

MODERN HISTORY 1

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by Luke Cashman, Pam Cupper, Shane Hart, Natalie Shephard,
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● SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF THIS EDITION

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Pam Cupper has taught History and Geography at secondary schools in Victoria and London, contributed to several textbooks and now writes student support material for VCE Revolutions. She co-authored the first modern guidebook to *Gallipoli* (1989) and leads tours to Gallipoli and Western Front battlefields.

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USING THIS BOOK

To assist VCE students who are using this book, icons are used to show how the historical knowledge fits into two areas of study:



ideology and conflict



social and cultural change.

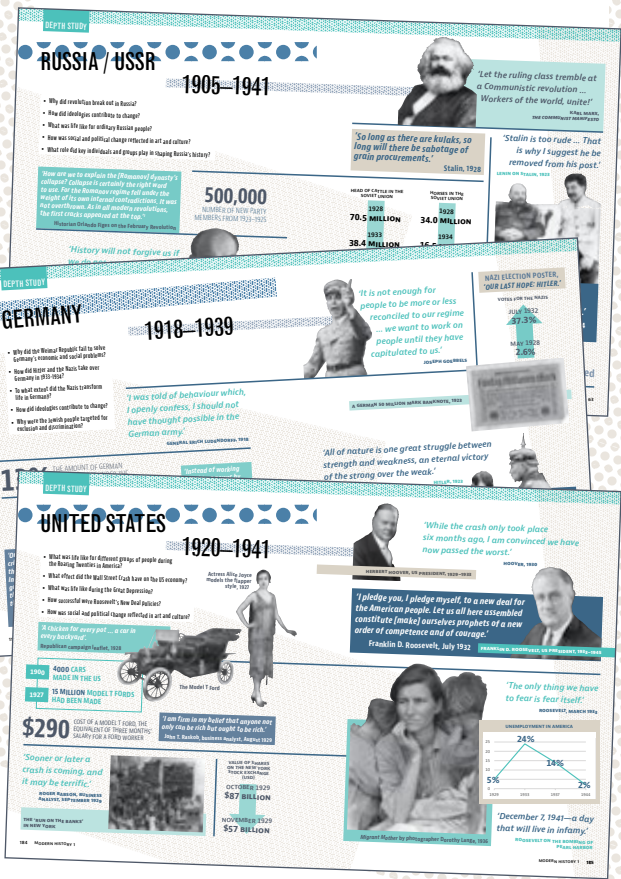
You will also use depth studies to focus on one or more nations. The depth studies are:

- Russia/USSR
- Germany
- United States.

In these depth studies, historical knowledge from the two areas of study has been presented together.

This is to ensure that the material is *chronological* and *meaningful*. Political and economic ideology influences, and is influenced by, developments in society and culture. This book encourages you to explore this interaction, and to make connections between political events and changes to people's life and to culture.

To assist the two areas of study separately, use the table below as well as the icons on each textbook page and on the Contents pages.



CHAPTER / SNAPSHOT	IDEOLOGY AND CONFLICT	SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE
Chapter 1 A Changing World	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Snapshot World War I	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Chapter 2 The Peacemakers	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Snapshot Ideologies and 'isms'	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Snapshot The Great Depression	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Chapter 3 The Russian Revolution, 1905–1924	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Chapter 4 Stalin's Russia, 1924–1941	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Chapter 5 The Rise of Nazism in Germany, 1918–1933	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Chapter 6 Life in the Third Reich, 1933–1939	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Chapter 7 The Roaring Twenties in America, 1920–1929	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Chapter 8 The Great Depression in America, 1929–1941	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Snapshot Cultural Expression	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change
Chapter 9 The Causes of World War II	Icon: Ideology and Conflict	Icon: Social and Cultural Change

A CHANGING WORLD

'The muffled tongue of Big Ben tolled nine by the clock as the [profession] left the palace, but on the sun of the old world was setting in a dying blaze of splendor never to be seen again.'

BERNARD SHAW

On 20 May 1919, the German delegation leaving the Versailles Peace Conference of 1919-1920...

Without eight years' study of the things... the world was a new world... the beginning of the new century's change and development.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 1853 - A fleet of five Japanese warships...
1858 - Britain forces the Opium Treaty...
1863 - The first railroads in the United States...
1870 - The Franco-Prussian War...
1871 - The Meiji Restoration in Japan...
1901 - The Boxer Rebellion...
1912 - The Chinese Revolution...
1917 - The Russian Revolution...
1919 - The Paris Peace Conference...

KEY QUESTIONS

- How was the political world changed from the 1850s to the 1920s?
Which nations became the world's great powers?
How did industrialization affect nations?
How did the world's economy change in the early 20th century?

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

How did the political world change from the 1850s to the 1920s?
Which nations became the world's great powers?
How did industrialization affect nations?
How did the world's economy change in the early 20th century?

CHAPTER INTRODUCTIONS

- Preview key content—such as key dates and events as well as significant individuals—that will be covered in the chapter ahead.
List key questions to focus and guide your thinking.
Include historical inquiry tasks to help extend your thinking. Keep these in mind as you progress through each chapter.

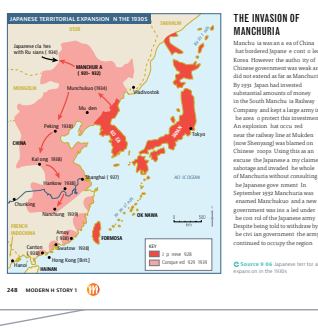
Key words are highlighted and defined in the margin the first time they are used in the book. You can also look them up in the back-of-book glossary.

GLOSSARY

Abolition: the act of ending a practice, especially slavery.
Adaptation: a change in an organism's traits that helps it survive in its environment.
Alliance: a formal agreement between two or more countries for mutual support.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. How did the political world change from the 1850s to the 1920s?
2. Which nations became the world's great powers?
3. How did industrialization affect nations?
4. How did the world's economy change in the early 20th century?



The invasion of Manchuria in 1931 was a major step in Japan's expansion... The Japanese government had lost control of the army...

The invasion of Manchuria in 1931 was a major step in Japan's expansion... The Japanese government had lost control of the army...

THROUGHOUT EACH CHAPTER

- Secondary sources provide historical interpretations.
Primary sources explore the perspectives of people from the time.
'Check your understanding' questions see if you remember and understand.

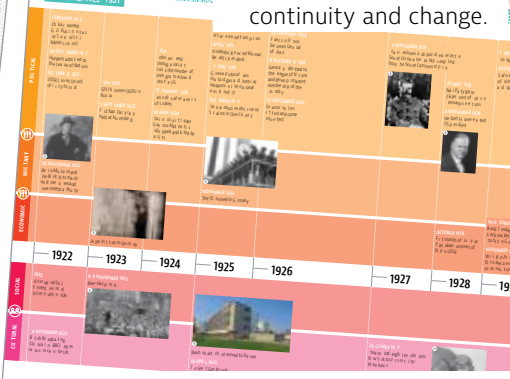
SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

Paul von Hindenburg, 1847-1934
Adolf Hitler, 1889-1945
Hindenburg was a German general and president... Hitler was an Austrian-born German politician...

CHAPTER REVIEWS

CHAPTER 5 REVIEW
From October 1918 to the end of 1919, the world was in a state of political chaos... The League of Nations was established in 1919...

TIMELINE



Examine the contribution to political change by significant individuals.

Visit Beyond the Book for additional resources.

Events are divided into categories (political, military, economic, social and cultural) that correspond to the two areas of study.



IDEOLOGY AND CONFLICT

- How did significant events and ideas contribute to conflict and change?
- How did individuals and movements challenge existing political and economic conditions?
- What were the consequences of World War I?
- How did ideology influence the emergence of new nation states?
- To what extent did the events, ideologies, individuals, movements and new nations contribute to the causes of World War II?



SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE

- How did society and culture change?
- How did cultural life both reflect and challenge the prevailing political, economic and social conditions?
- How did ideologies contribute to continuities and changes in society and culture?
- What role did individuals, groups and movements play in social and cultural continuity and/or change?

The fifty years from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century saw profound change in politics, economics, society, culture and technology.

At the end of the nineteenth century, European empires stretched across the globe. Britain, France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Italy and Portugal had established colonies in much of Africa, parts of Asia and the Americas, and in Australia.

Many imagined that this world of empires and colonised peoples might last forever. However, international stability was constantly challenged during the final years of the nineteenth century and the first fourteen years of the twentieth century.

International tensions developed from disputes over colonies, growing nationalism, an arms race and alliances between European powers. In the 'Fashoda Incident' in 1898, France and Britain came into conflict in what is now South Sudan. The 1905 Moroccan Crisis was a dispute between Germany and France over France's control of Morocco. The Second Boer War (1899–1902) saw Britain defeat the independent Boer republics in southern Africa and absorb them into the British Empire. In 1904–1905, Russia and Japan fought for control of Russia's far east. Three empires—Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and Russian—claimed land in the Balkans that led to two Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913.

One result of such disputes was an arms race in which powers tried to develop an advantage over their opponents' armed forces and military technology. When the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne was assassinated by a Bosnian Serb terrorist in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914, the system of alliances quickly escalated into World War I.

The war lasted more than four years and affected people across the globe. It was fought at sea in all major oceans, and aircraft became a new aspect of warfare that took war to civilians far away from the frontline.

Trench warfare became symbolic of the war. On the Western Front, trenches stretched continuously along 650 kilometres through northern France and Belgium. On the Eastern Front, Russia suffered enormous casualties fighting Germany and Austria-Hungary, and signed a separate peace treaty with Germany in March 1918.

Extracts above from the VCE Modern History Study Design (2022–2026) © VCAA, reproduced by permission.

November 1918 not only brought Germany and its allies defeat and the end of fighting, but the collapse of much that had seemed familiar before 1914. After Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated the throne, Germany's monarchy was replaced by the democratic Weimar Republic. The Austro-Hungarian Empire ceased to exist, its former land distributed among new nations such as Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, or added to existing countries such as Romania. Germany was stripped of its colonies, including New Guinea, which became an Australian mandate. The Ottoman Empire was broken up; the Turkish Republic was established, some former Ottoman territories gained independence and others were placed under British and French control.

In addition to dividing former empires into new nation-states, the Treaty of Versailles held Germany responsible for the war and forced it to pay reparations for war damage.

The first half of the twentieth century saw worldwide debates between conflicting ideologies. Monarchies often seemed outdated. The effects of World War I and the Great Depression later made some question the benefits of democratic capitalism. For some, socialism and communism offered the possibility of better lives, as explored by Russia. During the 1930s, Germany, Italy and Spain had fascist governments.

The Great Depression of the 1930s had significant consequences, such as massive unemployment, in countries with capitalist economies. Between 1930 and 1934 in countries such as Germany, the United States (US), Britain and Australia, up to one-quarter of their workers were unemployed. Some were disillusioned with capitalism and considered whether alternative economic systems would help them. Minorities in the US, Britain and Australia looked to extreme left-wing or socialist ideologies, or to extreme right-wing or fascist ideologies, as solutions to their problems.

In 1900, Russia was still a largely agrarian society with an autocratic ruler, Tsar Nicholas II. Political parties and individuals increasingly challenged the government, but it was World War I that brought political, economic and social collapse to Russia. The tsar abdicated in March 1917 and the democratic Provisional Government survived until its overthrow by Lenin's Bolshevik Party in October 1917. Communist rule in Russia lasted until 1991.

The democratic Weimar Republic, which was formed in Germany at the end of World War I, faced the consequences of the country's war losses, hyperinflation in the early 1920s and the Depression in the early 1930s. Economic and social instability encouraged support for Hitler's Nazi Party, which established a totalitarian state from 1933.

Unlike other combatant countries, the US emerged from World War I with a strong economy, and consumer goods—refrigerators, radios and vacuum cleaners—appeared in many homes. Relatively new inventions such as automobiles and cinemas became commonplace. The share market seemed to offer prosperity, but the underlying economy was less stable than it appeared and the Wall Street Crash of October 1929 began years of economic depression. In 1933, fourteen million Americans—25 per cent of the labour force—were unemployed.

These worldwide political, economic and social changes were reflected in cultural movements. The end of the nineteenth century encouraged artists to reflect on a world that was passing and to question what the future would hold. The destruction and upheavals of World War I led to new art styles such as German expressionism, while poetry and novels described soldiers' experiences. Rapid technological changes also influenced cultural expression, including the Bauhaus influence on architecture. Totalitarian governments in Russia and Germany imposed strong censorship of cultural expression to present art that supported their ideologies.

The generation that had experienced World War I wanted to avoid another world war, a sentiment that encouraged appeasement of fascist and militaristic regimes. The League of Nations proved incapable of preventing territorial aggression by Japan, Italy and Germany. On 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland, and Britain and France declared war against Germany. For the second time in the century, the world was at war.

KEY SKILLS: THINK LIKE A HISTORIAN

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

To establish the **historical significance** of a development, person, movement or an event or idea, ask:

- By which criteria might it qualify as significant (e.g. extent or duration of impact, reach, originality)?
- Did it result in changes? What changed?
- Did it result in continuities? What continued?
- Did it reveal something? What did it reveal?
- Does the answer to these questions vary over time or for different groups?

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

To analyse **causes**, ask:

- What were the long-term causes, short-term causes and triggers?
- What was the impact of political, social, cultural, economic, environmental and technological conditions of the time? What was the role of individuals, groups, movements and ideas?
- How were all of these causes connected?
- What causes were most influential?

To analyse **consequences**, ask:

- What kinds of consequences occurred (e.g. political, cultural, social)?
- What was the impact on people and society? (What changed? Who was most affected?)
- Were the consequences short-term or long-term, intended or unintended? What consequences were most important?
- Did any consequences become the causes of something else?

Did people at the time, or historians afterwards, agree on what the causes and consequences were?

Most historical events have multiple causes and multiple consequences. Causes can be divided into long-term causes, short-term causes and both intended or unintended. By analysing these, students determine why events happened, what their effects were, and which causes or consequences were most significant in bringing about change.

Some events, developments, people, movements or ideas in the past are perceived as more important than others. Historians use a variety of criteria to establish significance, such as number of people affected, duration of the impact, popularity and impact of ideas, and their relevance to the present day.

ESTABLISH HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

ANALYSE CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS

IDENTIFY CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Many events in the past led to tremendous changes in society, both positive and negative. However, sometimes aspects of life continue without any appreciable difference, even during periods of great change. To identify continuity and change, students sequence events chronologically, recognise turning points (moments when a change in direction occurs) and compare different points in time by applying concepts such as progress and decline.

CONSTRUCT HISTORICAL ARGUMENTS

History students share their conclusions (what they believe) using logical, persuasive, evidence-based arguments.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Constructing timelines are always helpful when identifying **continuity and change**.

You can also ask the following:

- Was there a point in time when a change of direction occurred (a turning point)?
- What type of change occurred (e.g. political, social, cultural, economic)?
- How did the change come about (e.g. intended or unintended, resisted or welcomed)?
- What was the impact of change (e.g. widespread or limited, radical or superficial)?
- Can you see evidence of progress or decline? (Was this for all people? Does progress and decline vary over time?)
- Did anything stay the same?
- What were the forces or influences that kept these things the same over time?
- What changed the most and what changed the least?

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

To construct a **historical argument** you need the following:

- Knowledge—a good understanding of the topic you are writing about.
- A contention—the conclusion you have come to (e.g. how or why something happened, the extent to which something was significant).
- Evidence—you must be able to prove your contention using a range of relevant primary and secondary sources. You should critically analyse the sources on which you draw.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

To use a source as **evidence**, ask the following:

- What is the source?
- Who created it?
- When was it created?
- Where was it created? What was happening there at this time (context)?
- What insights does it provide?
- What assumptions can you make about it?
- What was its purpose? Why it was created?
- Who was the intended audience?
- What was the author's/creator's viewpoint?
- Are there other sources that support these facts or views?
- Is the source reliable?
- Is it useful for understanding the past?
- Does it contradict or add to what you already know?

Our knowledge of the past comes from historical sources. Primary sources, made at the time by people involved or affected, can be examined for historical perspectives. Secondary sources, made later by people looking back at events, provide a range of historical interpretations. To use a source as evidence you must first evaluate its context, reliability and usefulness.

USE SOURCES AS EVIDENCE

HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS

EXPLORE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Historical perspectives are the views of people during or close to the period being studied. The way people in the past perceived and reacted to key events, or what they believed or valued, can be discovered in primary sources. It is important that these sources be critically evaluated so that they can be used as evidence.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

To explore **historical perspectives**, ask the following:

- What does the source tell us about the ideas, events, beliefs, values, individuals or communities of the time?
- Whose views are being expressed?
- Why might they hold those views?
- How are these views being expressed—through what form of writing, art, object-making or architecture? How does this shape what you can learn from it?
- How do these differ from the views of other people at the time?
- How do these differ from the views of today?
- What was going on at the time? How does knowing this give you a better understanding of the historical perspective?

In exploring historical perspectives, you will often be asked to 'read between the lines'. This means that you can make assumptions or draw conclusions, but they must be based on your knowledge of the content and interpretation of the evidence.

ANALYSE HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS

Historians, writers, artists and other commentators use evidence to interpret the past and construct theories about it. These historical interpretations, which can be found in secondary sources, can give us a broader understanding of past events. Each historian may have a different viewpoint. Each historian must be analysed by asking questions—and you can challenge them or agree with them when constructing your own arguments.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

When analysing **historical interpretations**, ask the following:

- What conclusions has the historian, writer or artist come to about the ideas, events, beliefs, values, individuals or communities of the time?
- What evidence has been used to form these conclusions?
- How might these conclusions have been shaped by who, when and where they were produced?
- Why might they hold those views?
- How are these views being expressed—through what form of writing or art? How does this shape what you can learn from it?
- How do these differ from the views of other historians or commentators?

ASK AND USE HISTORICAL QUESTIONS

Historians and history students ask particular types of questions about the past. These questions focus their attention; apply the historical thinking concepts; narrow the range of time, factors or locations they are considering; and allow them to come to specific conclusions.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

When you have an opportunity to formulate your own **historical questions** (e.g. for a historical inquiry task), ask the following:

- Do I know 'how', 'why', 'who', 'when' or 'to what extent'?
- Can I narrow my focus by asking about change, continuity, causes, consequences, or significance?
- Can I narrow my focus by specifying the date range, the geographic region, the group of people involved or affected, or the kind of sources I will use?
- Does my question enable me to reach a conclusion and defend it with evidence?
- Is there evidence available that will allow me to answer the question?

A CHANGING WORLD

'The muffled tongue of Big Ben tolled nine by the clock as the [procession] left the palace, but on history's clock it was sunset, and the sun of the old world was setting in a dying blaze of splendor never to be seen again.'

BARBARA TUCHMAN

On 20 May 1910, the gun carriage bearing the coffin of King Edward VII of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was taken from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Hall. The funeral procession marked a significant moment in history, and was one of the largest gatherings of European royalty. Nine European monarchs rode with the casket, along with numerous princes and dukes and 'forty more imperial or royal highnesses'.² It was the last time that so many royal families met before their world was shattered by World War I and its aftermath.

Did you know? King Edward VII was the eldest son of Queen Victoria. He helped develop good relationships between Britain and other European countries, and was sometimes called the 'Peacemaker'. The Edwardian era is named for him and represents the start of the twentieth century and an era of rapid change.

Within eight years, many of the kings, emperors, princes and dukes who attended no longer ruled empires. Some of those empires had disappeared, and several of the men themselves were dead. The event represents the end of an imperialist world and the beginning of the new century's change and uncertainty.

old world
The countries of Europe, which were considered to have old customs and traditions.

imperial
Relating to an empire.

empire
A group of states or countries ruled over and 'owned' by another country.

imperialist
A supporter of imperial rule or an imperial power.

unification
Two or more countries combine to become one.

colonies
Foreign territories ruled by another country.

abdicate
To give up the throne.

nationalism
Pride in belonging to one's country.

liberalism
The belief that people should be equal under the law and have individual civil rights.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1853

8 JULY — American Commodore Perry arrives in Tokyo Bay and urges Japan to open up for European trade

1858

Britain declares the Indian subcontinent to be under its rule

1861–
1865

American Civil War

1863

1 JANUARY — US President Lincoln proclaims that slaves are to be freed

1870

OCTOBER — Unification of Italy completed with the capture of Rome

1871

18 JANUARY — Unification of Germany completed, and Wilhelm proclaimed as kaiser (emperor)

1901

1 JANUARY — Six colonies unite to form the Commonwealth of Australia

1912

12 FEBRUARY — Qing Dynasty overthrown and the Republic of China proclaimed

1917

2 MARCH — Tsar Nicholas II abdicates, ending the Russian Empire

Source 1.01
The funeral of King Edward VII, 20 May 1910.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How was the political world changing from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries?
- Which empires dominated the world at the end of the nineteenth century?
- How did colonised people begin to demand independence?
- How did former colonies emerge as nation-states?
- What does the nineteenth-century emphasis on empires and the twentieth-century emphasis on nation-states tell us about attitudes to race and government?

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

The nineteenth century saw the growth of European empires, but at the same time new ideas emerged, such as *nationalism* and *liberalism*. In the early twentieth century, these beliefs became conflicted, as empires tried to maintain their power at the same time as colonised peoples asserted their rights to independence. As you work through this chapter, consider how countries dealt with these beliefs.

