

Paper 3, Section B: Question 3d

How far do you agree with Interpretation 1 about Hitler's rise to power?

Explain your answer, using both interpretations and your knowledge of the historical context. (20 marks)

Strong answer

Interpretation 1 says that there was a depression in Germany between 1929 and 1933 and that this caused economic problems, like failing businesses, and social problems, like unemployment. From my own knowledge, I know that unemployment reached five million, so Interpretation 1 is correct. It also says that the moderate parties in the Reichstag couldn't agree how to solve these problems. I know that this is true; it resulted in Brüning using Article 48 66 times in 1932 because the Reichstag could not agree what to do.

Interpretation 1 goes on to say that all this caused support for Hitler's ideas. This is true, because Hitler got 13 million votes in the presidential election. So I would give some support for the view in Interpretation 1. Interpretation 2, on the other hand, does not explain how Hitler got to such a strong position that Hindenburg was persuaded to choose him as Chancellor. Interpretation 2 is weak in aspect, which is another reason why I am tempted to support the view in Interpretation 1.

But Interpretation 1 does not explain how Hitler became Chancellor. It explains how Hitler received support in the Presidential elections, and how the NSDAP became the biggest party in the Reichstag, but there were no elections for the Chancellor so the people could not choose him. The Chancellor had to be chosen by President Hindenburg. This is an important issue because I know from my own knowledge that Hindenburg thought Hitler was a 'jumped-up corporal'. So why did he choose him? This is the key reason why I support Interpretation 2. Interpretation 2 explains how von Papen persuaded Hindenburg that coalition with Hitler would save Germany from revolution and that Hitler could be safely controlled. This is the key reason Hitler became Chancellor, so it is the reason I support the view in Interpretation 2 more than Interpretation 1.

In one sense I agree with both interpretations. Interpretation 1 explains how Hitler came to be in a position to be chosen as Chancellor. Interpretation 2 explains why he WAS chosen to be Chancellor. Interpretation 1 can only tell me about the general situation in Germany at the time. It doesn't speak directly about Hitler in particular. Interpretation 2 is much more specific for this enquiry – why did Hitler come to power. Interpretation 2 tells me much more directly why Hitler came to power. So, on balance, I agree with Interpretation 2 more than Interpretation 1.

The extracts are analysed to show contrasting views and contextual knowledge is integrated.

A key issue is identified and there is good use of contextual knowledge to make a judgement.

Both views are considered and a judgement is reached with a clear reason. Knowledge is used well to support the judgement. Appropriate specialist terminology is used (economic and social, moderate parties, Article 48, Chancellor, NSDAP).

Verdict

This is a strong answer because:

- both interpretations are analysed and evaluated using own knowledge
- the line of reasoning is coherent and the judgement is appropriately justified with a clear reason
- SPaG demonstrates accuracy, effective control of meaning and the use of a wide range of specialist terms.

