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# AS HISTORY 7041/2P

The Transformation of China, 1936–1997

Component 2P The emergence of the People's Republic of China, 1936–1962

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Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](https://www.aqa.org.uk)

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## Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

### Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity, you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level, you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly Level 3 with a small amount of Level 4 material it would be placed in Level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the Level 4 content.

### Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

**Section A**

- 0 1** With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two sources is more valuable in explaining the impact of the CCP's Marriage Law on women's lives during the early 1950s?

**[25 marks]***Target: AO2*

*Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.*

**Generic Mark Scheme**

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the value of the sources in relation to the issue identified in the question. They will evaluate the sources thoroughly in order to provide a well-substantiated conclusion. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will provide a range of relevant well-supported comments on the value of the sources for the issue identified in the question. There will be sufficient comment to provide a supported conclusion but not all comments will be well-substantiated, and judgements will be limited. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **16–20**
- L3:** The answer will provide some relevant comments on the value of the sources and there will be some explicit reference to the issue identified in the question. Judgements will however, be partial and/or thinly supported. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer will be partial. There may be either some relevant comments on the value of one source in relation to the issue identified in the question or some comment on both, but lacking depth and having little, if any, explicit link to the issue identified in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **6–10**
- L1:** The answer will either describe source content or offer stock phrases about the value of the source. There may be some comment on the issue identified in the question but it is likely to be limited, unsubstantiated and unconvincing. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

## Indicative content

**Note:** This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

**Students must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.**

In responding to this question, students may choose to address each source in turn or to adopt a more comparative approach in order to arrive at a judgement. Either approach is equally valid and what follows is indicative of the evaluation which may be relevant.

**Source A: in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following:**

### Provenance and tone

- as an official government pamphlet, the source is valuable in setting out the official policy and intentions of the CCP in terms of improving women's rights within marriage
- it was written to educate peasants, showing that the party was keen to promote these values even amongst groups where there was considerable resistance to change
- the tone is anti-patriarchal and pro-gender equality, which is valuable in showing the attitudes the CCP wanted the people of China to adopt. The fact they were running publicity campaigns to the peasantry and publishing educative pamphlets utilising simple, easy to understand language shows commitment to spreading these values in China.

### Content and argument

- argues women's lives did improve because of the Marriage Law. Before the CCP came to power, women were very much treated as inferior within the family and within marriages. Marriages were often arranged in their early teens, and rich and powerful men kept concubines as well as wives and women were powerless within their marriages
- it shows the new rights given to women by the Marriage Law – the end of arranged marriages, payment of dowries, banning concubinage and infanticide, raised minimum age for marriage for women to 18, made divorce available on equal terms, and gave unmarried, divorced or widowed women the same property rights. This suggests women's lives were much improved
- there certainly were some improvements to women's lives as a result of this law as the marriage age for women increased throughout the 1950s and the rate of female infanticide decreased. Many women in China, especially in urban areas, were able to marry on their own terms. Resistance to divorce gradually did break down over time
- one limitation of this source is that it does not fully show the situation on the ground and may give an exaggerated view of how much women's lives did, in fact, improve. There was considerable resistance to these changes, especially in the more conservative, rural areas that were targeted with these pamphlets, and traditional practices continued in many instances. The Marriage Law was also not fully comprehensive – for example, women married to members of the PLA were not allowed to apply for divorce.

**Source B: in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following:**

**Provenance and tone**

- as it is the personal story of an individual CCP member who had first-hand experience of marriage during the early years of the PRC, it could be used to show the reality on the ground. Her status as a CCP member is valuable as you would expect her to be at the forefront of the reforms to improve women's lives in marriage and yet even she did not benefit from them. It is, however, only the account of one individual
- the source comes from an anonymous account and comes from many years after the event so there may be an element of exaggeration or simplification as the story cannot be checked. The anonymity could be seen as a positive too as she can be frank despite giving her account on state radio
- the tone is very negative, giving a critical account of how little impact the Marriage Law had on improving women's lives. The emotive tone also shows how betrayed the woman felt, even many years after the event.

**Content and argument**

- it argues women's lives did not improve as much as it seems from a study of the official policy. While the Marriage Law said that women had free choice in their marriage, this account shows that this was not the reality and women were still forced into arranged marriages
- it shows that the false hope created by the new policies actually made things worse for women as they were more crushed after having expected to have control over their lives
- it shows that the attitude of CCP party members was not as modern as one would assume from the slogan 'Women hold up half the sky'. Here, it is senior party officials who are arranging a marriage for one of their members. If even party officials retain this attitude, it questions how much the rights enshrined in the Marriage Law spread to the rest of China
- we do at least see the laws on marriage age being adhered to, so this account cannot be used to show that all elements of the Marriage Law were being ignored.