1.01 How did Britain gain control over India and China?

1.02 How did Japan and China differ in their reactions to European imperialism?

1.03 The world in 1900 was still largely based on racist attitudes. How was this demonstrated in countries such as China, Australia and the United States?

THE WORLD OF 1900

PEOPLE'S CENTURY (TELEVISION SERIES): 'The nineteenth century is ebbing away. In the heart of Europe old dynasties hold on to power. It's a stable, certain but unequal world. Most ordinary people still accept that it's their place to toil and not to share, to serve and not to question. All that is about to change.'³

In 1900, European powers dominated the political and economic world. British colonies stretched across the globe in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and large areas of Africa. Both France and Germany had colonies in the Pacific and Africa. At the same time, non-European countries such as the United States (US) and Japan were emerging to challenge European influence.

The map of Europe in 1900 resulted largely from the 1815 Congress of Vienna. After Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, the Congress sought to rebuild peace and order in Europe. Austria-Hungary, Russia and Prussia were determined to limit France's influence and maintain the *balance of power*.

However, the Congress of Vienna failed to halt two strong sentiments that were growing: nationalism and liberalism. Nationalism—pride in belonging to one's country—was demonstrated in the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, where ethnic groups wanted freedom from their foreign rulers and the right to form their own nations. Nationalism also motivated people who identified as 'Italian' or 'German' and wanted to form one united 'Italy' or 'Germany'.

Liberalism—the belief that people should be equal under the law and have

individual liberties—encouraged demands for a share in government. In 1848 there were *revolutions* in almost every country in Europe, but they were quickly suppressed and European monarchies reasserted their dominance over the political systems in their empires. Nevertheless, nationalism and liberalism did not die and continued to influence international relations.

Although western Europe was relatively peaceful in the forty years prior to the outbreak of World War I, underlying tensions persisted, with much *antagonism* and rivalry between European powers. After 1815, parts of the former Poland were incorporated into surrounding empires, and Polish nationals naturally maintained their nationalism. Russia, in particular, tried to suppress any Polish nationalist rebellions. France was sympathetic to Polish independence, which led to increasing tension between Russia and France.

These dreams of nationalism and the rivalries between once-powerful empires intensified in the years before World War I.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

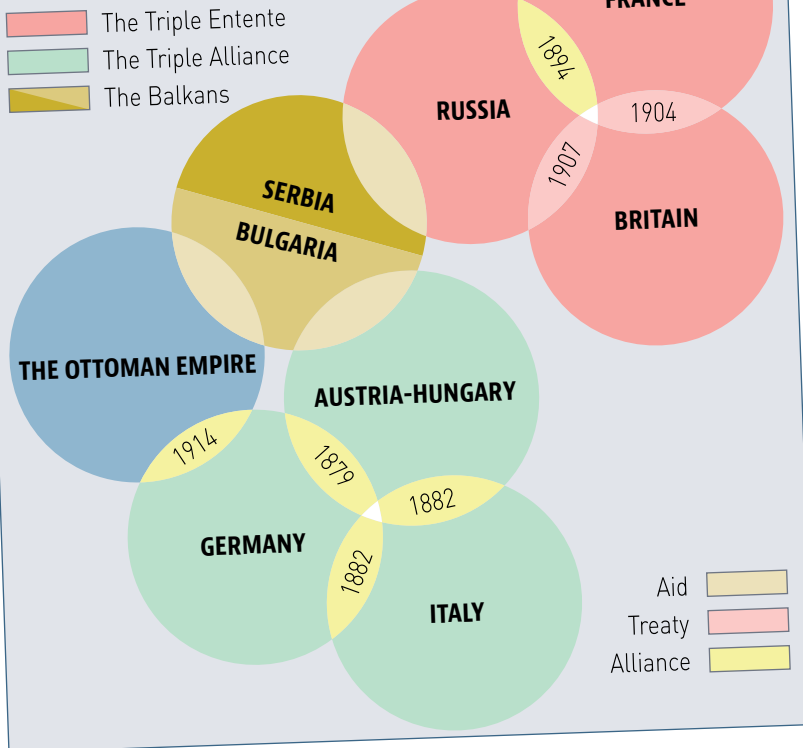
1.04 Which nation dominated much of the world in 1900?

1.05 When was the Congress of Vienna, and what was the significance of this event?

1.06 Explain how 'liberalism' and 'nationalism' challenged the basis of the Congress of Vienna.

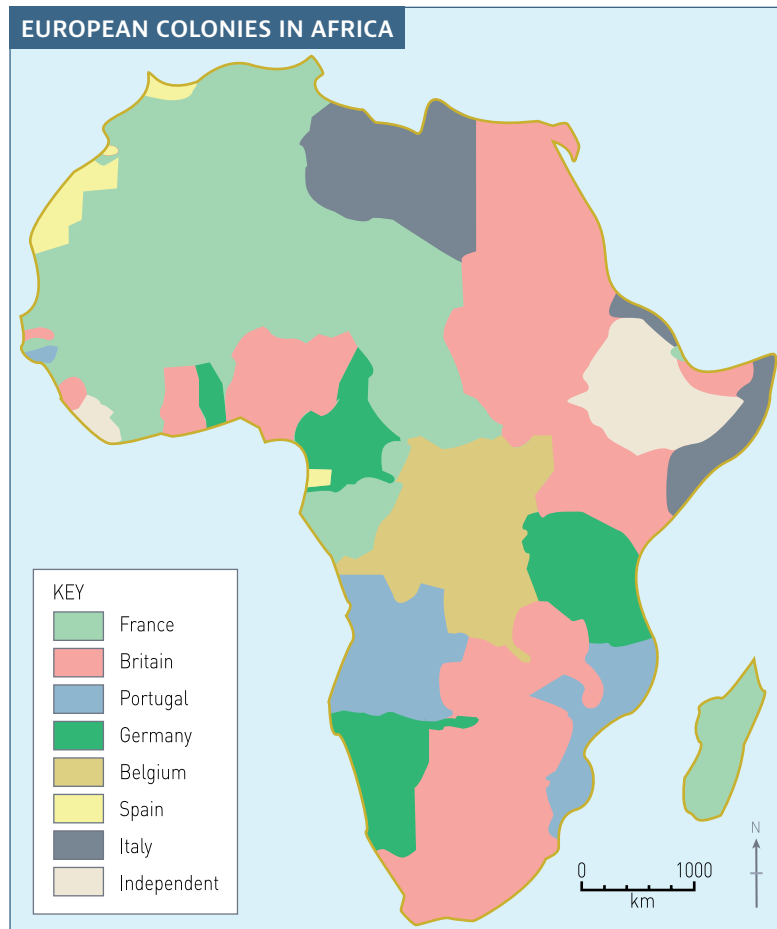
1.07 What tensions emerged in the decades leading up to World War I?

NATIONS PRE-WORLD WAR I



THE AGE OF EMPIRES

Building an empire is an ancient idea, but ‘modern’ *imperialism* began in around 1500 when Portugal and Spain colonised parts of Africa, Asia, and South and Central America; later, Holland established colonies in America and south-east Asia. Beginning in the seventeenth century, Britain and France became empire builders—Britain established colonies on most continents, while France acquired Pacific islands, parts of North Africa and Indochina.



By 1880, an era of ‘New Imperialism’ began:

- 90 per cent of Africa was controlled by European powers.
- the US acquired Pacific islands.
- Japan *annexed* territories along east Asia’s Pacific coastline.
- China was not formally colonised but was ‘carved up’ into *spheres of influence* by European powers and Japan.

By 1900, more than half the world’s people lived under some degree of imperialism under Britain, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Russia, Japan and the US.

THE EMERGENCE OF NATION-STATES

Colonised peoples frequently resisted their colonisers, but from the 1920s this became a strong movement. Nationalist movements pushed for independence using both violent and non-violent resistance against colonial powers. Generally, Asian countries became independent earlier than Africa. India gained independence from Britain in 1947, and Indonesia (formerly the Dutch East Indies) achieved independence in 1949. Several French colonies in West Africa gained independence in 1960, while Kenya became independent of Britain in 1963. By 1975, colonial empires had mostly ceased to exist.

← **Source 1.02** European colonies in Africa.

Prussia

The largest and most powerful Germanic state. Centred on its capital, Berlin, Prussian lands stretched across what is now north-east Germany and included much of present-day Poland. In the 1860s, its prime minister, Otto von Bismarck, led the unification of German states that resulted in the formation of the German Empire in 1871.

balance of power

The belief that peace will be preserved if no single nation becomes too powerful so that power is balanced among several nations.

Ottoman Empire

The empire based on today’s Turkey once stretched from the Austrian border, through southern Russia, the Middle East and North Africa, with its capital at Constantinople (today’s Istanbul). During World War I it was allied with the Central Powers; after its defeat in 1918, the empire was broken up and the Republic of Turkey emerged from its core lands.

Austro-Hungarian Empire

The empire that controlled lands in Central Europe from the 1860s to its breakup in 1918.

revolutions

A series of drastic political and social changes that occur within a short space of time.

antagonism

Active opposition.

imperialism

A policy to increase a nation’s influence by expanding beyond its own territories and acquiring and creating an overseas empire.

annexed

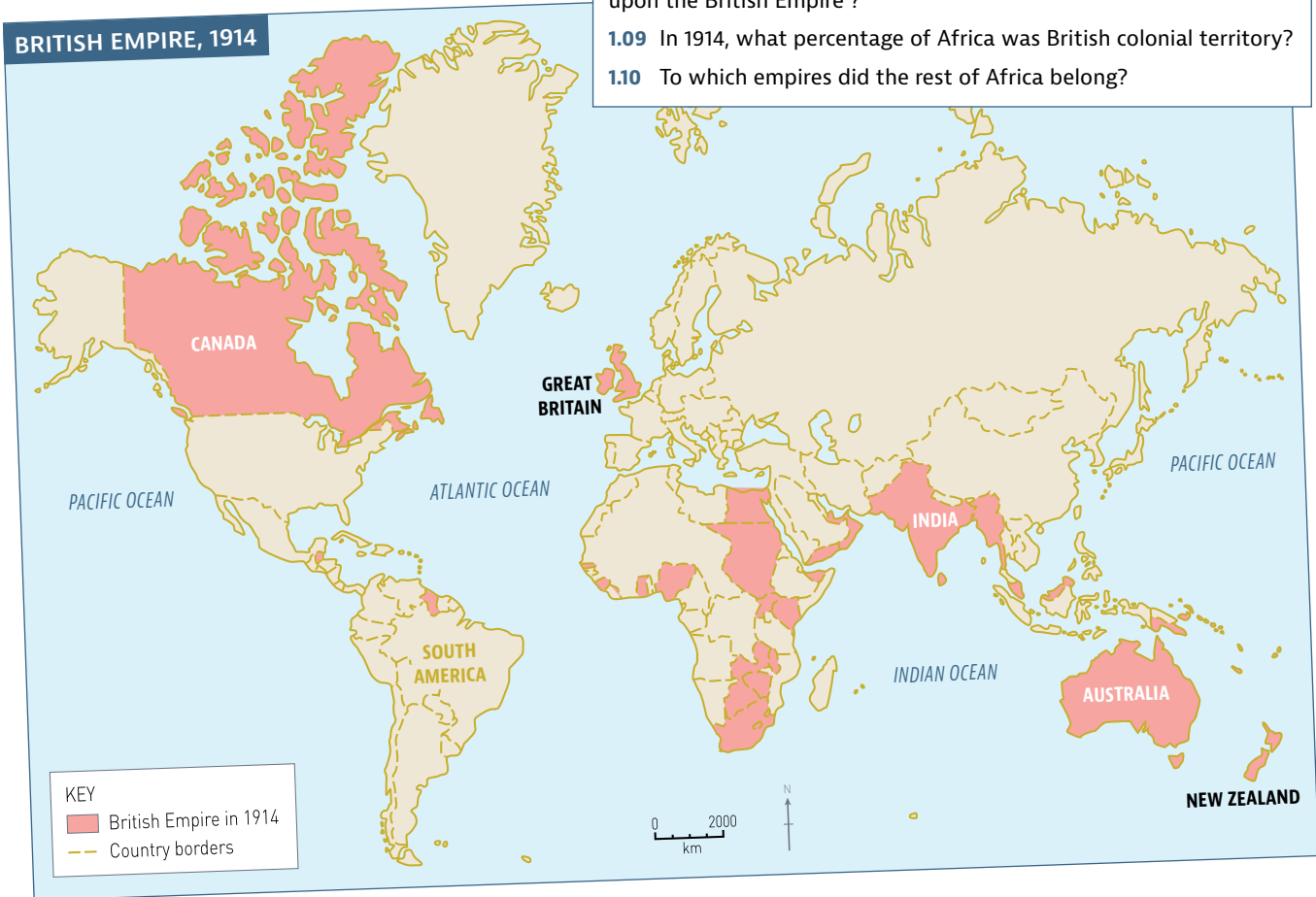
Take possession.

spheres of influence

Territories over which an imperial power has exclusive influence without actually annexing them.



Source 1.03 British Empire in 1914.



HISTORICAL SOURCES

- 1.08 School students in the late 1800s to early 1900s were often taught that the 'sun never sets upon the British Empire'. Classrooms typically displayed a map similar to the one depicted in Source 1.03. How does the map help explain that 'the sun never sets upon the British Empire'?
- 1.09 In 1914, what percentage of Africa was British colonial territory?
- 1.10 To which empires did the rest of Africa belong?

INDIA

Did you know? When Victoria ascended the throne in 1837, she became Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Although she never visited India, in 1876 she added the title 'Empress of India' to recognise the significance of the British Raj.

Raj
Meaning 'rule'; applied to the period of British rule in India.

BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, 1883: '[It is] the cherished conviction of every Englishman in India ... the conviction in every man that he belongs to a race whom God has destined to govern and subdue.'⁴

THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA

The Indian subcontinent—today's India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal—had no single 'national' identity until the British **Raj** was established after 1858. The millions of people living there had several racial origins and spoke different major languages. There were two main religions, Hinduism and Islam, and several smaller ones such as Sikhism and Christianity. By imposing a general system of law and communications, and having English used for administration and education, British rule provided a unifying element.



INDIAN NATIONALISM

Ironically, Britain's unification of India helped create a strong nationalist movement there. The Indian National Congress, founded in 1885, saw itself as the body that would govern when British rule ceased. The 'Home Rule for India' movement developed after 1914, especially under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership.

Significant individual →

MAHATMA GANDHI, 1869–1948

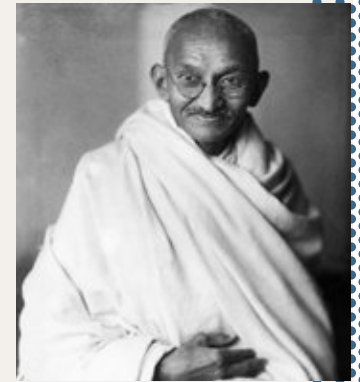
Considered the most important Indian national leader and promoter of Indian self-rule, Gandhi combined traditional Indian beliefs with aspects of Western **humanism**. Growing up in western India, he absorbed the local form of Hinduism, which emphasised devotional worship and tolerance for other religions. After studying law in England, he began practising law in South Africa. Over twenty years there he developed his ideas of non-violent civil disobedience against its racist laws.

Gandhi returned to India in 1915 and became the recognised leader of the Indian national movement. To oppose the British government in India, he organised non-violent demonstrations, non-cooperation and boycotts of British goods. These methods brought millions of Indians directly into the struggle for independence. He was often imprisoned for his political activities.

Gandhi believed that Hindus and Muslims should work together for independence, but he did not achieve this. He was assassinated by a Hindu nationalist on 30 January 1948. His example of non-violent opposition to **oppressive** authority inspired many other movements, including America's Civil Rights movement.

He said: 'I regard myself as a soldier, though a soldier of peace.'

Said about: 'Gandhi proved it is possible to fight for one's people and win without for a moment losing the world's respect.' (*Albert Camus, French philosopher*)



humanism A philosophy or belief in the idea of human freedom and progress. It is generally non-religious and based on a view that all humans have value.

oppressive Treating people cruelly and unfairly.

TOWARDS A NATION-STATE

Indian resistance to British rule was hampered by religious differences. The majority of the subcontinent's population was Hindu, and one-quarter was Muslim. The Indian National Congress represented Hindu Indians, and many Muslims believed that a future independent India would disregard their own interests.

Indian independence was achieved in 1947. Religious antagonism was resolved by **partitioning**—India was created with a predominantly Hindu population and Pakistan as a Muslim nation. Up to twelve million people were displaced along religious lines, and mass **migrations** of Hindus from Muslim areas and Muslims from Hindu areas led to violence.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1.11 What does the word 'Raj' mean?

1.12 How did British control of India help Indian nationalism?

1.13 What role did Gandhi play in the Indian nationalist movement?

1.14 Why was the Indian subcontinent divided into India and Pakistan in 1947 rather than making it one independent nation?

Did you know? Rudyard Kipling set many of his children's stories in India during the British Raj, where he spent part of his childhood and later worked as a journalist.

partitioning

To divide into parts. Those regions of the subcontinent with mostly Hindu populations became India, and those with mostly Muslim populations (in the north-west and in the east) became Pakistan. In 1971, the eastern portion gained independence from Pakistan and became Bangladesh.

migration

The movement of people from one place to another.



JAPAN

TAKASU YOSHIJIRO (JAPANESE SCHOLAR): 'When those [Western] barbarians plan to subdue a country not their own, they start by opening commerce and watch for a sign of weakness.'⁵

Did you know? Commodore Matthew Perry, who visited Japan in 1853 and 1854, was rewarded by the US Congress. In 1855 Perry received US\$20,000, equivalent today to US\$500,000, in appreciation of his work in negotiating the agreement that opened ports to American trade.

Meiji Restoration

Meaning 'enlightened rule', the Meiji Restoration was series of events that restored imperial rule in Japan.

mandate

When a country is given the responsibility for administering the affairs of another.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 1.04 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 1.15** Describe how Russia and Japan have been depicted.
- 1.16** Explain why the cartoonist may have depicted them this way.
- 1.17** Explain the outcomes of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905.
- 1.18** Evaluate the significance of Russia's overconfidence as a cause of the Russo-Japanese War using evidence to support your response.

THE JAPANESE EMPIRE

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, Japan was largely cut off from outside influences. In 1853, the American Naval Commodore Matthew Perry arrived, urging the emperor to open his country to foreign trade. Perry's show of strength and increasing world trade convinced Japanese leaders that they had to take the initiative or become yet another colonised people.

Under the **Meiji Restoration**, Emperor Mutsuhito rapidly modernised Japan by adopting what was considered the best Western ideas and practices. Modernisation was imposed from above (by the government) rather than coming from a popular nationwide revolution.

JAPANESE NATIONALISM

Japan quickly modernised and industrialised. In 1904–1905 this newly emerged country defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War and became an imperial power, taking control of Korea in 1910.

In World War I, Japan increased its power in the region, occupying German colonies in Micronesia and German settlements in China. The war improved Japan's economy and its international standing, with the League of Nations granting Japan **mandates** over former German possessions.



Source 1.04 'Regarding Russia's War with Japan', a poster from 1905.



TOWARDS A NATION-STATE

Imperialism continued in the 1930s with Japan's invasion of Manchuria and other parts of China, but this ended with Japan's defeat in World War II. From 1947 it became a *democracy*, with the Emperor playing an important but mostly ceremonial role.

democracy

A system of government that allows citizens to elect representatives involved in decision-making.



Source 1.05 *Concert of European Music (Ōshū kangengaku gassō no zu)* by Yōshū (Hashimoto) Chikanobu, 1889.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 1.19** How and when was Japan opened to foreign contacts and trade?
- 1.20** Why was the term 'Meiji Restoration' appropriate for Japan's reaction to Western attempts to colonise it?
- 1.21** How did Japan challenge the interests of European powers in east Asia?

HISTORICAL SOURCES

- 1.22** Identify traditional Japanese features depicted in Source 1.05.
- 1.23** Identify Western features depicted in Source 1.05.
- 1.24** Explain how this illustration highlights the nature of the Meiji Restoration.

ITALY

AUSTRIAN PRIME MINISTER COUNT METTERNICH: 'The word "Italy" is only a geographical expression.'⁶

Until 1870, 'Italy' was a group of states and kingdoms mostly controlled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Between 1815 and 1870, these were gradually unified to gain independence from Austria-Hungary. A significant nationalist leader was Giuseppe Garibaldi, who led uprisings against Austria in the 1830s, and after 1848 commanded a volunteer army of 'Red Shirts' in military campaigns that eventually led to unification. By 1870 the Italian states were united as the Kingdom of Italy.

THE ITALIAN EMPIRE

After its unification, Italy built a small empire in North Africa, establishing control of Eritrea, Somalia and parts of Libya. Italy also had concessions in China.

Although a member of the *Triple Alliance* with Germany and Austria-Hungary, Italy did not enter World War I until May 1915, and was on the Allied side. Italy fought mostly against Austrian troops, and in October 1918 contributed to their defeat, which helped bring about the end of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire.

Triple Alliance

A treaty signed in 1882 by Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy that tied all three nations in a military pact. Italy made a similar secret treaty with France in 1902.



