**Question 5 - 16 Marks - Mock Question**

**Q: To what extent do you agree with this interpretation? [16+3 SPaG]**

**[In your answer you should refer to how and why interpretations on this issue differ. Use your own knowledge and understanding of the wider historical debate over this issue to reach a well-supported judgement.]**

**Interpretation: P. Grey & R. Little, two historians, writing in a school history textbook, *Germany 1918-1945*, published in 2003.**

The Weimar Republic was successful in dealing with its problems. By 1929 prosperity and stability had been restored to Germany.

**Mark scheme:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **AO1 (4 marks- knowledge)** | | **AO4 (12 marks- interpretation analysis)** | |
| **BAND 4** | You have a very detailed understanding of the question topic. | 4 | You have fully analysed/evaluated how and why interpretations differ and have shown some awareness of the historical debate. You have reached a well-supported judgement about the accuracy of the interpretation and have discussed the relevance of the authorship. | 5-6 |
| **BAND 3** | You have detailed understanding of the question topic. | 3 | You have analysed/evaluated the interpretation and why others differ. You have reached a clear judgement showing and understanding of how and why opinions differ. You have referenced the author well and have a good understanding of the historical debate. | 3-4 |
| **BAND 2** | You have some understanding of the question topic. | 2 | You have partially analysed/evaluated the interpretation and other interpretations. You have referenced the author and reached an unsupported judgement. | 2 |
| **BAND 1** | You have a basic understanding of the question topic. | 1 | You have made limited comments about the interpretation and have not reached a judgement. | 1 |

**Model answer:**

**Q: To what extent do you agree with this interpretation? [16+3 SPaG]**

**[In your answer you should refer to how and why interpretations on this issue differ. Use your own knowledge and understanding of the wider historical debate over this issue to reach a well-supported judgement.]**

**Interpretation: Eric Hobsbawn, an historian writing in his academic book *The Age of Extremes*, published in 1994. Hobsbawn was a long-standing member of the Communist Party who left Germany as a child in 1933.**

‘The Great Depression turned Hitler from an unimportant political figure into the master of the country’

The interpretation suggests that the Great Depression was the main reason why Hitler and the Nazis came to power in 1933. However, there are other factors that led to Hitler coming to power such as their use of propaganda and the use of terror by the SA.

This interpretation is accurate to an extent because the Great Depression did play a very important role in Hitler’s rise to power. Before the Great Depression, support for the Nazis in elections was quite weak; for example, in 1928, the only won 12 seats. However, by 1933 the Nazis were the biggest party in the Reichstag. During the Great Depression, there was a surge in unemployment, which caused more anger towards the Weimar government who were not doing enough to deal with the problem. This gave extremist parties, such as the Nazis, an opportunity to appeal to the unemployed by making promises of jobs and prosperity. Therefore, the interpretation is accurate because the Great Depression did help Hitler come to power as it showed the weaknesses of the Weimar government and encouraged German people to look for alternative leadership that promised to improve the German economy.

However, I disagree with the interpretation because the SA’s use of terror also helped Hitler’s rise to power. The SA were used to show the strength of the Nazi Party and they were used to disrupt the meetings of their opponents, for example the KPD and other left-wing parties. The membership of the SA increased rapidly during the early 1930s, which allowed the Nazis to show that they were capable of getting rid of the communist threat, something that the Weimar was never able to do. The SA also helped the Nazis by expressing the values of the Nazi Party, for example, loyalty, unity and strength. Therefore, I disagree with the interpretation because it was the SA and use of terror that increased the popularity of Hitler. This is because it prevented people from opposing them due to fear, and also demonstrated a strength that German people had not seen for some time.

Furthermore, I disagree with the interpretation because propaganda was an important part of Hitler’s rise to power. The Nazis used a variety of propaganda methods to increase their popularity, such as mass rallies, posters and speeches. This meant that Nazi ideas could be seen everywhere. By the early 1930s, the Nazis owned over 120 newspapers that were regularly read by Germans across the country. This meant that they could spread their ideas about the Treaty of Versailles, Jews, employment and the democracy to all sections of the country. The Nazis used propaganda to target different groups of people. For example, when talking to the working class, Hitler made sure that his speeches focussed on how the Nazis would improve employment for working people. Therefore, propaganda was extremely important to Hitler’s rise to power because it meant that the Nazis could target groups of people in different ways and unite them under one idea.

The author of the interpretation, Eric Hobsbawn, is a historian who grew up in Germany during Hitler’s rise to power. This means that he would have seen first-hand the Nazi rise to power. He is writing in 1994, which means that he has seen what happened to the regime and has carried out research into the events. However, as a member of the Communist Party, Hobsbawn would be more critical of the Nazi Party and might suggest that their success was due to external factors (the Great Depression) rather than their own work (the SA and propaganda).

Overall, I agree with the interpretation that the Great Depression was the most important part of Hitler’s rise to power because it encouraged Germans to look for an alternative form of government. The lack of jobs also provided the Nazis with propaganda campaigns about increasing employment and reversing the Treaty of Versailles. The fact that the Nazis were relatively unpopular before the Great Depression suggests that the two are linked and the interpretation comes from an academic book, which would have been well-researched and specialised.