In arriving at a judgement as to which source might be of greater value, students might argue that Source A is more valuable as it shows that there was a genuine intention, through the passing of legislation and the running of publicity campaigns, to improve the lives of women through the new Marriage Law and one anonymous account is not enough to discount this. Alternatively, students might argue Source B is more valuable as it shows the reality on the ground and the old-fashioned attitudes that continued even within the CCP.

## Section B

**0 2** 'Jiang Jieshi's position was strengthened by the Sino-Japanese War.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

**[25 marks]**

*Target: AO1*

*Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.*

## Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

### **Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

#### **Arguments supporting the view that Jiang Jieshi's position was strengthened by the Sino-Japanese War might include:**

- Jiang Jieshi's international standing had been strengthened as he had been recognised as the official leader of China and worked with the US government. A high point was Jiang Jieshi's attendance at the Cairo Conference of 1943 alongside Roosevelt and Churchill
- his party was given a considerable amount of military equipment and financial aid from the USA that should have been of great help in the struggle against the Communists
- Jiang Jieshi's popularity was boosted by the fact he had led the country to victory. By the end of the war the vast majority of China was under GMD control, including regaining control of the foreign-run treaty-ports, which made Jiang Jieshi look like a strong leader. The CCP, by contrast, had been somewhat contained in the north
- the 1945 Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship recognised Jiang's government as the only legitimate authority in China, again boosting Jiang and ensuring the CCP received no official help from their natural allies.

#### **Arguments challenging the view that Jiang Jieshi's position was strengthened by the Sino-Japanese War might include:**

- Jiang Jieshi's decision to prioritise fighting the CCP rather than the Japanese after 1941 weakened him as it enabled the CCP to portray him as unpatriotic
- the US government's increased exposure to Jiang Jieshi led to increased US disillusionment with him and his government. They witnessed their corruption and incompetence which meant they were more reluctant to give wholehearted support to Jiang Jieshi during the subsequent civil war
- the use of conscription and the NRA's poor treatment of these soldiers during the war weakened Jiang Jieshi's position as it led to decreased levels of public support. The number of Nationalist soldiers killed while fighting the Japanese also weakened him militarily
- Jiang's military weaknesses were exposed, for example, his preference for loyal rather than necessarily able men, and his tendency to give contradictory orders. This caused him to lose credibility and support amongst his own generals, which weakened him for the subsequent civil war.

Students might argue that although the war seemed to strengthen Jiang Jieshi's position, due to the recognition of his leadership by both the USA and USSR, the reality is that the war exposed his weaknesses and he lost respect and support both overseas and at home. Alternatively, they might argue that Jiang Jieshi's position was strengthened and that in 1945, he was in a very strong position in relation to the CCP.



- 0 3** 'In the years 1950 to 1952, the consolidation of Communist power was due to the actions of the PLA.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

**[25 marks]**

Target: AO1

*Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.*

### Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

**Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

**Arguments supporting the view that in the years 1950 to 1952, the consolidation of Communist power was due to the actions of the PLA might include:**

- the PLA consolidated Communist power through the reunification campaigns in Tibet and Xinjiang and removing opposition from the 'new liberated areas' in the south
- the PLA spread Communist propaganda through the 'Learn from the PLA' campaign and public works projects
- their success in the Korean War consolidated Communist power both domestically and as a regional power
- they had a significant role in the new governmental structure created by the Communists at both national and regional level.

**Arguments challenging the view that in the years 1950 to 1952, the consolidation of Communist power was due to the actions of the PLA might include:**

- land reform could be seen as more significant in consolidating Communist control in the countryside, both through the popularity of the policy with the peasants and in terms of extending control into the countryside
- the mass mobilisation terror campaigns could be seen as more significant as they removed or intimidated any opponents of the regime
- the successful propaganda of the period did not rely on the PLA alone – the Communists also used the cadres and the prestige of Mao as a leader.

Students might argue that the actions of the PLA were responsible for the consolidation of Communist power because it cut across so many different elements of consolidation, including both terror and propaganda. Alternatively, they could argue that it was only one factor amongst many and that popularity/terror in general was the most significant factor.