GERMANY

GERMAN CHANCELLOR OTTO VON BISMARCK: 'The great questions of the day will not be decided by speeches and the resolutions of majorities ... but by iron and blood.'⁷

Did you know? The year 1888 is known as the 'Year of the Three Kaisers'; the German saying 'drei Achten, drei Kaiser' (meaning 'three eights, three Kaisers') is also used. In that year, two German kaisers died in quick succession: Kaiser Wilhelm, Germany's first Kaiser, died on 9 March and was succeeded by his fifty-six-year-old son, Frederick III. He died on 15 June, and was succeeded by his son Wilhelm II.

culture

The totality of human thought, activity, expression, communication and customs.

kaiser

The German word for emperor.

concessions

Agreements that granted the German government special trading rights over particular areas in China.

➔ **Source 1.06** Cited in Harry Mills, *The Road to Sarajevo* (Auckland: Macmillan, 1983), 15.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the area that is now Germany was divided into more than 300 independent states that often had differences in religion, language, **culture** and social structure. However, the Napoleonic Wars had fostered a sense of German unity that strengthened during the nineteenth century. There was a series of agreements and special relationships between the German states, such as the Zollverein, a type of customs union that reduced barriers to commerce and trade within the union. The Prussian Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, is particularly identified as the leader of German unification. German nationalism was stimulated by the unification of Italy and encouraged by improved transport, especially railway development.

In the earlier part of the nineteenth century, Austria dominated central Europe, but Prussia challenged this dominance. Growing German unity, especially under Prussian leadership, increasingly challenged Austria's position. German states were united when Prussian troops defeated the French in 1871, and Wilhelm was proclaimed **kaiser** in the Palace of Versailles.

THE GERMAN EMPIRE

Unification allowed Germany to join other European empire-builders. In 1897, the German Foreign Secretary declared that 'we wish to throw no one into the shade, but we also want our own place in the sun'.⁸ By 1914, Germany had acquired colonies in Africa and the Pacific, and **concessions** in China.

German historian, Hans Delbrück, 1896

In the next decades vast tracts of land in very different parts of the world will be distributed. The nation which goes away empty-handed will lose its place in the next generation from the ranks of those Great Powers which will coin the human spirit. Did we found the German Empire to see it disappear under our grandchildren?

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 1.06 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

1.25 What value does Hans Delbrück see in a nation controlling vast tracts of land?

1.26 What might have been Hans Delbrück's attitude towards the map depicted in Source 1.03?

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1.27 Which two leaders were responsible for unification in Italy and Germany?

1.28 What similarities are there between Italian unification and German unification?

1.29 Explain how unification helped both Italy and Germany to gain empires.



RUSSIA

GEORGE KENNAN, AN AMERICAN WHO TRAVELLED WIDELY IN RUSSIA IN THE 1880s:

'Most of the Russian terrorists were nothing more, at first, than moderate liberals ... [T]hey were gradually transformed into revolutionists.'⁹

THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

In the nineteenth century, the Russian Empire stretched approximately 9000 km from western Europe to east Asia, one of the largest empires in history. However, it was politically, economically and socially backward compared with other European powers. It was ruled by an **autocratic** tsar, its economy was based on poorly developed agriculture, and the social system remained essentially **feudal**, with peasants making up 80 per cent of the population.

Tsar Alexander II began to modernise Russia but, after his assassination in 1881, succeeding tsars believed that continuing liberal reforms would produce more revolutionaries like those who had murdered Alexander II. Treatment of the regime's opponents became more severe, but opposition increased. Historian Daniel Beer described the aftermath of Alexander's assassination.

Historian Daniel Beer on Tsar Alexander II's assassination

What followed were two decades in which the state failed to distinguish between dangerous radicals and moderate reformers. ... In the eyes of its critics, the emergency legislation [passed after 1881] was ... a recruiting sergeant for the revolutionaries.

↑ **Source 1.07** Daniel Beer, *The House of the Dead: Siberian Exile Under the Tsars* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2017), 292.

Tsar Nicholas II failed to deliver promised constitutional reforms, and Russia's involvement in World War I exposed its failings. The tsar was forced to abdicate in March 1917, and the Provisional Government took control of Russia for eight months until it was overthrown by the **Bolsheviks** in the October Revolution.

With the tsar's abdication, the Russian Empire ceased to exist, but there was no smooth transition to independent nation states. The Bolsheviks promised 'free **self-determination**, including the right of separation and the formation of an independent state',¹⁰ and countries such as Finland, Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland declared themselves independent **republics**. In the postwar years, the

Bolshevik government reabsorbed most of these republics into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which many perceived as a 'Soviet empire'. It lasted until 1991.



↪ **Source 1.08** Part of the bronze statue of Tsar Alexander III in the centre of Moscow. It was removed by the new Bolshevik government in 1918.

autocratic/autocracy

A system of government in which supreme power lies in the hands of one person, an autocrat, such as an emperor or tsar. This person has absolute power and is not limited by the law. In Russia this person was the tsar and the system was known as tsarist autocracy.

feudal

A system where peasants worked land owned by a lord.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— INTERPRETATIONS

Using Source 1.07 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 1.30** Explain what Beer means when he states: 'The state failed to distinguish between dangerous radicals and moderate reformers'.
- 1.31** Describe what might have happened in Russia in the early twentieth century if the tsar had made that distinction.
- 1.32** Explain what the writer means by 'a recruiting sergeant for the revolutionaries'.
- 1.33** Analyse the extent to which tsarist autocracy was the main issue facing Russia in the nineteenth century. Use evidence to support your response.

Bolsheviks

A small revolutionary group of communists led by Lenin; the Reds.

self-determination

The process by which a country determines its own statehood and forms its own government.

republic

A country or political system whose head of state is not a monarch, and where the people have the right to elect representatives. Republics often have a president.



CHINA

CHINESE PHILOSOPHER KANG YOUWEI IN 1893: 'A survey of all the states in the world will show that those states which undertook reforms became strong while those states which clung to the past perished.'¹¹

THE QING DYNASTY

The Qing was China's last **dynasty**, ruling from 1636 to 1912.

Europeans had traded with Chinese ports from the sixteenth century, but the Chinese often restricted foreign traders. Britain, in particular, wanted 'free trade' and in 1793 King George III sent an ambassador to China to try to expand trade between England and China. Emperor Qianlong responded that 'we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures.'¹²

Although the Qing Dynasty was considered great, China was becoming intellectually and technologically **stagnant**. From 1861 to 1908, the Dowager Empress Cixi effectively ruled China and resisted attempts to modernise. European powers exploited this and used superior military forces to make China agree to trade advantages. By 1900, much of China was under spheres of influence: Britain, France, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Germany, Italy, Russia, the US and Japan each had areas of China over which they had certain exclusive rights.

dynasty

A series of rulers from the same family.

stagnant

Not growing or developing.

Significant individual ➔

DOWAGER EMPRESS CIXI, 1835–1908



The title 'Dowager Empress' is given to an emperor's widow. Dowager Empress Cixi had been a **consort** of Emperor Xianfeng, and had significant influence over him partly because she read and wrote Chinese, a rare accomplishment for women in nineteenth-century China. When the Emperor died in 1861, their son Tongzhi was too young to rule and Cixi became regent. For the next 47 years, Cixi effectively ruled China, controlling first her son Emperor Tongzhi and, after his death in 1875, her three-year-old nephew, the new Emperor Guangxu, who reigned from 1875 to 1908.

Chinese emperors were theoretically all-powerful and held the title 'Son of Heaven'. However, Cixi is often described as 'ruling behind the curtain', hidden by a silk screen and invisibly influencing decision-making. She was a ruthless **dictator** who opposed attempts to modernise China and refused to adopt Western models of government, helping to weaken China and aiding humiliating defeats by foreign powers. After 1900 she attempted reforms, but it was too late to heal the deeply divided society. Emperor Guangxu died on 14 November 1908, possibly from arsenic poisoning, and Cixi died one day later.

📌 **Source 1.09** 'Empress Dowager of China to the Son of Heaven: "Reform, indeed! I'll reform you! Go and stand in the corner until I tell you to come out!"'



CHINESE NATIONALISM

Many Chinese believed the Qing Dynasty had lost the *Mandate of Heaven*. When Cixi died in 1908, Puyi, who was not yet three years old, became emperor with his father as *regent*. The Qing Dynasty continued to decline, unable to preserve China's independence from Western influence.

Numerous groups agitated for a republic and an end to imperial rule. One such group was the Tongmenghui (The Alliance Society) led by Sun Yixian (Sun Yat-Sen). These groups often had western-educated members influenced by Western ideas of democracy and nationalism. On 10 October 1911, revolution began in Wuchang, and soon after the Tongmenghui declared a Provisional Government with Sun Yixian as president. Emperor Puyi was forced to abdicate, imperial rule ceased and, in name at least, China was a republic.

It is difficult to transform a society from autocracy to democracy. The Provisional Government broke down, and between 1916 and 1928 China was governed by warlords—military strongmen who ruled their regions through terror. Constant warfare between rival leaders, looting by undisciplined soldiers, and failure to maintain infrastructure resulted in widespread famine. Two independence movements emerged in the 1930s, the Guomindang (National People's Party) and the Chinese Communist Party, the latter ultimately declaring the Republic of China on 1 October 1949. Guomindang supporters fled to Taiwan and established a separate Chinese government.

She said: "Poor China! Why cannot foreigners let her alone with her own?"

Said about: 'She is portrayed as one of the most power hungry, manipulative and evil rulers in history and blamed for the downfall of the old regime of China.' (Dianne McDonald, historian)

consort A secondary wife to the emperor.

dictator A ruler with total power.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 1.09 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

1.38 Explain who the 'Son of Heaven' was.

1.39 Describe how the Dowager Empress is treating the 'Son of Heaven' in the source.

1.40 Analyse the significance of the Dowager Empress in preventing reform in China in the late nineteenth century. Use evidence to support your response.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1.34 What does Emperor Qianlong's response to England's attempt at expanding trade suggest about his attitude to China and to western Europe?

1.35 What is the Mandate of Heaven?

1.36 Who became president of the Provisional Government?

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

1.37 To what extent is Kang Youwei's comment that 'states which undertook reforms became strong while those states which clung to the past perished' accurate?

Mandate of Heaven

Chinese belief that Heaven bestows the right to rule ('mandate') on a just ruler.

regent

A person appointed to administer the kingdom when the monarch is too young to rule.

PUYI

Puyi, the last emperor of China, spent the final eight years of his life living as a commoner in Beijing. He was two years old when he ascended the throne in 1908, and he abdicated in 1912. Although no longer emperor, he continued to live with privileges; in 1932 he became a *puppet emperor* for the Japanese occupation of northern China. He was imprisoned by communist China after 1950 and, according to his autobiography, this was the first time he did basic tasks of looking after himself, such as brushing his own teeth. From 1959 he lived in Beijing and did menial work, including street sweeping. Puyi died in 1967, aged 61.

puppet emperor

An emperor installed by a dominating country to give the appearance of local authority. The emperor was like a puppet controlled by Japan.



FEDERALISM

The US and Australia, along with other countries including India, Germany and Russia, have federal political systems—each state has its own government plus one federal government. The US's federal system resulted from its War of Independence (1776–1783), while Australia's was decided by constitutional conventions leading to the proclamation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901.

civil war

A conflict between two or more armed groups within a nation state fighting for control of that country.

Reconstruction

The era in the southern US states lasting from 1865–1877.

abolished

Legally removed.

legislatures

Where each state's laws are made; the equivalent of Australia's state parliaments.

disenfranchised

To take away the right to vote.

white supremacy

The belief that white people are superior to other racial groups.

plantation system

The agricultural system common in the southern states of the US prior to the Civil War, consisting of large farms that relied on slaves to do most work.

industrialisation

The process whereby a country expands its manufacturing output on a vast scale by increasing the number of factories.

immigration

When people leave their country of birth to live in another country.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN: 'With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in.'

RECONSTRUCTION AFTER THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

America's federation was challenged in the lead up to the American **Civil War** when eleven states withdrew from the Union to form the Confederacy. The Civil War (1861–1865) cost 600,000 lives. The Confederacy surrendered in April 1865, and five days later President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by a fanatical Confederacy supporter, John Wilkes Booth.

The period after the Civil War to 1877 is called **Reconstruction**. The US government wanted to rebuild the former Confederacy states, bring them back into the Union, and to assist freed slaves. Many historians believe the opportunity to develop a fair and equal society was squandered.

The Civil War began over states' rights rather than slavery. During the war, on 1 January 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which granted freedom to slaves. After the Civil War, constitutional amendments **abolished** slavery and gave citizenship rights to all Americans. To rejoin the Union, former Confederacy states had to adopt the amendments. Between 1868 and 1874, the eleven former Confederacy states were readmitted to the Union, but their state **legislatures** soon enacted laws that **disenfranchised** many African Americans and reimposed **white supremacy**.

The Union victory in the Civil War meant the southern **plantation system** decreased and **industrialisation** accelerated. Expansion of the railroads and **immigration** fuelled industrial development, so that America's manufacturing output increased sevenfold between 1870 and 1914 (compared to Germany's fivefold and Britain's twofold). By 1880, the US was ranked first in the world's industrial production.

When World War I was declared in August 1914, American sentiment strongly favoured neutrality, although it became a major supplier of materials and money to the Allies. America entered the war in April 1917, and its fresh troops contributed to Allied victory on the Western Front.

After the war, America quickly returned to what was considered normalcy, ceasing military conscription and looking inwards rather than outwards towards expansion. Unlike combatant countries such as Japan and Australia, the US received no additional territories under mandates established by the League of Nations.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 1.41 When was the American Civil War, and how many died in this conflict?
- 1.42 What was the purpose of the Reconstruction era (1865–1877)?
- 1.43 What effect did the Civil War have on slaves, the former Confederate states and the US economy overall?



RAILROADS

The expansion of railroads was a symbol of industrial growth: on 10 May 1869, near Ogden, Utah, the Central Pacific railroad that had been built east from California met the Union Pacific built west from Nebraska. This created the first of the US' transcontinental railroads.

 **Source 1.10** Photograph of the two railroads meeting at Promontory Summit, near Ogden, 10 May 1869.



CIVIL RIGHTS

At the end of the Civil War, three amendments to the US **Constitution** related directly to former slaves:

- » The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery.
- » The Fourteenth Amendment gave citizenship to all Americans.
- » The Fifteenth Amendment prohibited state governments disenfranchising citizens on the basis of 'race, color, or previous condition of servitude'.

Southern states used various methods to suppress African American votes. Electoral fraud and violence, literacy tests, poll taxes and property ownership requirements disqualified many members of minority groups from voting.

There were legal attempts to overthrow them, but the **Supreme Court** generally upheld the states' rights to discriminatory laws. It was not until the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s that such laws were finally removed. Nevertheless, as recently as 2016, former US President Barack Obama could say, 'We really are the only advanced democracy on Earth that systematically and purposely makes it really hard for people to vote'¹³

constitution

A written document that outlines how a government will function and who is permitted to participate.

Supreme Court

The highest court of appeals in the US. It also hears matters relating to the Constitution.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Students of history are required to identify the perspectives of people who lived in the past and how perspectives changed over time. Over thousands of years, slavery existed in many societies and was often considered an essential part of the economy of that society.

1.44 What arguments could a nineteenth-century white plantation owner have used to justify slavery?

1.45 Since the Civil War, numerous buildings, statues and other commemorations were named for men who led or served with the Confederate forces. For example, there were many statues of the commander of the Confederate States Army, Robert E. Lee, the president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, and of Confederate soldiers. Confederate flags were sometimes incorporated into states' flags. Explain the arguments that could be used to either have these commemorative items removed or to retain them.

1.46 Research Britain's anti-slave trade movement led by William Wilberforce from 1780 to 1807. What arguments did the movement use to abolish the slave trade?

AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN HISTORIAN MANNING CLARK: 'Australians were becoming confident that they could paint their own world and sing their own songs.'¹⁴

Westminster system

The British system of government with three branches—the legislature (makes laws), the executive (administers laws) and the judiciary (interprets laws).

Anglo-Celts

The people who inhabit England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. This term also refers to the descendants of those people in many countries around the world.

referendum

A vote taken by the citizens of a state on important matters, such as changing the constitution.

federation

The act of joining states together under one central authority.

British settlement of the Australian continent began in 1788 and took the form of separate colonies, all governed by an appointee from Britain. Later, each colony elected councils to advise the governor. The colonies obtained self-government from the 1850s, with their parliaments based on the **Westminster system**. While the colonies were self-governing in internal matters, foreign affairs and defence remained under British control.

Each colony developed separately and with its own identity. Most had British heritage, but as locally born populations increased, people identified with their colony: they saw themselves as Victorians, New South Welshmen or Tasmanians within the British Empire.

THE FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

In the second half of the nineteenth century, several factors encouraged people of these separate colonies to consider uniting as 'Australians'. Many felt militarily insecure because of European imperialism and their great distance from the British army and navy, so a unified defence force offered greater security. Most colonists were **Anglo-Celts** and felt threatened by the presence of large Asian populations in Australia's north. Many colonists also believed that trade barriers between the existing colonies slowed commerce.

These 'practical' factors coincided with the growth of an Australian identity: transport and communications made it easier to mix with other colonists, and helped realise their common heritage, language and values. Nationalist writers such as Henry Lawson and 'Banjo' Paterson, and artists such as Tom Roberts and Frederick McCubbin, promoted distinctive Australian themes.

An important consideration was whether a federated Australia should be independent of Britain or be united 'under the Crown'. The latter was by far the more popular view. Thus, after a series of constitutional conventions and two **referendums**, the colonies federated to become the Commonwealth of Australia. **Federation** was formally proclaimed on 1 January 1901. Australia remained in the British Empire and Britain's monarch became the head of state.



↑ **Source 1.11** *A Break Away!* by Tom Roberts, 1891.



In late July 1914, Australia was in a federal election campaign and the political parties pledged to support Britain should war develop. Prime Minister Joseph Cook declared, 'If the old country is at war so are we', and the ALP leader Andrew Fisher announced that, should war happen, 'we Australians will help and defend the mother country to our last man and our last *shilling*'.¹⁵ When Britain declared war against Germany on 4 August 1914, the Australian government immediately announced it would send Australian military forces to assist Britain.

shilling

A monetary unit and coin used in Australia until decimalisation in 1966.



Source 1.12 'The lion in the way' of federation. A cartoon published in the *Bulletin*, 22 February 1890. The *Bulletin* was a newspaper opposed to federation under the Crown.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 1.12 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 1.47** Outline what the lion and the kangaroo represent.
- 1.48** Explain why the colonies of Australia wanted to form a federation 'under the Crown'.
- 1.49** Explain the alternative to federating 'under the Crown' and what the consequences of this might have been.
- 1.50** Evaluate the significance of an emerging sense of Australian identity as a factor that motivated the move towards federation. Use evidence to support your response.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 1.51** How did the colonies in Australia develop a measure of self-governance over the nineteenth century?
- 1.52** What factors contributed to the rise in support for a single nation-state of Australia by 1900?
- 1.53** Despite federation in 1901, in what sense was Australia still very much under British influence in the early twentieth century?

VOTING IN AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED STATES

Australia and the US both have federal systems of government, but their electoral systems are vastly different. Voting is compulsory in Australia, but not in the US. The Australian Electoral Commission oversees all elections in Australia, so there is just one set of rules for all elections. In the US, each state oversees elections in its state, including federal elections such as the presidential election. This often means quite different voting rules and procedures. For example, ballots in different US states may be cast by ticking a box with a

pencil, filling in a bubble sheet or pushing a button on a machine. Voter identification requirements vary, making it harder in some states for minority groups to vote. In recent years, Texas has closed some voting places so that voters (e.g. from minorities) have to travel further to cast their vote. In Australia, elections are always held on a Saturday. In the US they are held on a Tuesday, thereby making it difficult for some workers to vote.



IMPERIALISM, NATIONALISM AND LIBERALISM

HISTORIAN SIR ROBERT ENSOR: ‘Liberal opinion, which was dominant in Great Britain and France between 1900 and 1914, generally favoured the claims of nationalism.’¹⁶

European imperialism reached its peak in the nineteenth century, when more than half the world’s population was under some form of European control. However, national movements had grown by 1900 so that some of those people argued for the removal of imperial powers and the creation of their own nation states. Often their arguments were framed in terms of liberalism—an idea that had developed in Europe from the seventeenth century. Liberalism argues that all things that do not make people free should be removed and that all people should have civil liberties. Independence movements often used Western liberal arguments to advance their cause.

➔ **Source 1.13** *Bulgarians overrun the Turkish positions* by Jaroslav Věšín, 1912.

Balkans

A culturally and ethnically diverse region in south-east Europe that today includes Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece. Before 1914, the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires had particular interests in Balkan territories.



In the first fourteen years of the twentieth century, imperialism and nationalism increased international tensions. In the **Balkans**, nationalism prompted ethnic groups to oppose imperial powers that controlled their territories, leading to two Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913. The assassination of Austria’s archduke in Bosnia on 28 June 1914 was the spark that ignited World War I.

