

GCSE HISTORY

Paper 1 Section A/B: Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship

Interpretations Booklet

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



Interpretation A Adapted from the autobiography of Irmgard Hunt, published in 2005, called 'On Hitler's Mountain'.

Hunt had middle-class parents who supported the Nazis. She was in the Nazi youth movement which her mother helped to run. Her father was killed in the early years of the war when Germany invaded France. Hunt left Germany in 1958 to start a new life, aged 24, in the USA.

The Nazis rose to power because of the promises that Hitler made to different groups. For years my family had become poorer and Germans had been made to feel like beggars and scum. His promises of prosperity gained him followers.

Hitler also understood the power of patriotism. People listened eagerly to a man who said that Germany was a superior nation. Furthermore, Hitler realised that creating fear of an enemy – the Jewish race – would win over desperate people, including my parents.

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Interpretation B Adapted from an interview with Hans von Herwarth in 1987.

Herwarth was a diplomat in the German Embassy in Moscow in the 1930s. When war broke out in 1939 he became a low-ranking officer in the German army. Herwarth was linked to the July 1944 bomb plot against Hitler. After the war he went on to be Germany's ambassador to Britain in 1955.

The Nazis gained power because the traditional parties failed, especially the Social Democrats. They were not used to governing and did not try to block Brüning's powers or actions. Despite the problem of high unemployment and hatred of the Versailles Treaty, the traditional parties did not work together against the Nazis or the Communists. Worst of all, apart from the Social Democrats, few Germans believed in or supported the Weimar Republic.

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END OF INTERPRETATIONS

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