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# GCSE HISTORY

Paper 1 Section A/C: Russia, 1894–1945: Tsardom and communism

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## Interpretations Booklet

Interpretations **A** and **B** for use in answering Questions 01, 02 and 03



**Interpretation A** Adapted from an article published in America for a worldwide audience.

This was written by Leon Trotsky, in 1926, during the power struggle for control of the Communist party.

Lenin had all the qualities of a great leader. He did not hesitate in his fight against the enemies of the working class. He devoted his life to the downtrodden masses, and millions of peasants. Lenin wanted to give workers, soldiers and peasants real political power in the soviets. He made no mistakes in the choice of methods we used to achieve the Revolution. Lenin was good tempered, polite and caring – especially to the weak.

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**Interpretation B** Adapted from ‘The Bolshevik Myth’ by Alexander Berkman published in Britain in the late 1920s.

Berkman was a Russian who believed that governments were not necessary and people should be able to live as they wished. He had hoped Russia would become a freer country under the Communists.

Lenin’s leadership methods were based on terror. He destroyed the Revolution. The people lived in dread of the Cheka. Lenin thought freedom of speech was harmful. The Party took over the soviets. The government controlled everything and demanded that citizens do as they are told. When the Kronstadt sailors demanded greater freedom, Lenin responded with his usual tactics.

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## END OF INTERPRETATIONS

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