World War I hastened the collapse of four empires—Russian, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman and German—and some former colonial territories were granted self-determination. For example,

the new nation state of Yugoslavia was created from former Austro-Hungarian territories in the Balkans, and Poland was formed from territories previously part of the German, Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires. Other colonial territories became mandated territories that remained under the control of another country. For example, in 1919 the former German colony of New Guinea was mandated to Australia.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 1.54** How did liberalism and nationalism challenge the empires of the nineteenth century?
- 1.55** Where did wars of national liberation break out in the early twentieth century?
- 1.56** What effect did World War I have on some of the empires that fought in it?



CHAPTER 1 REVIEW

The world before 1900 had seemed stable if unequal, with much of the globe under European control. This was demonstrated by King Edward VII's funeral in 1910, which brought together representatives of the various royal families that ruled nineteenth-century empires. In many ways the event marked the end of the old world. World War I began four years later, putting impossible strains on the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman and Russian empires. New nation states were formed from these collapsed empires, and the map of Europe was redrawn.

The twentieth century was less secure. Many no longer accepted 'that it's their place to toil and not to share, to serve and not to question'. Those living under European colonialism demanded independence and their right to self-determination.

SUMMARY

- The end of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century marked a significant turning point to a less secure world.
- At the start of the twentieth century, vast areas of the world were part of European empires.
- Colonised peoples generally wanted independence from colonial power, but this often took decades to achieve.
- The Indian subcontinent only achieved independence in 1947 and was partitioned into Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan.
- Japan and China reacted differently to colonisation attempts. Japan modernised and industrialised and successfully resisted European imperialism, while China was unable to resist division into spheres of influence until 1911.
- Both Italian and German states were unified and rushed to establish their overseas empires in the nineteenth century.
- The Russian Empire declined politically, economically and socially until it collapsed during World War I.
- The US and Australia developed federal systems of government.
- World War I hastened the end of several empires.

REVIEW

1.57 Select one of the countries covered in this chapter (India, Japan, Germany, Italy, Russia, China, the US) and create a presentation that includes:

- if the country was colonised, with maps showing how it was occupied by imperialist powers
- a timeline for the development of the country, including its colonial period and its moves towards independence
- an overview of how imperial rule led to independent government.

1.58 Select a modern African nation and investigate how it was colonised and how it achieved its independence. Hold a class presentation to compare the stories of imperialism and independence in African nations.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

1.59 What was the key difference in feelings of security between the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century?

EXTENDED RESPONSE

1.60 Write a 250–350-word extended response to the topic below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence and a clear conclusion.

- Compare and contrast the ways in which Japan and China dealt with European colonialism in the nineteenth century.

ESSAY

1.61 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- How did imperialist powers differ in the development of their empires in the late nineteenth century? In your response, refer to at least two colonial powers.
- 'The Meiji Restoration ensured Japan was able to resist European colonisation.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?
- 'Britain claimed it believed in liberalism, but this did not apply to its colonies.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

1.62 Explain why the funeral of King Edward VII in 1910 marked a historical turning point separating two distinct eras. Use evidence, including primary sources or historical interpretations, to support your response.



WORLD WAR I



Source 1 The Gallipoli campaign in 1915.

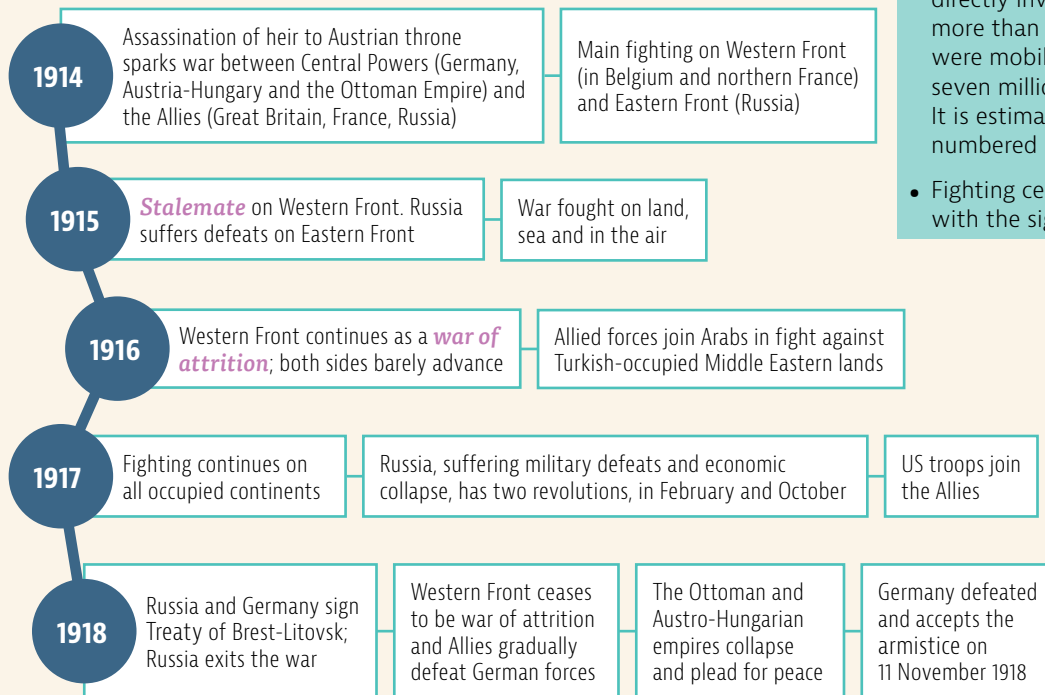
'This is a war to end all wars.'

H.G. WELLS / WOODROW WILSON

KEY POINTS

- World War I officially commenced with Britain's declaration of war against Germany on 4 August 1914.
- World War I was fought between the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire) and the Allies (formed by France, Britain and Russia).
- More than fifty countries were directly involved in World War I, more than sixty-five million troops were mobilised, and more than seven million troops were killed. It is estimated that total casualties numbered 35–37 million people.
- Fighting ceased on 11 November 1918, with the signing of the armistice.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS



stalemate
When a conflict has reached a point where neither side can make further progress or win.

war of attrition
Wearing down an enemy gradually over time through a series of small actions or through loss of soldiers and military equipment.



INTRODUCTION

On 12 August 1914, *Punch* magazine published the cartoon 'Bravo, Belgium!' showing a small Belgian farmer standing up to an aggressive German 'brute'. The British cartoon left the reader in no doubt that Belgium deserved support to resist Germany's attempt to apply its plan (the Schlieffen Plan) to invade France through Belgium. However, this event, which ushered in World War I, was the final playing out of long-term tensions and disputes between European powers.

These tensions had intensified during the last decades of the nineteenth century, and by mid-1914 had led to two armed camps: the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy) and the Allies (formed by France, Britain and Russia). When the heir to the Austrian throne was assassinated in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914, each European nation started to manoeuvre towards war.

World War I officially commenced with Britain's declaration of war against Germany on 4 August 1914.

Few imagined that this war would last four years and involve every inhabited continent, be fought on the seas and in the air, and result in millions of deaths.

The war was fought mostly in Europe. The Western Front was characterised by long lines of trenches; the Eastern Front was longer but less defined. The major European powers were supported by their allies across the world; for example, Australia immediately supported the 'mother country'—Great Britain—and sent troops to German New Guinea and to other German colonies in the Pacific. In October 1914, Ottoman Turkey entered the war on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary.



Source 2

'Bravo, Belgium!' Cartoon printed in the British magazine, *Punch*, 12 August 1914.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 2 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

S.01 Describe the physical appearance in the cartoon of:

- Germany
- Belgium.

S.02 Which features of the cartoon suggest German aggression or brutality?

Which features suggest Belgium bravery?

S.03 In the context of August 1914, what does the gate with the sign 'no thoroughfare' mean?

S.04 Describe the buildings in the distance. What do they represent, and why has the cartoonist drawn them in this way?

S.05 Evaluate the significance of the German invasion of Belgium as a cause of World War I. Use evidence to support your response.

Source 3

Queen Mary, in a letter to her aunt

God grant we may not have a European War thrust upon us, [and] for such a stupid reason too, no I don't mean stupid, but to have to go to war on account of tiresome Servia [Serbia] beggars belief.

25 July 1914

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 3 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

S.06 What did Queen Mary believe was the cause of World War I?

S.07 What was Queen Mary's view of Serbia?

S.08 Consider the date of Queen Mary's letter. Using the timeline in this book, explain why the queen could still have hoped that a European War would not be 'thrust upon us'.

THE LANGUAGE OF WORLD WAR I

- Words and phrases such as 'no man's land', 'going over the top', 'balkanisation', 'dogfight', 'shell shock' and 'stab in the back' entered the language or gained greater currency during World War I. Many are still used today.
- The first use of the word 'Anzac' was probably made by a clerk working with the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps in Egypt in late 1914, when he asked for someone to 'throw me the ANZAC stamp'.

British, French, Australian and New Zealand troops fought the Ottomans at Gallipoli in 1915 and later in the Turkish-occupied Middle East. At sea, Germany and Britain, with their respective allies, tried to disrupt each other's trade routes to prevent supplies and reinforcements reaching the enemy. Submarines, which had previously been small and generally limited to coastal defence, were modified to improve their military value. In the air, planes expanded their role from reconnaissance to playing a vital role in land battles.

The once-great European powers Russia and Austria-Hungary collapsed under the stress of years of warfare. Germany was defeated in 1918; the Allied naval blockade successfully cut food and supplies to Germany, while the entry of the US into the war in 1917 strengthened the Allies. The effective use of new technology, especially the tank, enabled the Allies to break through the German lines on the Western Front.

Fighting ceased on 11 November 1918 with the signing of the armistice. During 1919 and 1920, peace treaties were negotiated for all combatant nations. The war marked the end of empire for Russia, Austria-Hungary and the Ottomans, the end of monarchy in Germany, and the formation of new nations such as Yugoslavia and Poland.

CAUSES OF WORLD WAR I

LONG-TERM CAUSES

Most historians observe the long-term causes of World War I as being nationalism, imperialism, militarism and the system of alliances between European powers in the years before 1914.

Nationalism

Nationalism explained why newly formed Germany wanted to assert its power at the end of the nineteenth century. Nationalism also helped explain France's resentment and fear of increasing German power. Nationalism lay behind the various ethnic groups within the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires who wanted independence.

Imperialism

In the nineteenth century, European powers extended their empires into Africa. This resulted in wars, initially fought on African soil, that inevitably caused friction between the European powers in Europe itself.

Militarism

From the first years of the twentieth century, European powers, especially Britain and Germany, entered an 'arms race', with each country vying for more weapons of greater power. *The Age* newspaper in Melbourne described this militarism as a 'mad competition' with disastrous consequences, 'the day of Armageddon'.¹



Alliances

The system of alliances that developed from 1880 meant that Europe had fallen into two 'camps' by mid-1914: France, Britain and Russia formed the **Triple Entente**, and Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed the Triple Alliance.

SHORT-TERM CAUSE ('SPARK')

Long-term tensions often need a 'spark' to set off an inferno.

The spark came on 28 June 1914 when the heir to the Austrian throne, Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated in Sarajevo. Austria-Hungary blamed Serbia. One by one, the European powers aligned themselves either with Austria-Hungary, seeking revenge, or with Russia, supporting Serbia.

On 28 July, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, which then asked for Russia's help.

After Russia mobilised its troops on 30 July, Germany honoured its alliance with Austria-Hungary and declared war on Russia on 1 August. France, allied to Russia, also mobilised.

On 2 August, Germany presented an ultimatum to Belgium: grant safe passage through Belgium so German troops could attack the French, or be considered an enemy of Germany. Belgium rejected the ultimatum and, when German troops crossed the Belgian border on 3 August, Britain used the terms of the 1839 Treaty of London to support Belgium against invasion.

On 4 August, Britain declared war against Germany, and World War I officially began. Most of Europe was at war and, within days, European colonies and former colonies, including Australia, declared their support for either the Allies or the Central Powers.

Triple Entente

Formed in 1907 by Britain, France and Russia, the Triple Entente formed a counterbalance to the Triple Alliance.



Source 4 A World War I recruitment poster. Recruitment posters were produced by all combatant nations to encourage young men to enlist.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 4 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

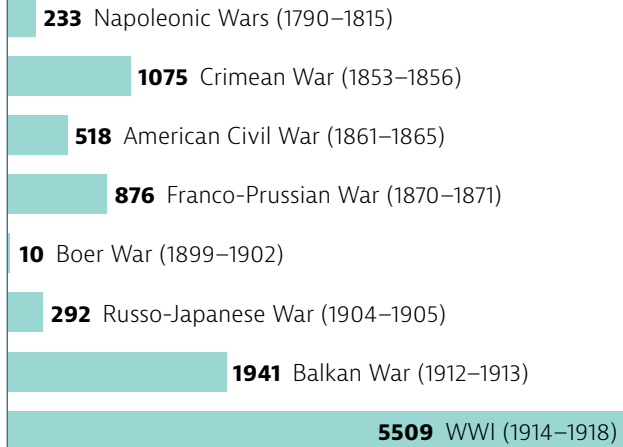
- S.09** To which nationality is this poster directed? How do you know?
- S.10** Which aspects of the country are identified as 'worth fighting for'?
- S.11** What does the poster imply will happen if young men, such as the one in the poster, do not enlist to fight?

THE COST OF WORLD WAR I

Historian Tony Howarth describes the cost of World War I

If you want to know how many died, you will have to put up with guesses. We know that Britain and her Empire suffered nearly 950,000 deaths, France 1,400,000, Germany, 1,800,000. We estimate that Turkey lost 300,000 people—though it may have been twice as many as that, or three times. Maybe two million Russians died, or maybe it was four or even six million. In Petrograd they didn't count deaths as carefully as in London or Paris—and for the Russians the Great War was followed by the Civil War. Who's to say for certain whether Ivan [a typical Russian soldier] was killed by the Germans, the Austrians, the Bulgars, the Turks, the Reds or the Whites? ... The exact figures, even if we had them, could not tell us any more than this—that in the Great War, Europe was sick, and that recovery would take a long, long time.

Losses per day comparative



Source 5 Cited in Tony Howarth, *Twentieth Century History: The World Since 1900* (Essex: Longman, 1985), 43.

Source 6 Figures from Harry Mills, *Twentieth Century World History in Focus* (London: Macmillan, 1984), 25.

Troops mobilised and casualties in the war of 1914–1918

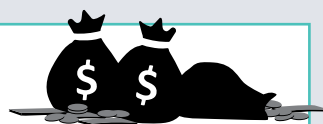
NATION	POPULATION	TROOPS MOBILISED	TROOPS TOOK THE FIELD	KILLED AND DIED	WOUNDED LESS DIED OF WOUNDS	MISSING AND 'PRISONERS'	TOTAL BATTLE CASUALTIES	% OF TOTAL BATTLE CASUALTIES TO TROOPS MOBILISED
British Empire	391,844,691	8,485,926	7,756,791	897,780	2,085,377	266,700	3,249,857	37.31
French Republic	39,700,000	8,194,150	-	1,457,000	2,300,000	47,800	4,235,000	51.68
Russia	182,182,600	15,123,000	-	664,890	3,813,827	3,950,000	8,428,717	55.73
Italy	36,546,437	5,615,000	-	650,000	947,000	600,000	2,197,000	39.13
United States	102,017,312	4,355,000	2,040,000	51,606	234,300	4500	290,406	6.44
Japan	78,152,244	800,000	-	300	907	3	1210	0.15
Belgium	7,571,387	267,000	-	13,716	44,686	34,659	93,061	34.85
Serbia	4,615,567	707,343	-	45,000	133,148	152,958	331,106	46.81
Montenegro	436,789	50,000	-	3000	10,000	7000	20,000	40.00
Romania	7,508,009	750,000	-	335,706	120,000	80,000	535,706	71.43
Greece	4,821,300	261,890	-	5000	21,000	1000	27,000	10.31
Portugal	5,957,566	191,362	109,229	7222	13,751	12,318	33,291	17.40
TOTALS	861,353,902	44,800,671	-	4,131,220	9,723,996	5,587,138	19,442,354	43.39
Germany	68,000,000	13,387,000	4,183,000	1,061,740	5,397,884	771,659	7,231,283	54.02
Austria	52,290,556	7,800,000	-	1,200,000	3,620,000	2,200,000	7,020,000	90.00
Turkey	21,273,900	2,850,000	-	325,000	400,000	250,000	975,000	34.21
Bulgaria	5,517,000	1,200,000	-	87,500	152,390	27,029	266,919	22.24
TOTALS	147,081,466	25,237,000	-	2,674,240	9,570,274	3,248,688	15,493,202	

Source 7 A.G. Butler, *The Official History of the Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914–18*, vol. III (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1943), 868.



THE COST OF WORLD WAR I

The direct economic losses of World War I amounted to over \$180 billion.



In France, where much of the fighting occurred on the Western Front, 21,000 square kilometres of agricultural land was destroyed.



In France, 1500 schools, 1200 churches, 377 public buildings and 1000 industrial plants were destroyed.



As a result of the costs of war, Britain was forced to increase taxation from six pence per pound (in 1914) to thirty pence per pound (in 1922).



All the defeated countries were financially ruined, while most of the victors were half-bankrupt.



Source 8 Figures from Harry Mills, *Twentieth Century World History in Focus* (London: Macmillan, 1984), 25, 27.



HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Sources 5–9 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- S.12** Why are casualty figures for Russia so hard to calculate?
- S.13** Why does Howarth believe casualty figures, even accurate ones, are of little use in understanding the cost of World War I?
- S.14** Which country mobilised the most troops in World War I?
- S.15** What percentage of troops mobilised became battle casualties for:
 - the British Empire
 - Russia
 - the US
 - Germany
 - Austria?
- S.16** Which country suffered the greatest percentage of battle casualties?

S.17 Using the information provided in Source 7, which country do you think suffered most during World War I? Explain why you selected that country.

Outline why Source 6 helps to explain the phrase that was used to describe World War I at the time: ‘the war to end all wars’.

S.18 Sources 5–8 contain various statistics on war casualties and the financial and material costs of World War I. Which statistics do you find most useful in helping to understand the cost of the war? Write a short paragraph that sums up the usefulness of each type of statistic and explains why you think one type of statistic is more helpful than others.

Source 9 A ruined medieval church in Montfaucon, France.



THE PEACEMAKERS

'The Big Four set out to do nothing less than fix the world.'

RICHARD HOLBROOKE

Following World War I, with civilian populations close to starvation, millions of soldiers in prisoner-of-war camps and national governments close to collapsing, the world turned its attention to negotiating a postwar settlement at the Paris Peace Conference. In an unprecedented situation, the transition from a world at war to a world that would attempt to prevent future conflicts would be extremely difficult.

Following the armistice with the **Central Powers**, the leaders of thirty-nine nations met in Paris to work out appropriate punishments for the defeated countries. They were to decide on such issues as the redrawing of national boundaries, the limitation of arms and the fixing of appropriate **reparations**. They also examined US President Woodrow Wilson's **Fourteen Points**. The centrepiece of these was an organisation designed to prevent future wars: the League of Nations.

After months of discussion, argument and compromise, the Treaty of Versailles was signed with Germany in June 1919. This treaty was despised by many, and this affected the commitment of many nations to the League of Nations.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What were the aspirations of the **Big Four** as they began meeting in Paris?
- What were the main features of the Treaty of Versailles and the other peace treaties?
- How did the peace treaties affect the victorious and the defeated countries?
- How were old empires broken up as a result of war and the peace treaties?
- How was the map of the world redrawn?
- What was the League of Nations? How important was it in planning for future peace?

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1918

8 JANUARY — Woodrow Wilson delivers his Fourteen Points to US Congress

11 NOVEMBER — Germany signs the armistice

1919

28 JUNE — The Treaty of Versailles is signed

19 NOVEMBER — US Senate refuses to approve the Treaty of Versailles

1920

16 JANUARY — First session of the League of Nations

1921

5 MAY — London Schedule of Payments sets reparations for Germany at £6.6 billion

Central Powers

The countries opposed by the Allies in World War I, principally Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

reparations

A set amount of money one nation has to pay another to cover the damage caused during a war.

Fourteen Points

Wilson's plan to end the fighting with neither rewards nor punishments for belligerent nations.

Big Four

The name given to the leaders of Great Britain, France, the US and Italy.



Source 2.01

A German prisoner and British soldier share a cigarette.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS



WOODROW WILSON

President of the United States (1913–1921)

Wanted a lenient peace treaty



DAVID LLOYD GEORGE

Prime Minister of Great Britain (1916–1922)

Took the middle ground in the treaty negotiations



GEORGES CLÉMENTEAU

Prime Minister of France (1917–1920)

Demanded harsh penalties for Germany

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

Some historians have argued that Wilson's ideals of a better future were flawed from the start. Others argue that the national priorities affected the ability of leaders to bring the ideals of the League of Nations to fruition. As you work through this chapter consider these questions.

2.01 Was the League of Nations a naive idea that had no chance of success in 1919?

2.02 How would Europe and the Middle East have been different if there were greater agreement and less compromise between the participants at the Paris Peace Conference?

THE END OF THE WAR

WOODROW WILSON, 22 JANUARY 1917: 'Only a peace between equals can last.'

armistice

A truce; an agreement from opposing sides to stop fighting.

World War I came to an end with the signing of the **armistice** (or ceasefire) on 11 November 1918. However, planning for the end of the war had been in the minds of the leaders of the key nations for several months. Although the US did not enter the war until April 1917, US President Woodrow Wilson had set out his agenda for peace as early as January 1917 in his 'Peace Without Victory' address to the US Senate. It was evident at this stage that Wilson's main focus was not victory or punishment, but on making sure that such a terrible war could not occur again.



