



GCE AS/A LEVEL

2100U80-1



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HISTORY – AS unit 2

DEPTH STUDY 8

Germany: Democracy to Dictatorship c. 1918-1945

Part 1: Weimar and its challenges c. 1918-1933

TUESDAY, 22 MAY 2018 – AFTERNOON

1 hour 45 minutes

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

A WJEC pink 16-page answer booklet.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Use black ink or black ball-point pen.

Answer **both** questions.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The number of marks is given in square brackets at the end of each question.

You are advised to spend around 50 minutes on answering each question.

The sources and extracts used in this unit may have been amended or adapted from the stated published work in order to make the wording more accessible.

UNIT 2

DEPTH STUDY 8

Germany: Democracy to Dictatorship c. 1918-1945

Part 1: Weimar and its challenges c. 1918-1933

Answer **both** questions.

QUESTION 1

Study the sources below and answer the question that follows.

Source A

The Nationalists on the right lack a social sense, the Socialists on the left a nationalist one. If you want to be a nationalist then come down among your people and put away your class pride. You on the left who proclaim your solidarity with the whole world, first show your solidarity with your own people – be German first and foremost. You who are real revolutionaries come over to us and fight with us for our whole nation. You who are still young and still have the fire of enthusiasm in your veins, come over to us. Join our fighting party, which pursues its aims ruthlessly, with every means, even with force! We are not a class party, but the party of honest producers. Our strength does not lie in the communist international but in our own strength, that is to say, our people!

[Adolf Hitler, in a speech delivered in a beer cellar in Munich (October 1920)]

Source B

We are an anti-parliamentarian party that for good reasons rejects the Weimar constitution and its republican institutions. We enter the Reichstag to arm ourselves with democracy's weapons. If democracy is foolish enough to give us free railway passes and salaries that is its problem. We do not beg for votes. We demand conviction, devotion, and passion! A vote is only a tool for us as well as for you. We will march into the marble halls of parliament, bringing with us the revolutionary will of the broad masses from which we came, called by fate. We do not want to join this pile of manure. We are coming to shovel it out. We are coming neither as friends or neutrals. We come as enemies! As the wolf attacks the sheep, so we come. You are not among your friends any longer! You will not enjoy having us among you! Do not believe that running parliament is our goal.

[Joseph Goebbels, writing in an article for the Nazi newspaper *Der Angriff*, ('The Attack') entitled: *Why Do We Want To Join The Reichstag?* (April 1928)]

Source C

A black day for Germany. At about four o'clock I received a telegram with the election results. The Nazis have increased their representation ten fold, they have risen to 107 seats and they have thus become the second largest party in the Reichstag. The impression abroad is bound to be catastrophic and the aftermath both diplomatically and financially, will be dreadful. With some 220 deputies who now radically reject the present German State and seek to overthrow it by a revolutionary means, we are confronted with a political crisis which can only be mastered by the formation of a strong united front of all those forces which support or at least tolerate the Republic. National Socialism is the feverish symptom of the dying German middle classes, but the poison of its illness can only bring misery to Germany and Europe for decades to come.

[Count Harry Kessler, writing in his diary in September 1930.
Kessler was a German aristocrat and opponent of the Nazis.]

With reference to the sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the growth of the Nazi party between 1920 and 1930. [30]

QUESTION 2

Study the extracts below and answer the question that follows.

Interpretation 1

The most serious problems for the Weimar Republic in the period 1919-1923 were caused by the signing of the Treaty of Versailles with the victorious allies. Just as serious as the Treaty's economic impact was the national demoralisation which the Treaty caused. Two particular issues connected with the Treaty of Versailles continued to poison the political atmosphere for many years. The first was the question of 'war guilt' and the second was the so called 'stab in the back'. The Treaty cast a long shadow over the Weimar republic. It became a millstone around the neck of the young republic and wrecked the German democratic process almost from the start.

[A.J. Nicholls, a traditional academic historian and specialist in German history, writing in a specialist book on the Weimar Republic, *Weimar and the Rise of Hitler* (1979)]

Interpretation 2

From the start there were underlying problems within the Weimar political system which went a lot deeper than merely criticisms of the new constitutional framework on the signing of the peace treaty. From its days of origin, there was an undercurrent of anti-democratic feeling which meant that the Weimar Republic was unwanted and unloved. Despite the relative success of the forces sympathetic to the republic in the Reichstag elections in January 1919, such problems were rooted in the very nature of the political establishment. This meant that the republic was confronted by the ongoing problem of creating and maintaining government coalitions. In the years 1919-1923 the cumulative effect of these political problems created an atmosphere of ongoing political crisis and instability which reached its height in the year 1923.

[G. Layton, an academic historian and specialist in European history, writing in a student study guide, *From Bismarck to Hitler: Germany 1890-1933* (1995)]

Historians have made different interpretations about the Weimar Republic between 1919-1923. Analyse, evaluate and use the two extracts above and your understanding of the historical debate to answer the following question:

How valid is the view that the problems of the Weimar Republic in the years 1919-1923 were mainly caused by political instability? [30]

END OF PAPER