fundamental Laws, with precise detail, e.g. article 87. The response discusses the significance of the setting up of the Duma with some well deployed detail such as the Third Duma. Goes on to cite evidence of emerging political groups and of the nature of Stolypin's repression. The overall judgement is supported and well argued.

Level 4

4	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issues relevant to the question are explored by an analysis of the relationships between key features of the period, although treatment of issues may be uneven. • Sufficient knowledge is deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question and to meet most of its demands. • Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied in the process of coming to a judgement. Although some of the evaluations may be only partly substantiated, the overall judgement is supported. • The answer is generally well organised. The argument is logical and is communicated with clarity, although in a few places it may lack coherence and precision.
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