➔ **Source 2.02** Paul von Hindenburg, Kaiser Wilhelm II and General Erich Ludendorff.

Congress

The legislative branch of the US government comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate.

treaty

A formal agreement between one or more nations related to peace, alliance, commerce or other international matters.

Did you know? The British confectionary company Bassetts created a sweet called Victory Babies. These were so popular that they are still produced, and we now know them as Jelly Babies. Production halted during World War II (1939–1945) because of a lack of sugar.

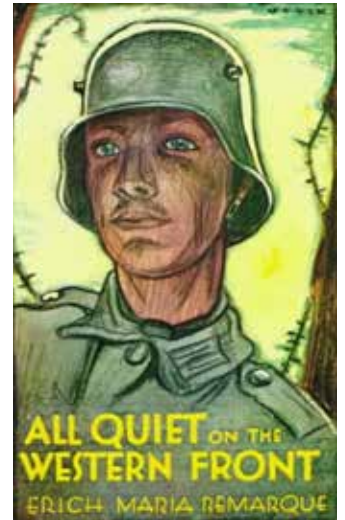
Wilson further refined his principles in the Fourteen Points that he outlined for the US **Congress** in January 1918, about nine months after the US became involved in World War I. Wilson's Fourteen Points, with the League of Nations at their core, were to influence Germany's decision to agree to the armistice and to play a role in shaping the peace **treaty**: the Treaty of Versailles.

The end of World War I, just like its start, was swift and dramatic—as the events of October 1918 clearly illustrate. The Western Front was far from quiet, and the Allies began to push the Germans back towards German territory, not only by trenches and metres but also by kilometres each day. Looming defeat on the Western Front, combined with internal strife, made a German victory impossible. This was obvious to the German military command long before it was grudgingly accepted by Kaiser Wilhelm II. General Erich Ludendorff and his supervisor, Paul von Hindenburg, convinced the kaiser that the army was 'becoming weaker by the day' due to 'irreversible troop losses, declining discipline and battle readiness due to exhaustion, illnesses, food shortages, desertions and drunkenness'.² On 2 October 1918, General Ludendorff sent a military representative to Berlin with the message for the kaiser that 'the war is lost and that the armistice discussions should begin immediately'.³



Many historians argue that Germans—and particularly civilians—never saw the armistice as surrender, but merely an agreement to bring the horrendous war to an end—the ‘peace without victory’ that Wilson had idealistically spoken of in January 1917. The main argument for this was that German civilians never fully experienced the horrors of war because no battles occurred within German territory. This is reflected in Erich Maria Remarque’s poignant 1929 novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which captures the gulf between exhausted German soldiers and the expectations of unrealistic German civilians. When a young German soldier named Paul Bäumer reunites with his former teacher Kantorek, a civilian, Kantorek argues that ‘you boys need to just hurry up over there’.⁴ However, there is more than just literature as evidence of the German command’s desire to get out of the seemingly never-ending war.

Remarque’s novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front*.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

2.03 When did the fighting on the Western Front end?

2.04 When did the US enter World War I?

2.05 What factors convinced Germany to seek an armistice by October 1918?

2.06 Why did many German civilians not understand that their country had lost the war?

1918 TIMELINE

JAN 8 JANUARY — Woodrow Wilson delivers his Fourteen Points program to a joint session of Congress.

MAY 21 MAY — The Allies begin a major counteroffensive.

JULY 18 JULY — Mutinies in the Austrian army.

2 OCTOBER — Wilhelm II handed Parliament authority on military decisions. Prince Max von Baden named Chancellor of Germany.

7 OCTOBER — Poland declares itself an independent state.

12 OCTOBER — Germany agrees to withdraw forces from France and Belgium.

14 OCTOBER — Provisional government formed in Czechoslovakia. Ottoman Sultan requests peace terms for Turkey.

25 OCTOBER — Hungarian National Council established in Budapest. Allied leaders meet at Senlis to establish formal armistice terms.

29 OCTOBER — Yugoslavia proclaims itself an independent state.

30 OCTOBER — Turkey signs armistice.

2 NOVEMBER — Austria signs armistice and begins to withdraw forces.

9 NOVEMBER — German delegation begins formal armistice negotiations at Compiègne.

Max von Baden announces the abdication of Wilhelm II.

Romania declares war on Germany.

11 NOVEMBER — Germany signs armistice, formally ending World War I.



THE COMPLICATED PATH TO ARMISTICE

Source 2.03 Signing the armistice in the Forest of Compiègne, France, 11 November 1918.



chancellor

The head of the legislative body in the Weimar Republic, similar to a prime minister.

When the Germans initiated contact with Wilson to push for an armistice based on his Fourteen Points, Wilson understood that his European allies would not accept this until a democratic state was created in Germany. Wilson had his own problems now: 'In London and Paris, he discovered that both Allies anticipating an immediate German collapse had no interest in an armistice based on the Fourteen Points.'⁵ France and Britain could invade a dispirited Germany but, from Wilson's perspective, what would be the point of more war dead? Wilson threatened to withdraw US troops and leave the war if France and Britain insisted on this pointless option.⁶ Wilson's gamble worked. The Supreme War Council accepted a pre-armistice agreement on 4 November 1918, and a week later German officials signed the Armistice Agreement based on the Fourteen Points. Wilson had clearly reinstated his influence and power. These differing values foreshadowed the complications that would be faced at the Paris Peace Conference.

The armistice was merely a truce, a halt in fighting until the terms of a peace treaty could be determined. A month later in Berlin, Germany's new **chancellor**, the socialist Friedrich Ebert, announced to soldiers returning, 'I salute you who return unvanquished from the field of battle.'⁷ From a German perspective, it is easy to understand that the armistice was not seen as a surrender, because, at the time of signing, their armies 'still stood deep in enemy territory in all fronts'.⁸ Germany had certainly lost the other Central Powers, who had already signed armistices with the Allies. However, Wilson's slogan of 'Peace without Victory' was certainly taken as a reality by many of the German people, and this would complicate matters when it came to drawing up terms at the Paris Peace Conference.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

2.07 In Wilson's Fourteen Points, Point 14 attempts to address the problem of secret agreements suggested in Point 1. Why do you think Wilson ordered his points the way he did?

2.08 Which points specifically address the self-determination of nations?

2.09 Can you identify any glaring omissions from the points? Explain your answer.

2.10 The point that caused the most controversy in Britain was Point 2. Why do you think it was controversial?

WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS

1 No secret agreements.



2 Free navigation of all the seas.



3 An end to all economic barriers between countries.



4 Commitment to reduce weapons.



5 All decisions regarding the colonies should be impartial.



6 The German Army is to be removed from Russia. Russia should be left to develop her own political set-up.



7 Belgium should be independent, as it was before the war.



8 France should be fully liberated and allowed to recover Alsace-Lorraine.



9 The borders of Italy should be redrawn along clearly recognisable lines of nationality.



10 Self-determination should be allowed for all those living in Austria-Hungary.



11 Self-determination and guarantees of independence should be allowed for the Balkan states.



12 The Turkish people should be governed by the Turkish government. Non-Turks in the old Ottoman Empire should govern themselves.



13 An independent Poland should be created, which should have access to the sea.



14 A League of Nations should be set up to guarantee the political and territorial independence of all states.



TOWARDS A PEACEFUL FUTURE

Wilson's Fourteen Points struck a chord with political leaders, even those determined for revenge, such as Georges Clémenceau. However, they were not appreciated by the people of Europe, who were exhausted by war, death and destruction. British historian Hew Strachan argues that Wilson's most significant audience was people, rather than governments. Equally, as a political scientist Wilson knew that a peaceful Europe was only possible if Germany and the other Central Powers were not left humiliated. Wilson warned his colleagues as early as March 1918 that treating Germany severely could result in a vengeful response.

Source 2.04 'It's the only way out, Wilhelm!' Cartoon by E.A. Bushnell, 1918.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 2.04 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 2.11 Who is the figure depicted in this cartoon?
- 2.12 Describe how this figure has been depicted. Explain why the cartoonist depicted him this way.
- 2.13 Explain the cartoonist's point of view on the Fourteen Points. Refer to specific elements of the cartoon in your response.
- 2.14 Evaluate the extent to which Wilson's Fourteen Points was responsible for bringing an end to the fighting in World War I. Use evidence to support your response.



THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

The leaders of the victorious countries met at the Palace of Versailles near Paris on 18 January 1919. Thirty-nine nations were present, and initially the 'Supreme Council' was a council of ten—two representatives each from the US, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. For practical reasons, the council was scaled back to the 'Big Four': Lloyd George (Britain), Georges Clémenceau (France), Woodrow Wilson (US) and Vittorio Orlando (Italy). The media demanded to be present, citing Wilson's first point of no secret agreements, but such an arrangement would have been ineffective and was rejected.

The armistice had been in effect for two months but Europe still faced many problems. Much of Europe was starving, and small revolutions in Hungary, Greece and Turkey were bubbling beneath the surface. Initially there was a desire to fix these issues as quickly as possible, but the conference became bogged down with disagreements. As historian Margaret MacMillan pointed out, 'The peacemakers soon discovered that they had taken on the administration of much of Europe and large parts of the Middle East ... There was little choice: if they did not do it, no one would—or worse, revolutionaries might.'⁹ Across most of the world, economies were in tatters from World War I. There was excess food—particularly from Australia, New Zealand and Canada—and ships to transport this food. Yet who should meet the costs? The whole idea of an international government was a new concept, and nations continued to put their own economic and political interests first.

BACKGROUND TO THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

To fully understand the implications for the peacemakers in Paris, we should first look at historical precedents. The leaders who met in Paris in 1919 were not the first leaders to attempt to plan for peace. In 1648, the Peace of Westphalia treaties ended the Thirty Years War. More importantly, it created the principle that still prevails: all states are sovereign. The Thirty Years War was largely fought on German territory, and the agreements for peace took almost a year to negotiate.

Equally, the Paris Treaty of 1815 after the Napoleonic Wars not only attempted to re-establish the power of kings, but also was the first peace treaty that put forward agreements for reparations. Under the Paris Treaty, France was required to pay reparations to Prussia, Austria and Britain. A third treaty, the 1871 Treaty of Versailles, unified Germany under one emperor

after the Franco-Prussian War. It also stipulated that France pay five billion francs to Germany in reparations. The German army occupied areas of France until France paid in full, and the French were left humiliated by this defeat and by the treaty. The 1871 Treaty of Versailles occurred during Georges Clémenceau's lifetime, which perhaps helps explain why France was determined never to let Germany invade again.

The 1919 Paris Peace Conference was dominated by Woodrow Wilson, a political scientist and former president of Princeton University. He sought to transform 'the war to end all wars' into a platform of international cooperation and lasting peace. However, the outcomes were complicated because different countries had different agendas and conflicting ideas about self-determination, reparations and territorial claims.

THE BIG FOUR

At the heart of the disagreements among the Big Four was that each country had experienced different levels of loss and suffering as a result of the war. Consequently, they also differed about the degree to which Germany should be punished.

UNITED STATES

Unlike the other nations making up the Big Four, the US had not been severely affected by the war. On 7 May 1915, a German submarine sank RMS *Lusitania* off the Irish coast. Although the *Lusitania* was a British civilian ship, the sinking resulted in the deaths of up to 120 Americans—and this created strong anti-German feelings in the US. However, it was not until April 1917 that the US entered the war, following

Germany's resumption of submarine attacks to sink civilian ships, and the revelation of a German plan to invade the US through Mexico. The US lost between 115,000 and 130,000 people during the war, but endured no fighting on home soil. This experience, coupled with President Wilson's idealistic belief that future wars could be prevented, led the US to use the peace negotiations to achieve reconciliation. Wilson argued strongly, through his Fourteen Points program and his proposal for a League of Nations, that the treaty should encourage democracy and should not aim to cripple Germany.

Source 2.05 A newspaper drawing from 1915 showing *RMS Lusitania* hit by torpedoes off Kinsale Head, Ireland.



FRANCE

France had suffered enormously during the war. Nearly two million French lives were lost in the conflict—more than 4 per cent of the population. Moreover, much of the fighting took place on French soil, destroying buildings in hundreds of towns and cities and rendering millions of hectares of farmland useless. The French also still harboured resentment over their loss to Germany in the 1870 Franco-Prussian war. The majority of French people wanted a treaty that would make Germany pay in terms of land, money and humiliation. They also wanted to make sure that Germany could not wage war against France again.

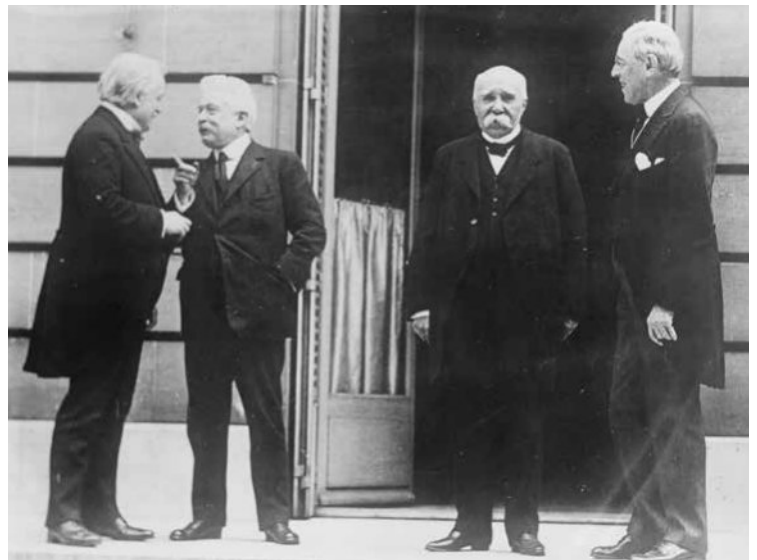
BRITAIN

Britain had a slightly less vengeful attitude towards Germany. The British Isles and their colonies had lost more than one million citizens in the war, but there was little war destruction on British soil. Many people wanted a peace that would punish Germany, but others worried that a harsh treaty would make Germany more likely to start another war. There was also the issue of trade. Many British businesses and farmers were keen to re-establish trading links with Germany. British Prime Minister Lloyd George charted a course between Wilson's idealism and Clémenceau's determination to make Germany pay.

ITALY

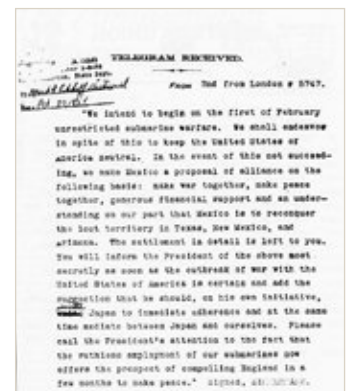
Italy had been a member of the Triple Alliance before the war but did not join on Germany's side in 1914. Instead, Italy entered the war on the side of the Allies in April 1915. Over the next three-and-a-half years, Italian forces opened a southern front on the Alps, causing Germany and Austria to divide their troops and resources three ways and weakening their fighting power. Italy also lost between one million and 1.2 million citizens in the conflict. Italian Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando attended the Paris Peace Conference confident that Italy would be suitably rewarded for its effort, but very few of Italy's territorial demands were met.

The Big Four met daily, and sometimes two or three times per day. The other nations' delegates were put to work on subcommittees to work out reparations and other arrangements.



Source 2.06 Leaders of the Big Four at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. From left: British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, Italian Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando, French Premier Georges Clémenceau, and US President Woodrow Wilson.

Did you know? Germany attempted to draw Mexico into the war in the so-called 'Zimmermann Telegram', which was named after the German foreign minister of the time. The message was intercepted by British naval intelligence, then decrypted, translated and passed to the Americans. The message stated that if Mexico agreed to enter the war on Germany's side, Germany promised to return Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, all of which had been Mexican territory until 1848 when it was ceded to America at the end of the American-Mexican War (1846-1848).



The decrypted and translated version of the Zimmerman telegram.



One notable absentee was Russia. It could be argued that Russia had saved France during the war when, as an ally, it had attacked Germany and created two fronts. However, following the Bolshevik Revolution in October 1917, Russia had withdrawn from the war and signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany. This treaty was very harsh on Russia, but in the eyes of the Allies, Russia had broken the terms of the Triple Entente and had no place at the conference table. Some historians have argued that the outcomes may have been very different had Russia been invited.

The last of Wilson's Fourteen Points was the creation of a League of Nations. Australian representative Prime Minister Billy Hughes joked that 'it was Wilson's toy, he would not be happy until he got it'. Wilson saw the League of Nations as the centrepiece of the peace treaty and the path to preventing future wars. Yet Clémenceau was more interested in discussing reparations and a treaty with the Germans. Lloyd George was stuck between Wilson's idealism and Clémenceau's push for making Germany pay. Orlando, as the conference continued, only made demands for more territory for Italy. With these conflicting agendas, the four argued, debated and, at times, ironically, came close to blows.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 2.15 Where and when did the Peace Conference delegates meet?
- 2.16 Which nations were considered the 'Big Four'?
- 2.17 Why do you think they were given this title?
- 2.18 What problems were facing Europe at that time?
- 2.19 Why was Russia not invited to the conference?

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

- 2.20 How much had each of the 'Big Four' suffered during World War I, and what demands did each of them want to make of Germany? Present your answers in a table.



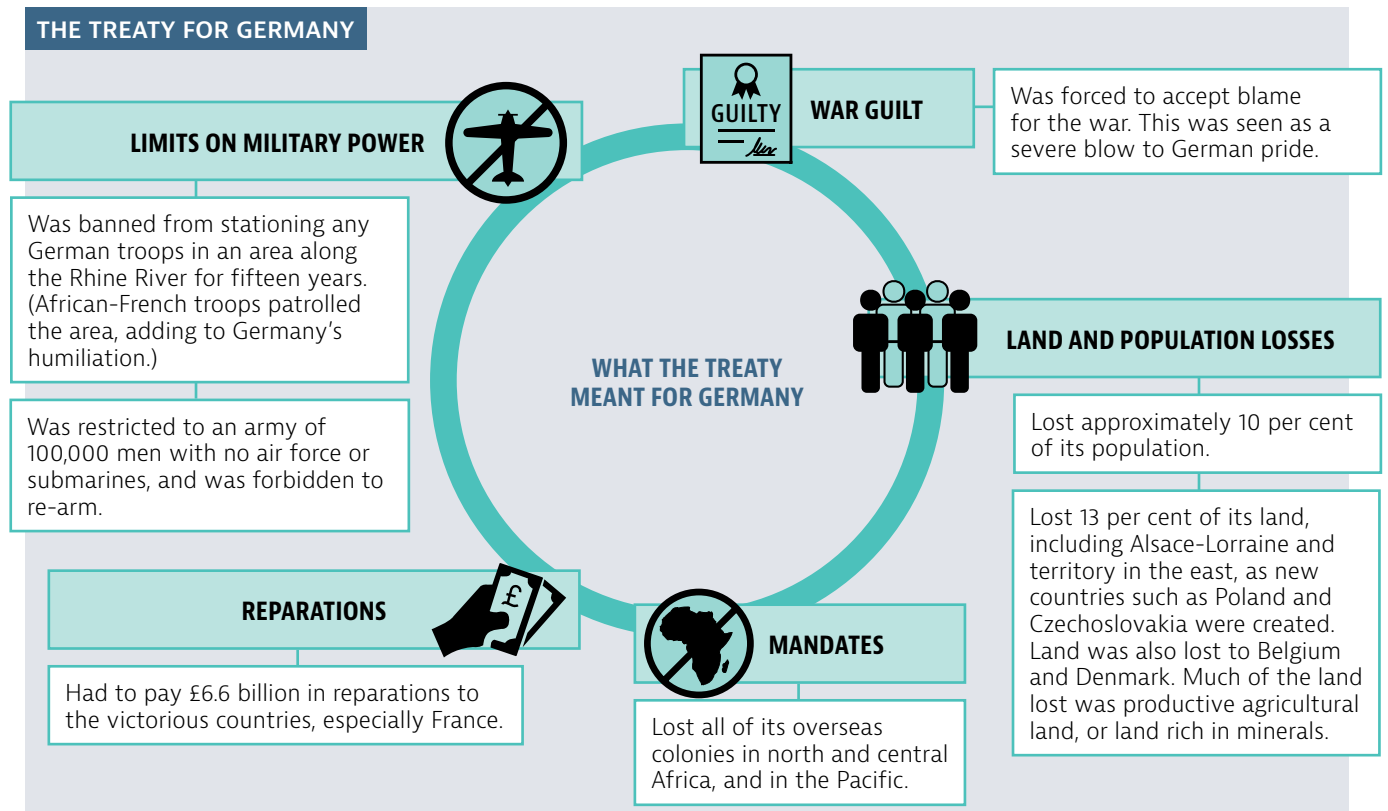
THE SETTLEMENT WITH GERMANY: THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES, 1919

On 28 June 1919, exactly five years after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, two German representatives, Dr Hermann Müller and Dr Johannes Bell, were ushered into the Hall of Mirrors to sign the Treaty of Versailles.



➔ **Source 2.07** The headlines of this New York evening newspaper from 28 June 1919, after the Treaty of Versailles was signed, reveal Wilson's thoughts on the outcome.





LOSS OF COLONIES: MANDATES

Following Italy's withdrawal from the Paris Peace Conference on 24 April 1919, the chief negotiating team became the 'Big Three': Wilson, Clémenceau and Lloyd George. They turned their attention to their major enemy: Germany. They agreed that Germany should hand over all of its colonies around the world to the Allied Powers in the form of mandates. Under the mandate system, former German colonies were the responsibility of the League of Nations, but were to be administered by the victorious Allies. The French wanted Cameroon and Togoland and German rights in Morocco. The Italians had their eyes on Somalia. In the British Empire, South Africa wanted German South West Africa (Namibia), Australia wanted New Guinea and some nearby islands, and New Zealand wanted German Samoa.¹⁰ Cynics referred to this as the great land grab, as Allied leaders presented arguments for their own control of former German colonies.



← The cover of the Treaty of Versailles (in English). The text reads as follows:

THE TREATY OF PEACE BETWEEN THE ALLIED AND ASSOCIATED POWERS AND GERMANY,

The protocol annexed thereto, the Agreement respecting the military occupation of the territories of the Rhine,

AND THE TREATY BETWEEN FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN RESPECTING

Assistance to France in the event of unprovoked aggression by Germany.

Signed at Versailles,
June 28th, 1919.



In the end, France, England, Belgium, Italy and the Union of South Africa took mandates with 999-year leases over former German territories in Africa. Australia, New Zealand and Japan divided former German territories in the Pacific—Japan north of the equator; Australia and New Zealand to the south. To resolve an ongoing dispute between Australia and New Zealand over Nauru, England took over the mandate but divided profits from phosphate mining between the three nations, until Nauru achieved independence. All former mandates have since become independent.

TERRITORIAL AND POPULATION LOSSES

One of the most significant and crippling features of the treaty was the stripping of up to 13 per cent of Germany's territory in Europe. The land handed over to Denmark, France, Belgium, Lithuania, Poland and Czechoslovakia was home to approximately 10 per cent of Germany's population, and was rich in agricultural land and mineral deposits. All of these losses were damaging to Germany, but the most humiliating was the loss of Alsace-Lorraine to France. These territories had been won from France in the settlement at the end of the 1871 Franco-Prussian War. Germany was not only embarrassed by the loss of these states but was also strongly economically disadvantaged by the arrangement.

Germany also lost territory to the new Polish nation. In the final redrawing of boundaries, a corridor of land was transferred to Poland to give the new nation access to the sea. It could be argued this was not such a surprise, as it was one of the articles in Wilson's Fourteen Points, but the decision left East Prussia surrounded by Poland. More German territory was lost when the **Sudetenland** was incorporated into Czechoslovakia. The Sudetenland included a large number of Germans who actively protested in 1918 and 1919 that they did not wish to join Czechoslovakia. Germany was also forbidden to join with Austria.

Sudetenland

The German-speaking area of Czechoslovakia.

REPARATIONS

With hindsight, it is easy to say that the victors should have been less concerned with making Germany pay and should have concentrated on getting Europe going again. However after a war that had brought destruction on such a scale and shaken European society so deeply, how could political leaders speak of forgetting? In any case, public opinion would simply not allow them to do so. 'Make the Hun Pay,' said the British. 'Let Germany Pay First,' said the posters covering Parisian walls.¹¹

The Big Three leaders at the Paris Peace Conference agreed that Germany should lose territory, but could not agree about the extent of financial reparations. A smaller Germany and a poorer Germany would be less of a threat to its neighbours, but if Germany were losing a lot of land was it also fair to expect it to pay out huge sums in reparations? Striking a balance between the different expectations was not easy, especially as Wilson, Clémenceau and Lloyd George did not agree among themselves or, frequently, with their own colleagues. Putting a price tag on farms, factories, mines and ships sunk was easy, but what price could be put on a human life? What about women who were left widows after the war, or children who became orphans? Who should be punished? Should any Germans be prosecuted as war criminals? Was it fair for a new German government to pay the price for the kaiser's decisions when the kaiser had fled Germany? These were all issues that the Paris Peace Conference attempted to address.

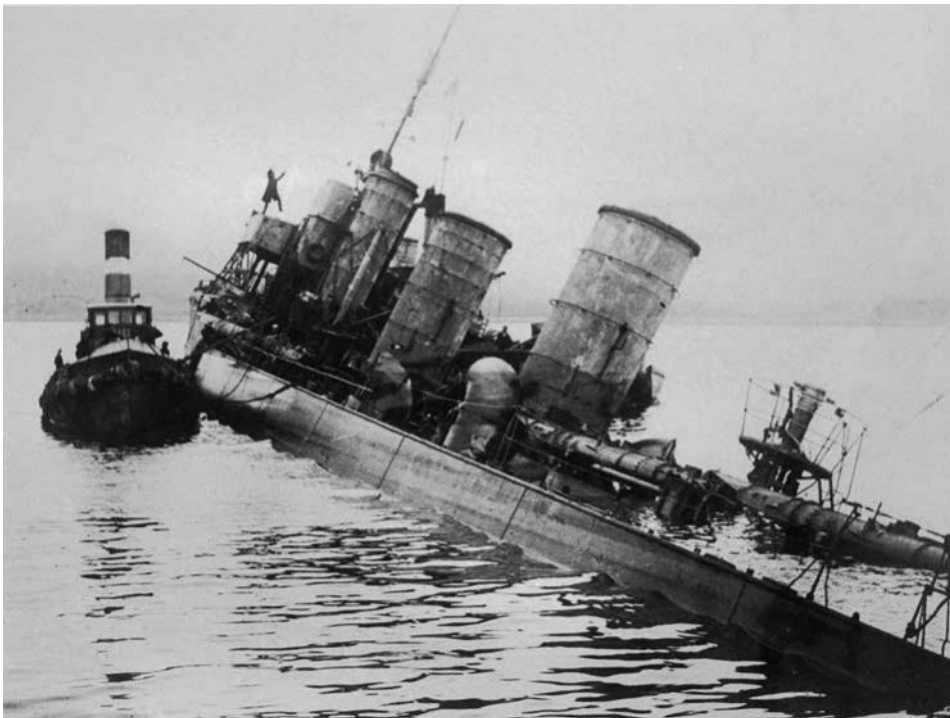
Did you know? The Paris Peace Conference also set up the International Labour Organization to establish international working conditions. German representatives were invited and the organisation continues today, meeting annually in Geneva.



Clémenceau was determined to extract large financial payments from Germany. He ultimately won his case over Lloyd George and Wilson, who argued that Germany should not be crippled by reparations. The figure for reparations was set at £6.6 billion, an amount that was daunting to a German population now struggling with poverty and a bankrupt economy.

LIMITING GERMANY'S MILITARY POWER

The **arms race**—especially between Britain and Germany—had been a major factor in the lead-up to World War I. It was clear to those at the Paris Peace Conference that disarmament (or a limitation of arms) was essential if future wars were to be prevented. Ultimately, the victorious leaders agreed that Germany's armed forces would be capped at an army of 100,000 men, which was large enough to prevent any revolutions. **Conscription** was forbidden, as was the development and manufacture of **armaments**. Most humiliating of all was that the Rhineland, along the border between Germany and France, was to be a **demilitarised** zone where no German troops were permitted.



Germany was forbidden to have an air force and tanks, or to manufacture heavy guns, and its navy was limited to six battleships and no submarines. At the time of the armistice, the German fleet of seventy-four ships had been forced to sail to Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands, off the west coast of Scotland. They were to remain there, under Allied control, until a decision was made about their future. In June 1919, the German Naval Command **scuttled** the fleet because they couldn't stand the idea of handing their battleships over to the Allies. The scuttling of the ships did not help Germany's cause, and was actually seen by Clémenceau as an act of treachery. However, the British navy secretly saw it as a blessing as they had no interest in converting the German ships.

Did you know? The London Schedule of Payments set the final amount of reparations to be paid by Germany on 5 May 1921.

arms race

When nations increase their spending on military resources to compete with a rival or rivals. In response, the rivals increase their own spending, and a military escalation begins.

conscription

Compulsory service in the armed forces for the citizens of a particular nation.

armaments

Military weapons and equipment.

demilitarised

Removing soldiers, equipment and military bases from a designated area.

Source 2.08 Scuttling the German fleet at Scapa Flow.

scuttled

Deliberately sinking one's own ship, usually to prevent it from falling into enemy hands.

WAR GUILT

The Treaty of Versailles contained 400 clauses. Article 231, known as the 'war guilt' clause, was the most controversial. It required the German delegates to agree that Germany was principally responsible for beginning World War I.

Article 231 was added in order to get the French and Belgians to reduce the sum of money that Germany would have to pay to compensate for war damage. The article was seen as a concession to the Germans by the negotiators, but it was bitterly resented by virtually all Germans, who did not believe they were responsible for the outbreak of the war. Article 231 was a constant thorn in the side of the **Weimar Republic**, whose leaders tried to meet the requirements of the Treaty of Versailles as well as build a new democratic nation.

Weimar Republic

The name given to the republican government that ruled in Germany from 1919 to 1933. It was named after the city where it first sat in 1919.

Source 2.09

(left) Cartoon published in the British magazine *Punch* on 19 February 1919. The caption reads as follows: German Criminal to Allied Police: 'Here, I say, stop! You're hurting me!' Aside: 'If I whine enough I may be able to wriggle out of this yet.'

Source 2.10

(right) 'And this is no scrap of paper.' A French military officer shows a German military officer the terms the 'German people must pay for all damage to civilians on land or sea or from the air'. *New York Herald*, 7 November 1918.



HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES


Using Sources 2.09 and 2.10 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 2.21 Identify the three nations represented in Source 2.09.
- 2.22 Explain why you think US police are not shown in Source 2.09.
- 2.23 Explain why the Germans in both sources are presented unfavourably.
- 2.24 Evaluate each cartoonists' attitude on the forthcoming treaty with Germany.
- 2.25 Evaluate the extent to which the Treaty of Versailles satisfied the demands of each of the Allied Powers involved in its writing. Use evidence to support your response.
- 2.26 Evaluate the extent to which Sources 2.09 and 2.10 capture the values of ordinary people at the time. Use evidence to support your response.



Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles


The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.

 **Source 2.11** *Treaty of Peace with Germany (Treaty of Versailles)*, 1919.

GERMAN REACTIONS TO ARTICLE 231


Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau, Leader of the German delegation, speaking to the Allies

The deeper we penetrated into the spirit of this Treaty, the more we became convinced of its impracticability. The demands raised go beyond the power of the German Nation ... We know the impact of the hate we are encountering here, and we have heard the passionate demand of the victors, who require us, the defeated, to pay the bill and plan to punish us as the guilty party. We are asked to confess ourselves the sole culprits; in my view, such a confession would be a lie ... We emphatically deny that the people of Germany, who were convinced that they were waging a war of defence, should be burdened with the sole guilt of that war.

 **Source 2.12** Spoken by Count Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau on 7 May 1919, in response to Article 231. Cited on *Learning Curve: The Great War*, <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/greatwar/transcript/g5cs1s3t.htm>

Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, 1923

It should scarcely seem questionable to anyone that the restoration of the frontiers of 1914 could be achieved only by blood. Only childish and naive minds can lull themselves in the idea that they can bring about a correction of Versailles by wheedling and begging ... No nation can remove this hand from its throat except by the sword. Only the assembled and concentrated might of a national passion rearing up in its strength can defy the international enslavement of peoples.

 **Source 2.13** Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 650–651.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

2.27 Why did Clémenceau, Wilson and Lloyd George have such different attitudes at the Paris Peace Conference?

2.28 Why did the victors not get exactly what they wanted from the Paris Peace Conference?

2.29 In your opinion, what was the greatest oversight of the Paris Peace Treaty? Explain your answer.

CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

2.30 Present the information you've read under the heading 'The Settlement with Germany' (pp. 34–39) in a mind map. Plan out your mind map first, and select only the most important information to include.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Sources 2.12 and 2.13 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

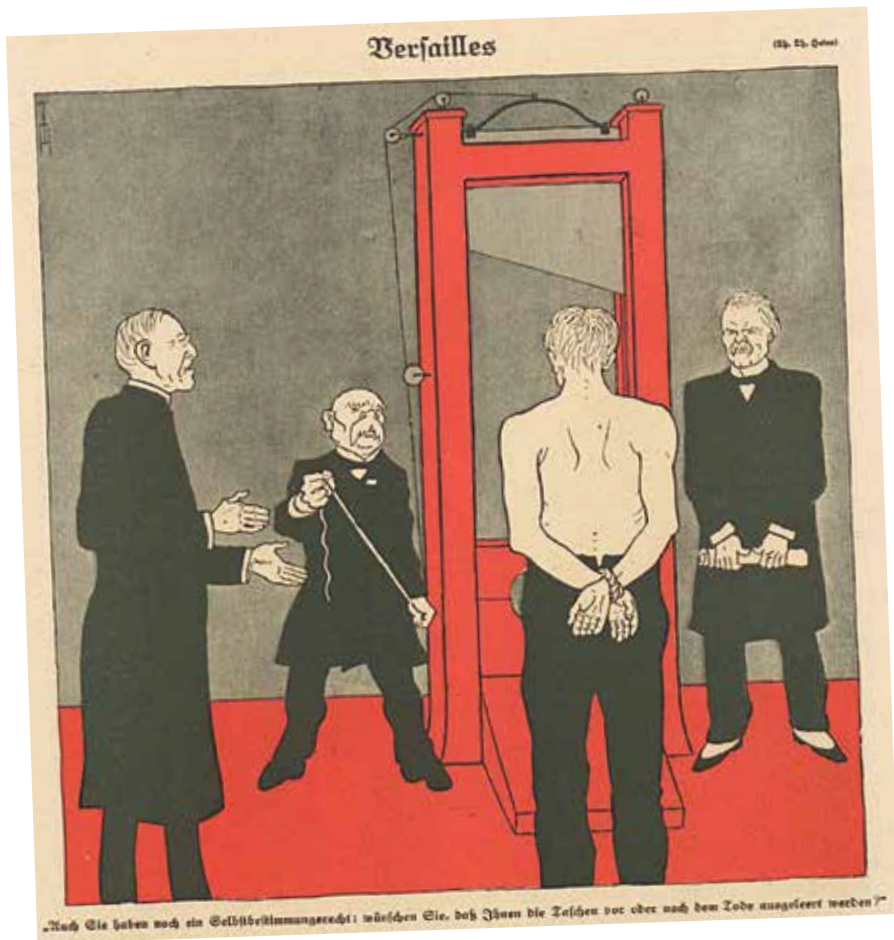
2.31 Identify Brockdorff-Rantzau's main criticism of Article 231.

2.32 Outline Adolf Hitler's criticism of the Treaty of Versailles, and explain the consequences of his criticism for Germany.

2.33 Explain why these views were commonly held in Germany in the aftermath of World War I.

2.34 Describe the key differences between Brockdorff-Rantzau's and Hitler's responses to the terms of the Treaty.





← **Source 2.14** 'The Terms of the Treaty of Versailles are Equivalent to Sending Germany to the Guillotine.' Cartoon by Thomas Theodor Heine, published in the German satirical magazine *Simplicissimus*, 3 June 1919.

HISTORICAL SOURCES —PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 2.14 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

2.35 Identify the Big Three, and suggest why France is controlling the guillotine.

2.36 Explain why the German figure is half-naked and has his hands tied.

2.37 Explain how and why the cartoonist has depicted Wilson as a more reasonable figure.

2.38 Explain what the intended effect of the cartoon on the German public might have been.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

At the heart of the Treaty of Versailles was the establishment of the League of Nations. This was to be a worldwide organisation whose main purpose would be to avert future wars and provide a forum for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Germany had to agree to the establishment of the league as part of its acceptance of the Treaty of Versailles. However, Germany was not allowed to join the league.

On 25 January 1919, the Paris Peace Conference formally approved the establishment of a commission on the League of Nations. Wilson's vision was ambitious: to establish an international commitment to **disarmament** and an avenue for nations to resolve future conflicts. The commission was to comprise representatives from the US, France, Great Britain, Italy and Japan, which would get two members each. After some objections from smaller nations, five more members were accepted from other nations. Wilson hoped that, in future, wars could be prevented by nations approaching the League of Nations to resolve conflicts. 'If a state refused to accept a league decision, then the next step would be **sanctions**, economic or even military.'¹² Despite his enormous workload, Wilson insisted on chairing the commission himself.

A fortnight later, the first draft of the **Covenant** of the League of Nations was presented to the Paris Peace Conference. France wanted the league to have 'more teeth' and to have its own military force. This proved to be the largest stumbling block, not from representatives at the Paris Peace Conference but from the US government headed by Wilson. Wilson met strong opposition from the US Congress. Staunch Republican

disarmament

The deliberate decision of a nation to reduce its armed forces to promote peace.

sanction

A penalty or punishment.

Covenant

An agreement.



Senator Henry Cabot Lodge expressed the views of many Americans when he said, ‘I am as moved by tributes to eternal peace as the next man, but are you ready to put soldiers and your sailors at the disposition of other Nations?’ Despite enormous efforts by Wilson, who was loved more by Europeans than Americans, it was the US doubters who ultimately won the battle—and the US did not join the League of Nations.

On 28 April 1919, a *plenary session* of the Paris Peace Conference approved the Covenant of the League of Nations. Under the Covenant, member states would have to protect minorities, improve working and health conditions, and to oversee mandates—the management of colonies of the defeated powers. The Covenant of the League of Nations was also included as part of all other treaties drafted with defeated powers. Historian Margaret MacMillan has argued that to get this ‘toy’ aboard, Wilson was forced to make compromises he himself would not have liked, such as awarding the German-speaking Tyrol to Italy, or placing millions of Germans under Czechoslovak or Polish rule, but ‘[in] time Wilson believed the League would grow and change over the years. In time it would embrace the enemy nations [as it did: Germany joined in 1926] and help them to stay on the paths to peace and democracy.’¹³

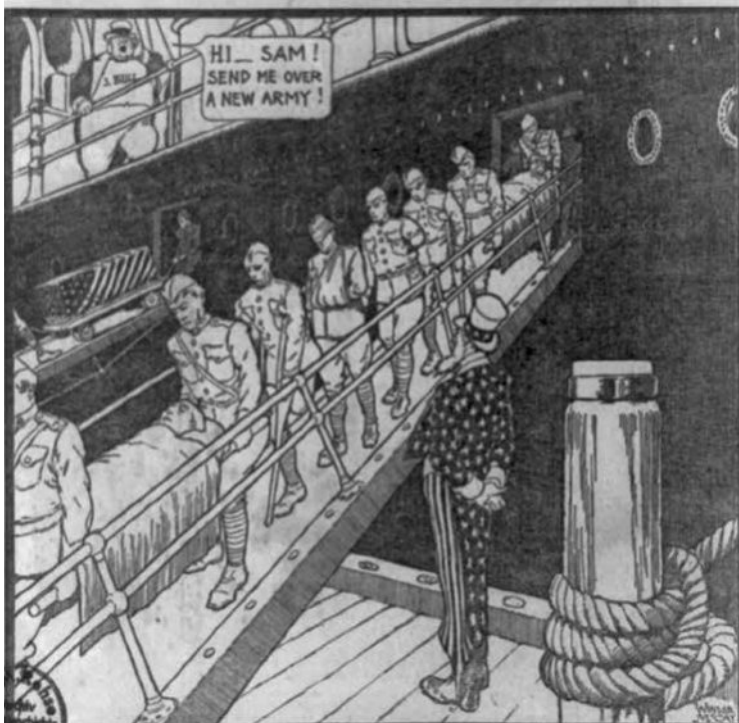
The Japanese wanted a Racial Equality Bill, but this was passively rejected by Billy Hughes, Australia’s prime minister, who argued that nations should control their own affairs with immigration. Wilson, in an attempt to appease Hughes—who was the most argumentative representative at the conference—argued that the Racial Equality Bill could only be approved if it were supported unanimously. Despite a vote of 11–6, the Racial Equality Bill proposed by Japan was rejected. The political handling of this alone put the relationship between Japan and Australia at risk.

Did you know? Under the terms of the US Constitution, the president must seek the consent of the Senate to ratify a treaty with a two-thirds majority vote. On 19 November 1919, in a 38–53 vote, the US Senate failed to ratify the Treaty of Versailles. The US signed a separate peace treaty with Germany in Berlin on 25 August 1921.

plenary session

A meeting attended by all the members or participants.

IF WE WERE IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 2.39** What was the purpose of the League of Nations?
- 2.40** Why didn't the US join the League of Nations?
- 2.41** When was the Covenant of the League of Nations signed? What were the responsibilities to which member states were bound?

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 2.15 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 2.42** Identify the figures in the cartoon.
- 2.43** Explain the criticism the cartoon is making of the League of Nations.

Source 2.15 ‘If We Were in the League of Nations.’ Uncle Sam (US) watching wounded, crippled and dead soldiers come off a ship. John Bull (UK) on the ship says, ‘Hi Sam! Send me over a new army!’



SELF-DETERMINATION

US SECRETARY OF STATE ROBERT LANSING: 'When the President talks of self-determination, what does he have in mind?'¹⁴

Self-determination was clearly one of the most inspiring and contentious issues to be discussed. Seven of Wilson's Fourteen Points related to the idea that nations should be able to rule themselves and determine their own futures. These items addressed the self-determination of Italians (Point 9), Austrians (Point 10), Hungarians (Point 10), The Balkan states (Point 11), the Turkish (Point 12) and the Poles (Point 13). But what of the Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Czechs, Slovaks, Finns, Armenians, Greeks, Palestinians and Egyptians? The list grew larger every day at the Paris Peace Conference.

There was general agreement that one of the reasons for the outbreak of World War I was that smaller nations, such as Serbia, wanted self-determination from larger empires. Indeed, the Allied Powers of France, Great Britain and Russia had been able to rally support from their peoples by declaring that this was a 'just' war that was to give the oppressed nationalists what was rightfully theirs.¹⁵ However, Wilson may not have been prepared for the consequences of this idea. According to academic Guntram Herb, 'Russia [which was not invited to Paris] also advocated national self-determination; however it wanted the principle applied universally, that is, not only in eastern Europe, but also in the rest of the world.'¹⁶

The ideal of self-determination raised issues from nations or aspiring nations all over the world. However, the more the conference delved into self-determination, the more problems it faced. Two attempts to be heard at the conference highlighted the complications—the questions of self-determination for the Irish nationalists and the Vietnamese. Wilson insisted that the issue of Irish nationalism was purely a domestic matter for the British, while Ho Chi Minh's petition asking for Vietnamese independence from France 'never even received an answer'.¹⁷

It was clear that Wilson's proposal about national self-determination had created as many problems as it solved. As if he understood that he had opened a can of worms, Wilson later told Congress, 'When I gave utterance to the words that all nations had a right to self-determination, I said them without the knowledge that nationalities existed which are coming to us day after day'.¹⁸ The issue of self-determination proved to be the greatest cause of contention at the conference, and later the League of Nations. For the Estonians, Latvians, Armenians, Lithuanians, Kurds, Ukrainians and numerous other nationalities, the Paris Peace Conference was a disappointment. It promised so much but, in their eyes, delivered so little.

Did you know? During World War I, prisoners of war from Ireland were approached by the Germans and presented with the option of starting a brigade to fight the British. The Germans proposed landing the prisoners of war on Irish soil and supporting them with arms. The hope was to create a third front and get the upper hand on the British.

Source 2.16 Mapmakers waiting on a final decision from the Paris Peace Conference before redrawing the map of Europe.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 2.44 Define 'national self-determination'.
- 2.45 List the countries mentioned in this section that wanted to achieve national self-determination.
- 2.46 Were these countries satisfied by the outcomes of the Paris Peace Conference? Explain your answer.
- 2.47 Explain why the issue of national self-determination was more complicated than Wilson had assumed.



THE HALL OF MIRRORS

GEORGES CLÉMENTEAU: 'In the end, it is what it is.'

On 4 May 1919, the Treaty of Versailles was sent to the printers and the German representatives were summoned to Paris. When the 180-strong German delegation arrived, they were surprised at their treatment. A heavy military escort collected them from the train station and took them to their hotel, where their luggage was unceremoniously dumped in the courtyard and they were told to carry it to their rooms themselves. The delegation led by Count Brockdorff-Rantzau arrived in good faith, believing that Wilson and his Fourteen Points would present them with a mild peace treaty. They even believed that Germany, along with the US, France and England, would work together to block **Bolshevism** in the east.

The symbolism of signing the treaty in the Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles was deliberate. The French had been forced to sign the 1871 Treaty of Versailles in this location, and the choice of venue reinforced the German belief that France was after revenge. Indeed, even Lloyd George snapped an ivory paper knife in two after hearing Clémenteau's opening speech in which he stated, 'You asked us for peace. We are disposed to grant it to you.' Brockdorff-Rantzau had prepared two speeches and was unsure which to deliver. He delivered his address sitting down, and then the delegation retired to their hotel to contemplate the signing of the treaty. The initial German response was, as Wilson later stated, 'the most **tactless** speech I have ever heard'.

Brockdorff-Rantzau's speech in response to the Treaty of Versailles, 7 May 1919

We are deeply impressed with the lofty character of the task which has brought us together with you, namely, to give the world a speedy and enduring peace. We cherish no illusions as to the extent of our defeat—the degree of our impotence. We know that the might of German arms is broken. We know the force of the hatred which confronts us here, and we have heard the passionate demand that the victors should both make us pay as vanquished and punish us as guilty.

We are required to admit that we alone are war-guilty ... but we emphatically combat the idea that Germany, whose people were convinced that they were waging a defensive war, should alone be laden with the guilt. ... During the last fifty years the imperialism of all European States has chronically poisoned the international situation. The policy of retaliation and that of expansion as well as disregard of the rights of peoples to self-determination, contributed to the disease of Europe, which reached its crisis in the world war. ...

Gentlemen, the lofty conception that the most terrible calamity in the history of the world should bring about the greatest advance in human progress has been formulated and will be realized. If the goal is to be attained, if the slain in this war are not to have died in vain, then the portals of the League of Nations must be thrown open to all peoples of good will.


Brockdorff-Rantzau and the German delegation were shocked at the terms of the treaty. The shock was echoed in Germany. Why should Germany lose 13 per cent of its territory and 10 per cent of its population? After all, had Germany lost the war? Why should Germany alone be made to disarm? Why—and this question became the focus of German hatred of the treaty—should Germany be the only country to take responsibility for the Great War? Most Germans still viewed the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 as a necessary defence against the threat of 'barbaric' Slavs to the east. From the German perspective, the treaty was a dictated peace. If they refused to sign, the naval blockade would continue and Germans would die of starvation or, worse, the war would start again, this time with Germany in a far weaker position.

Bolshevism

Revolutionary political doctrine of Russia's Bolshevik Party, which focused on overthrowing capitalism.

tactless

Lacking sensitivity in dealing with others; often offensive.

 **Source 2.17** *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, volume III, At Versailles, Protocol No. 1, Plenary Session of May 7, 1919, Document 11, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1919Parisv03/d11>*

EXTENSION

2.48 Write a paragraph arguing whether you agree or disagree with Wilson that Brockdorff-Rantzau's speech was tactless.





Source 2.18 *The signing of the Treaty of Peace at Versailles, June 28th, 1919, by J. Finnemore.*

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 2.49** How was the German delegation treated when they arrived at Paris to sign the treaty?
- 2.50** Why did the French hold the signing ceremony in the Hall of Mirrors?
- 2.51** What was the German reaction to the terms of the treaty?
- 2.52** Why did Germany sign the treaty in spite of this?
- 2.53** Why did French General Foch choose 28 June 1919 to inspect the fortifications on the border with Germany? What point do you think he was trying to make?

The scuttling of seventy-four German navy ships, days before Germany was to sign the treaty or face a military invasion, did not assist Germany's rejection of the treaty. Brockdorff-Rantzau told the German assembly that he believed the Allies were bluffing, but his untimely resignation on 20 June 1919, just three days before the deadline, complicated matters. Following rigorous debate, the German National Assembly voted in favour of signing with the exception of the 'war guilt' clause.

The day of the signing was 28 June 1919; ironically, this was the anniversary of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo in 1914. The two German delegates, Foreign Minister Hermann Müller and Minister for the Colonies Johannes Bell, were unknown to most of the other delegates. They signed along with twenty-one other countries in the Hall of Mirrors. The world's media and film crews were present to witness the occasion. At the end of 'six months that changed the world', the absences often spoke louder than the signatories. While France signed the treaty, General Foch of France chose to inspect arrangements in the Rhineland. He declared on that day, 'Wilhelm II lost the war ... Clémenceau lost the peace'.¹⁹ He also described the Treaty of Versailles as 'no more than a twenty year truce'. Sadly, Foch's prediction was true, almost to the date. In addition, the Chinese seats in the Hall of Mirrors were empty because China refused to sign the treaty in protest against the decision to award Shantung to Japan.

Significant individual

WOODROW WILSON, 1856–1924

Woodrow Wilson served as US president from 1913 to 1921. While he campaigned in 1916 on a platform of keeping America out of World War I, he asked Congress for a declaration of war against Imperial Germany in April 1917. In January 1918, Wilson outlined his Fourteen Points for finding a just peace, and it was on those terms that Germany sought an armistice in November. Expecting to foster a 'peace without victors', Wilson was bitterly disappointed with the Treaty of Versailles and the US Senate's refusal to ratify its terms. This left the US out of Wilson's ultimate goal, the League of Nations.

He said: 'What is at stake now is the peace of the world. What we are striving for is a new international order based upon broad and universal principles of right and justice.'

Said about: 'He led the nation through the terrific struggle of the world war with a lofty idealism which never failed him.' (*Calvin Coolidge, US president*)



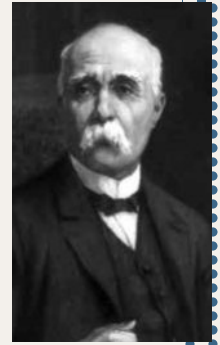
Significant individual →

GEORGES CLÉMENTEAU, 1841–1929

Georges Clémenceau was a powerful force in French and international politics. He served as prime minister of France from 1906 to 1909 and again from 1917 to 1920. Born in 1841, Clémenceau had seen France invaded twice by Germany (in 1871 and again in 1914). He was determined to never let this happen again. During the negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference, he demanded a treaty with harsh terms that would weaken Germany severely. Clémenceau used reason and emotion to get his way over Wilson and Lloyd George, but the final terms of Versailles were considered too lenient by France.

He said: 'America is far away and protected by the ocean. England could not be reached by Napoleon himself. You are sheltered, both of you; we are not.'

Said about: 'The truth is that Clémenceau embodied and expressed France. As much as any single human being, miraculously magnified, can ever be a nation, he was France.'
(Winston Churchill, British prime minister)



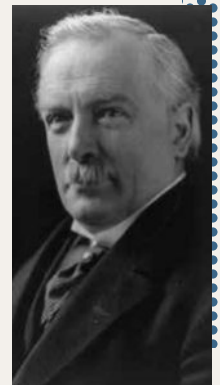
Significant individual →

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE, 1863–1945

Born in Wales, David Lloyd George served as British prime minister from 1916 to 1922. At the Paris Peace Conference, Lloyd George was the pragmatist that balanced out the idealism of Wilson and the desire for revenge demanded by Clémenceau. Under some pressure from the British voting public, he wanted to 'make Germany pay' and protect the British Empire from the German navy. However, Lloyd George did not want to punish Germany to the point that another war would break out. He was also keen to resume trade links with Germany, which would ensure jobs and prosperity for the British people.

He said: 'We want a peace that will be just, but not vindictive. We want a stern peace because the occasion demands it, but the severity must be designed, not for vengeance, but for justice.'

Said about: 'He was an unrivalled negotiator: on top of his brief, full of bounce, sure of himself, forceful, engaging, compelling.' (Antony Lentin, historian)



REDRAWING MAPS

The maps of Europe and the Middle East were drawn and redrawn repeatedly at the conference. New nations emerged from the empires of the nineteenth century. Older nations, including Poland and Czechoslovakia, were restored to their ancient borders. Yet the pleas of neighbouring peoples—Lithuanians, Latvians, Ukrainians and Estonians—for self-determination were ignored. Romania had entered the war to gain territory, but had withdrawn from the war and signed the Treaty of Bucharest with Germany in May 1918. Romania subsequently re-entered the war on the Allied side, declaring war on Germany on 10 November, the day before Armistice Day. Many historians argue that this was to bolster their claims for territory in the postwar treaties. Clémenceau considered these actions treacherous. However, geography proved to be Romania's greatest attribute. The Allies were fearful of Bolshevik revolution spreading, and were prepared to strengthen Romania by transferring territory from Hungary. The Balkans were temporarily winners by gaining territory for Yugoslavia (a name that emerged from 'Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes'), but the ethnic minorities and the drawing of borders created problems that would last for the rest of the century.



The Middle East was more complicated. A Jewish homeland was carved out of Palestine. This was based on the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which offered British support for a Jewish homeland. The decision sent a signal to the people of the Middle East that showed inconsistent promises to Arabs and Jews. This has created ongoing hostilities to this day, particularly in Syria and Iraq. Arabia was created as an Arab state but, despite these attempts, the situation in the Middle East remained unstable and did not build on the Fourteen Points. Secret agreements by the British and French seemed to have greater power than self-determination. Equally, China was annoyed that Japan was granted Shantung; although, this was eventually given back to China in 1922. Britain and France, despite making compromises, emerged with considerable land and a larger share of reparations.

Source 2.19 Territorial changes after World War I.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 2.54 Using Source 2.19, list the land lost by Germany.
- 2.55 Describe the changes made to the Austro-Hungarian Empire as a result of the treaty.
- 2.56 What territorial changes were made in the Balkans as a result of the treaties?
- 2.57 What gains did France and Britain make at the expense of the Ottoman Empire?



AFTER THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

The Paris Peace Conference continued until January 1920 when foreign ministers and diplomats took over, but it was like 'a theatrical production whose stars are gone'.²⁰ For Orlando, Clémenceau, George and Wilson, their days as global leaders were numbered. Orlando was replaced by Benito Mussolini. Clémenceau had expected France would accept him as France's prime minister until he chose to resign; however, the French public believed that Germany was let off lightly and voted against Clémenceau. Lloyd George was the leader of the Liberal Party, but lost control of the **coalition** and resigned as prime minister in 1922. Woodrow Wilson returned to the US and found a hostile Senate that opposed both the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations. Wilson toured the nation to rally support. Believing that the US was the sole power to bring the idealism of internationalism to fruition, he pushed himself to exhaustion and eventually suffered a stroke, finishing his presidency as a recluse. The US—despite holding a permanent membership of the League Council under the Covenant of the League of Nations—never ratified the Treaty of Versailles or joined the League of Nations. Indeed, prominent congressmen and senators wanted the US to engage in a period of **isolationism**, far from European concerns. It is one of the sad tales of the postwar years that Wilson was unable to convince his own nation that the League of Nations was a step towards a better future.

Did you know? Germany made its final payment of £59 million on 3 October 2010. Repayments were interrupted when Hitler was in power. However, a clause in the agreement said that Germany would have to pay interest on the bill if Germany were ever to reunite, which it did in 1990.

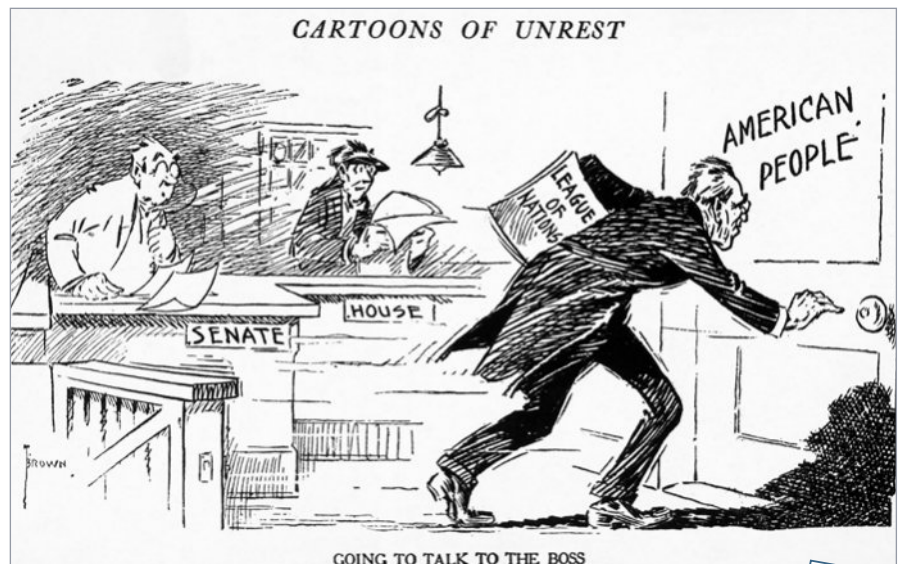
coalition

When several political parties unite to form government.

isolationism

The policy of isolating one's nation from involvement with other countries by not becoming involved in politics, joining alliances or making economic commitments.

Source 2.20 'Going to Talk to the Boss', from the *Chicago News*, 1919.



HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 2.20 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 2.58** Identify the three figures in this cartoon.
- 2.59** Identify 'the boss' referred to in the caption.
- 2.60** Explain what point the cartoonist is making about the role of the US Constitution.
- 2.61** Explain whether you think the cartoonist agrees with Wilson's decisions.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AT WORK

If the issues of the Paris Peace Conference convince us of anything, it is that **internationalism** takes time to both nurture and to be effective. The League of Nations met first in Paris and then in London before Geneva in Switzerland was chosen as its permanent home because of its neutrality in World War I. In the end, sixty-three countries became members of the League of Nations. It lasted from 1919 until 1946, when it was replaced by the United Nations. Ultimately, the Paris Peace Conference

internationalism

The idea that nation-states can put aside self-interest for the greater good of all the people on the planet.





↑ Palais Wilson, the original League of Nations building in Geneva, Switzerland.



↑ Calvin Coolidge, US President Herbert Hoover and Frank Kellogg in the White House with representatives of the governments that ratified the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

repatriation

The process of returning people to their place of origin. This includes the process of returning refugees or military personnel to their place of origin.

rearmament

The process of arming a nation with new or better weapons.

EXTENSION—COMPARE AND CONTRAST

2.62 Compare and contrast the League of Nations with the United Nations. You could draw up in a table with two columns to examine the:

- date formed
- purpose
- member states at its peak
- structure
- peacekeeping interventions
- non-military activities.

instituted an international order that gave the new international organisation no explicit political or military power. As the League could not intervene in matters of national sovereignty, essentially the only easily identifiable prewar internationalist element instituted in the League was a new international court: the Permanent Court of International Justice.²¹

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

At first, the League of Nations gained respect and authority, with forty-two member nations by the end of 1919. This authority was reinforced by a number of successful interventions during the 1920s. For example, a dispute between Sweden and Finland over the Åland Islands was successfully resolved in favour of Finland in 1921. The League of Nations was also responsible for diffusing tensions between Greece and Bulgaria in 1925. Moreover, the Treaty of Locarno, signed in 1925, fixed the issue of Germany's Western border under the Treaty of Versailles and put an end to the demilitarised area of the Rhineland.

The 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact is also observed by some historians as a successful outcome achieved by the League of Nations. The pact, which was signed by sixty-four nations—including Germany, the US and the Soviet Union—outlawed war as an instrument of national policy. However, other historians argue that the Kellogg-Briand Pact cannot be attributed to the League of Nations, as it was largely engineered by the US.

In addition to its successes in addressing international disputes, the League of Nations played an important role in humanitarian concerns. 'The League oversaw the **repatriation** of nearly half a million prisoners of war from twenty-six countries and initiated the process of establishing general codes for railways, ports and waterways.'²² The League also sent doctors from the League of Nations Health Organization, and spent more than £10 million on building homes and farms. Money was used to invest in seeds, and by 1926 had created employment for more than 600,000 people in Turkey. Campaigns against typhus were initiated by the League, and the banning of asphyxiating poisonous gases and other bacterial weapons, commonly known as the Geneva Protocol (1925), was ratified by sixty-five nations. These achievements gave the League of Nations credibility.

CHALLENGES FACING THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

However, the League of Nations also struggled because it had few powers of enforcement. If a country wanted to ignore a direction from the League, there was little the League could do. This was the case in 1931 when Japan annexed Manchuria. The League reprimanded Japan but there was little else that could be done because Japan withdrew from the League. Likewise, Nazi Germany opted out of the League in 1933 over a disagreement about **rearmament**. In 1935, when Italy invaded Abyssinia (Ethiopia), Britain appealed to the League to impose sanctions on Italy. Limited sanctions were applied, but they did not stop Mussolini, as the sanctions did not include petrol—which Italy needed to power both its economy and the army in Ethiopia. These setbacks severely undermined the status and credibility of the League of Nations. In the end, as nation after nation withdrew from the League, it was left as nothing more than a society. Hitler referred to the League as a congregation of dead people.



CHAPTER 2 REVIEW

The statement, 'Germany lost the War but Clémenceau lost the peace', has become a common criticism of the Treaty of Versailles. If the 'war guilt' clause had been omitted, Germany might have accepted the full terms of the Treaty of Versailles. There was no doubt that Germany was prepared to pay reparations—it demanded the same from treaties it signed with Russia and Romania—but Article 231 enraged the nation and gave it the ability to criticise the 400 other articles.

The League of Nations proved to be ineffective in preventing another major war. As a result of redrawn national boundaries in Europe and the Middle East, conflicts and wars have continued to this day. The absence of the US played a major part in the League's eventual downfall; undoubtedly Wilson died a disheartened man, aware that his vision of a better future did not come to fruition.

Only twenty years later the world was again at war. Many historians have argued that the seeds of World War II were planted at Versailles. The severity with which Germany and the other defeated powers were treated created financial hardship and fostered humiliation and resentment. It was these emotions that dictators such as Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini were able to tap into as they developed their right-wing governments during the 1930s.

SUMMARY

- President Wilson announced his Fourteen Points as a plan for peace in the world.
- Fighting stopped on the Western Front on 11 November 1918 with the signing of the armistice.
- Great Britain, France and the US found it difficult to draft terms of a peace treaty that were acceptable to all three.
- The Germans found the terms of the treaty, especially the 'war guilt clause', harsh and humiliating.
- The League of Nations was a key part of the Treaty of Versailles but the US did not join.
- The League had some initial successes but it failed to deter aggressive acts by Italy, Japan and, later, Germany.

REVIEW

2.63 Create a table that divides Wilson's Fourteen Points into short-term and long-term goals.

2.64 Create a table that summarises the positions, desires and outcomes of Wilson, Clémenceau and Lloyd George at the Paris Peace Conference.

2.65 Create a table and include all the conflicts in which the League of Nations was involved that are listed in the chapter. Have a column labelled 'Success' and another 'Failure'. Put a tick in the appropriate column for each event based on the League's actions. Be prepared to justify your decision.

EXTENDED RESPONSE

2.66 Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence and a clear conclusion.

- Describe the influence of Wilson, Clémenceau or Lloyd George on the outcome of the peace treaties.
- Explain how the ideals of the peacemakers were shattered by conflicting interpretations of reparations and self-determination.

ESSAY

2.67 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- 'The Paris Peace Conference created nations for some but ignored self-determination for others.' Discuss.
- 'The Treaty of Versailles created more problems than it solved.' Discuss.
- 'The League of Nations was totally ineffective.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?



IDEOLOGIES AND 'ISMS'

DEFINITION, OXFORD DICTIONARIES:

- 'ideol·ogy:** 1. *A system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy.*
- 1.1 *The set of beliefs characteristic of a social group or individual.*
 2. *The science of ideas; the study of their origin and nature.*
 - 2.1 *Visionary speculation, especially of an unrealistic or idealistic nature.'*

Source 1 Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini in the Italian weekly newspaper, *La Tribuna illustrata*, 1938.



KEY TERMS

proletariat

Working class, wage-earners; people without capital. Marx believed the proletariat were exploited by capitalists.

totalitarianism

A totalitarian society is one in which the government, a group or an individual has absolute control over the people and all aspects of their public and private lives.

KEY POINTS

- In the twentieth century, the European empires were being challenged by nationalism and demands for self-determination.
- Ideologies such as liberal democracy, socialism, communism and fascism challenged traditional beliefs about absolute monarchies.
- Liberal democracy, with its emphasis on freedoms and rights of citizens, had been established in much of western Europe, Great Britain and the US.
- Socialism and communism promised a fairer society that placed the interests of workers above those of capitalists and the ruling elite.
- The 1920s and 1930s saw the emergence of extreme right-wing parties identifying as fascist or national socialist.
- Dictators in fascist states promoted extreme nationalism and attempted to expand the territories under their control.



IDEOLOGIES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In the twentieth century, various ideologies developed about how society should be structured, governed and organised.

Most European countries entered the century with political systems that included some form of monarchy, and the social structure of those countries supported a monarchical system. Many countries also recognised the role of democracy as a positive form of government.

Before World War I, most Europeans—and many people in European colonies around the world—would have accepted that a monarchy should be included in any form of government; this might have varied from the *absolute monarchy* of Russia to the *constitutional monarchy* of Britain, which has a strong parliament. However, by 1918, old monarchies in Russia, Germany and Austria had ceased to exist, and democracies in the US, France and Britain had proved victorious. American capitalism helped the Allies win the war, as well as benefit greatly from that war.

As a result of World War I, some political ideologies became more popular. The war helped the collapse of the Romanov monarchy in Russia, which led first to the democratic Provisional Government in February 1917 and then to the communist government after October 1917. In Germany there was a very short period of revolutionary socialism, with Berlin briefly controlled by communists and 'revolutionary governments' proclaimed in some cities, but by early 1919 the moderate Weimar Republic was established.

The Russian Revolution established socialism in one country, and its promise of a fairer society with workers' interests at its heart had worldwide appeal. Both the communist uprising in Berlin in January 1919 and the short-lived communist government in Hungary in March 1919 took their lead from the Bolshevik Party. Socialist or communist parties were established in many Western countries, including the US; non-revolutionary socialist parties such as the British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats (SDs) were also strong following the war. Nevertheless, by the 1920s, Russia was the only communist republic.

The 1920s and 1930s saw the rise of extreme right-wing political parties: fascists in Italy and national socialists in Germany. The hopes of the 1919–1920 peace treaties rested on self-determination and democracy, but these concepts often proved unworkable in the newly established states, which had no tradition of government through freely elected parliaments, and often deep divisions between ethnic and social groups. By 1926, the newly recreated Poland had become a *dictatorship*, and in 1929 Yugoslavia (formed from six nationalities with long-held animosities), also became a dictatorship.

Spain had elected a republican government in 1931, but in 1936 General Francisco Franco led a *coup* against the government, which began the Spanish Civil War. From around the world, *International Brigades* were formed, often including socialists and communists, and those who believed in democracy. Seventy Australian men and women joined the International Brigades and fought in Spain between 1936 and 1939, when Franco's forces defeated the republicans and established a fascist dictatorship.

absolute monarchy

A form of government in which a monarch has absolute power that is not limited by laws or a constitution.

constitutional monarchy

A form of government that recognises a monarch (a king or queen), as the head of state. The powers of the monarch are limited by a form of constitution.

↓ The Russian Revolution, 1917.



Did you know? The terms 'left-wing' and 'right-wing' come from the first French government after the 1789 French Revolution, when the more progressive and radical deputies sat in the stalls to the Speaker's left while the more conservative deputies sat to the right.

dictatorship

A type of government where one individual holds all political power.

coup

The takeover, usually with force, of a legitimate government by a well-organised group, usually part of the military.

International Brigades

Military units made up of volunteers sent to fight in the Spanish Civil War on the republican side.



SOCIALISM

- Socialism is a political, economic and social theory that advocates that the community as a whole should own and control the means of production.
- Socialism is commonly associated with Marxism (see right). However, socialist ideas existed before Marx, and some socialists do not see themselves as followers of Marx.
- Socialist ideas developed out of the Industrial Revolution, which took place in Britain from 1750.

New Lanark village for cotton workers



Source 2

New Lanark, Scotland, was built by David Dale, a successful factory owner, to house his workers' families. Dale, and later his son-in-law Robert Owen, believed in practical socialism—better working conditions made for better work and, thus, improved profits.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

S.19 When built in 1795, this row of housing was considered unusual for cotton mill workers. What does this tell us about Robert Owen's attitude to his workers?

COMMUNISM (MARXISM)

- Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) wrote the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, in which they outlined a new political system called communism.
- Marx and Engels argued that human societies operated according to a set of mechanisms that could be scientifically studied and then applied. They stated that 'all history is the history of class struggle'—that history was a continuous series of struggles between those who had economic and political power and those who did not.
- 'Marxism' refers to the belief that society will pass from slavery, to feudalism, through capitalism and into socialism. Each stage is marked by the rising up of the exploited class to overthrow those who exploit them.
- The socialist stage is achieved when workers—Marx referred to them as the 'proletariat'—overthrow the capitalists who control the means of production; they then establish a 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. The final stage in the Marxist model is communism, a classless **utopia**.
- The terms Marxism, socialism, communism and Bolshevism are often used loosely and may refer to any revolution in the name of the workers.

utopia

A perfect society where everyone is happy and everyone's needs and desires are met.



↑ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, authors of the *Communist Manifesto*.

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

- Liberal democracy is a form of government that recognises the rights and freedoms of individuals. Representatives are elected by the people through free and fair elections.
- Liberal democracy is currently the dominant political ideology in the world, and can take different forms, such as a constitutional monarchy (Britain) or a constitutional republic (US, France).

CAPITALISM

- Capitalism is a system where 'capital', such as farms, factories and other means of production, is privately owned. This allows the owner to generate a profit.
- By 1914, the major European powers—Great Britain, France, Germany and Russia—as well as the US, were industrialising under capitalist systems.
- The US was already the world's most important economic power prior to 1914, but World War I strengthened its capitalist economy. The US was untouched by the war's devastation, as America entered the war late and benefited enormously through the sale of manufactured goods. Wall Street in New York City largely replaced London as the world's financial capital. Although there was dire poverty in America, many Americans lived in affluence that was not experienced in Europe until the 1960s. The US represented the triumph of capitalism.



NATIONALISM

- Nationalism is a sense of belonging to a distinct 'nation'—a patriotic feeling; a belief in one's country. Extreme nationalism might include feelings of superiority or actions such as taking land or people from another nation.
- After World War I, nationalism continued to cause tensions, and not only in Europe. The treaties signed after the war created new nations from old empires, but some nationalities still believed that their own identities had not been recognised.
- Yugoslavia was formed from six 'national groups'. This caused ongoing tension until, in 1929, it became a dictatorship.
- In Ireland, the political party Sinn Féin wanted an Ireland that was independent of Britain.
- There was a growing sense of Indian national identity that called for an end to British rule.
- In Asia, Japan was increasing its power and influence. This led to growing calls for European colonies in Asia to gain independence.
- In the Dutch East Indies, a nationalist party aimed to remove the Dutch colonists and establish Indonesia.
- In Indochina, nationalists wanted independence from France.

NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION

- National self-determination is linked to nationalism in the belief that people who identified as belonging to a 'national group' should be given the opportunity to determine their future.
- President Wilson's Fourteen Points included five points based on national self-determination. For example, Point 10 allowed for the people of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to be given the opportunity of self-government, while Point 13 called for the formation of an independent Poland.

ISOLATIONISM

- Isolationism is a policy of isolating one's nation from involvement with other countries. By not becoming involved in politics, joining alliances or making economic commitments, countries seek to serve their own interests.
- In 1823 Thomas Jefferson (US president 1801–1809) said, 'Our first and fundamental maxim should be never to entangle ourselves in the [problems] of Europe,' and in the 1920s and 1930s the US tried to do this. It refused to join the League of Nations, took measures to avoid external conflicts, restricted immigration and focused on improving its own economy.
- The threat of fascist regimes and the bombing of Pearl Harbor signalled the end of isolationism for the US. It joined World War II in December 1941.

INTERNATIONALISM

- Internationalism promotes friendly cooperation between nations, or even the absence of nations so that all people exist without destructive competition.
- The last of Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points was the establishment of a world parliament where nations could meet to settle disputes rather than go to war. At the 1919 Peace Conference this international 'parliament' was established, and called the League of Nations.
- The 'International' was the term applied to associations of socialists and communists that worked to promote socialist ideology. The First International was formed in 1864; the Third International was created after the Russian Revolution and operated from 1919 to 1943.
- The Bolsheviks, who led the October 1917 Russian Revolution, believed that they were the **vanguard** of a worldwide socialist revolution in which workers of the world would unite. True communism represented the 'withering away of the state', but the difficulties of establishing a socialist government in Russia forced the leaders to abandon their dreams of a worldwide revolution by the early 1920s.

vanguard

A group of people leading the way.



FASCISM

- The term ‘fascism’ is derived from the Latin word *fasces*, a bundle of rods representing authority. In Italy, Benito Mussolini founded the National Fascist Party in 1920, representing anti-socialist and anti-democratic viewpoints.
- The fascists quickly gained support, especially from people who feared and opposed communism, and often from those who feared instability.
- In 1924, Mussolini won a majority in general elections, and in 1925 he established a dictatorship: there was no freedom of the press, anti-fascist political parties were suppressed and free trade unions closed. Order was maintained through violence, such as through the secret police, **censorship** and even through the support of institutions such as the Roman Catholic Church.
- Despite the absence of political freedom, fascism appealed to some Europeans who admired its tight control of workers and industrial production.
- The term ‘fascism’ is applied to other extreme right-wing organisations and political systems, including Nazism in Germany and General Franco’s Falange Party in Spain.

NAZISM (NATIONAL SOCIALISM)

- The National Socialist German Workers’ Party (‘Nazi’ Party for short) was formed in 1920. It grew out of the German Workers’ Party founded by Anton Drexler in 1919.
- Its policies included the abolition of the Treaty of Versailles, the union of Germany and Austria, and the idea that only ‘true’ Germans be permitted to live in Germany and that Jews be excluded.
- It was a totalitarian regime, where all aspects of life were dictated by the Nazi Party. A strong, centralised government and large industry would be state-run and state-owned.
- Many of its policies could be considered ‘socialist’, such as generous aged pensions.

RACISM

- Racism refers to the theory that human abilities and attributes are based on race. This was not an unusual belief early in the twentieth century: many Britons believed that belonging to the ‘British race’ gave them superior opportunities and abilities. In some ways, ‘racism’ and ‘nationalism’ worked together. Many Europeans believed that their higher living standards and longer life expectancy owed something to their nationality or their race—or both.
- As leader of the Nazi Party, Adolf Hitler exploited and further intensified racial attitudes among many Germans. In his book *Mein Kampf*, Hitler argued that there is a struggle between different races, the main struggle being between the German **Aryan** race and the Jewish race. The Aryan race was a mythological creation based on selective interpretation of various writings. Distrust of Jewish Europeans was not uncommon in the early twentieth century, a suspicion that Hitler was able to exploit.
- Hitler intensified and promoted **anti-Semitism** beyond almost anything previously seen. Hitler’s race-based policies became more extreme until, in January 1939, he promised the ‘destruction of the Jews in Europe’. The ‘Final Solution to the Jewish Problem’ was applied from 1941, when specific and deliberate acts were applied to exterminate Jews.
- By 1945, six million Jewish Europeans had died at the hands of Nazism.

MILITARISM

- Militarism refers to great or excessive influence on the political process by the military. A militarist state relies on force to achieve its goals.
- Japan in the 1930s had a **militaristic** government. The Great Depression had seriously affected Japan’s economy, and the need for raw materials gave military extremists what they had been looking for—an excuse to invade China’s Manchuria region.

censorship

Banning or strictly limiting forms of media that do not conform to the government’s ideology.

Aryan

The misconceived notion that northern European and Scandinavian people are inherently superior to all others.

anti-Semitism

‘A certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews.’¹

militaristic

When military commanders exert excessive influence on government and policy, and when civilians, even elected representatives, have limited control.





Source 3 Cut-out doll promoting fascist views during the Spanish Civil War.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 3 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

S.20 What do the four dresses represent?

S.21 Both the republicans and the fascists produced children's books and toys that were connected with the war. Do you think such books and toys would have encouraged children to hold particular views? In your response, consider whether there are similar examples in children's books and toys today.



Source 4 A cartoon promoting the benefits of Italian fascism, 1923. The caption reads, 'The misdeeds of Bolshevism in 1919; the benefits of fascism in 1923'.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 4 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

S.22 Which Bolshevik 'misdeeds' are shown in the first panel?

S.23 What are the fascist 'benefits' shown in the second panel?

S.24 Who do the two men in the first panel represent? What flag are they waving?

S.25 How is the land and general environment contrasted in the panels?



Source 5 Communist and Nazi flags hang side by side in Berlin during the rent strikes of 1932. The slogan on the wall reads, 'Food first, then rent'.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 5 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

S.26 Does this photograph suggest animosity between people who supported Nazism and people who supported communism? Give evidence from the photograph to support your answer.

S.27 What circumstances led to these people identifying with either Nazi or communist ideology?

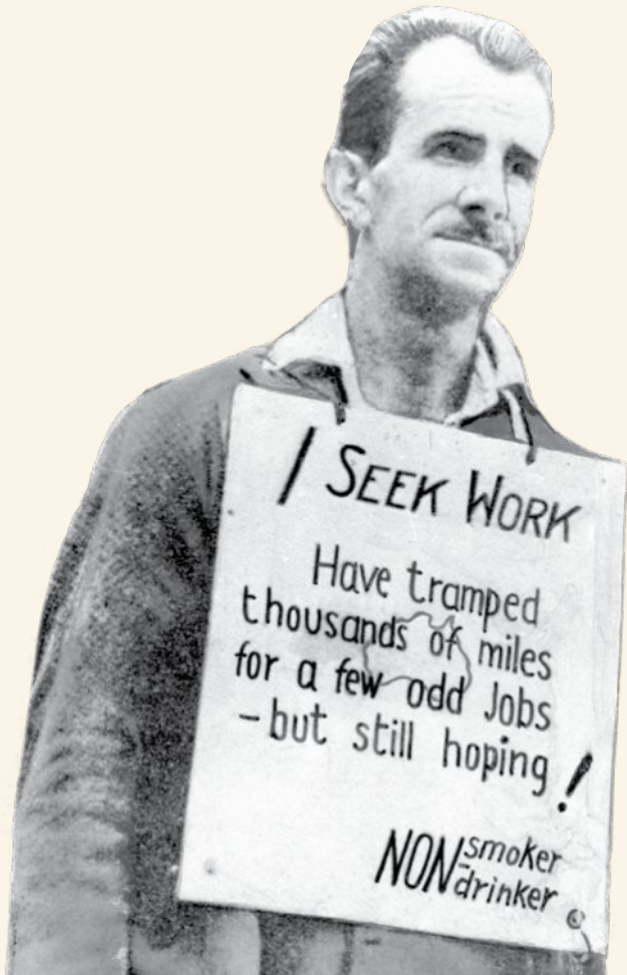
S.28 We often think of the ideologies of communism and Nazism as very different. Explain how this photograph suggests such an interpretation might be too simplistic.



THE GREAT DEPRESSION

THE ARGUS NEWSPAPER, 7 MARCH 1931:

'She told of her husband's daily heart-breaking search for work. Two years ago he lost a steady job ... Never since has he been able to get anything better than intermittent work ... In recent months he has walked the streets ... from early morn to setting sun in a fruitless search for a job of any kind or any duration.'



Source 1 A man searches for work in Sydney, 1932.

KEY POINTS

- A common view of the Great Depression is that it began with the collapse of US share prices in October 1929. In reality, business had been declining and unemployment increasing since 1927.
- The Wall Street collapse on Black Tuesday, 29 October 1929, saw a spectacular fall in share prices. People sold their shares for any price, usually much less than they had paid for them.
- Western capitalist countries experienced high unemployment from the late 1920s into the mid-1930s. At the Depression's peak, more than 25 per cent of workers were unemployed in some countries. In Germany, nearly 44 per cent of workers were unemployed. Unemployment varied greatly over time, from region to region and across different social groups (such as age, gender and race).
- Each country made various political, economic and social responses to the economic situation. In the US, President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced the New Deal in 1933, which gave relief work to unemployed workers and helped build public works. In Germany, Hitler also provided work for the unemployed, often in military developments and rearmament.
- The worst effects of the Depression began to fade from the mid-1930s as unemployment fell and national economies stabilised. However, the Depression only ended for many countries in 1939 with the beginning of World War II.



KEY TERMS

bank run or 'run on the bank'

When a large number of customers try to withdraw their deposits from a bank or financial institution at the same time. This creates a spiral of more panicked customers, and may lead to the bank being forced to close its doors as it runs out of cash.

deflation

A general decrease in the price of goods and an increase in the purchasing value of money. This may be associated with higher unemployment, when jobs are scarce and people have less money to spend on goods.

economic depression

A prolonged and sustained period of low economic activity, with high and rising unemployment and low demand for goods.

inflation

A general increase in prices and a fall in the purchasing value of money. The opposite of deflation. People may have work, but their wages buy increasingly less.

laissez-faire

A government policy of not interfering with or attempting to control the economy.

recession

A period in time when there is a decline in economic activity.

speculation

When people borrow money to buy stock market shares, gambling or 'speculating' that the price of shares will rise and they will get a return that covers the original money borrowed plus a profit from the sale of their shares.

shares

Shares give the buyer part-ownership of a company. Shares are bought and sold on the stock exchange or share market.

OVERVIEW

The world economy often goes through periods of ups and downs, from times when there is strong trade and people are generally better off, to times when there is a recession, with less trade, fewer goods produced and economic hardship. The 1930s Great Depression was a particularly severe decline, with high unemployment and very low levels of trade and manufacturing. The period created images of long queues of workers seeking employment, families evicted from their homes and living in 'shanty towns', and a population that 'went without' food and basic goods.



Source 2 Unemployed men queue outside a Chicago soup kitchen.

These images of the Great Depression were certainly real, but they do not tell the whole story. Countries suffered economic and social hardship to greater and lesser degrees, and there was great variation among countries. Some social groups suffered greatly, while other social groups, even in hard-hit countries such as America and Australia, experienced little or no hardship.

The Great Depression is generally dated from 1929, when the New York Stock Exchange 'collapsed', but trade and commerce had begun to shrink by 1927. Most countries experienced their worst effects in 1932 or 1933, when unemployment was highest and there was often a sense of hopelessness. By 1933, governments in most affected countries began to implement specific policies to reverse the dire economic and social circumstances. By 1934, unemployment rates, bank failures and business failures began to decline significantly. Despite this, by 1939 unemployment was often still higher than it had been in the early 1920s, and it was only with the start of World War II, in September 1939, that the economic damage of the Depression was finally over.

1930s CULTURE

Songs, musicals and films from the 1930s were heavily influenced by the social and economic circumstances of the Depression. Films were a relatively inexpensive diversion from personal hardships. The 1933 film *Confidence* included the song 'Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?' *Gold Diggers of 1933* included the songs 'We're in the Money' and 'Remember My Forgotten Man'. A feature of *Gold Diggers*, and several other popular 1930s films, was Busby Berkeley's colourful choreographed displays of dancers and chorus girls. Comedian Charlie Chaplin gained great popularity by playing 'the Tramp'.



↑ Charlie Chaplin.

quota
A set number or proportion.

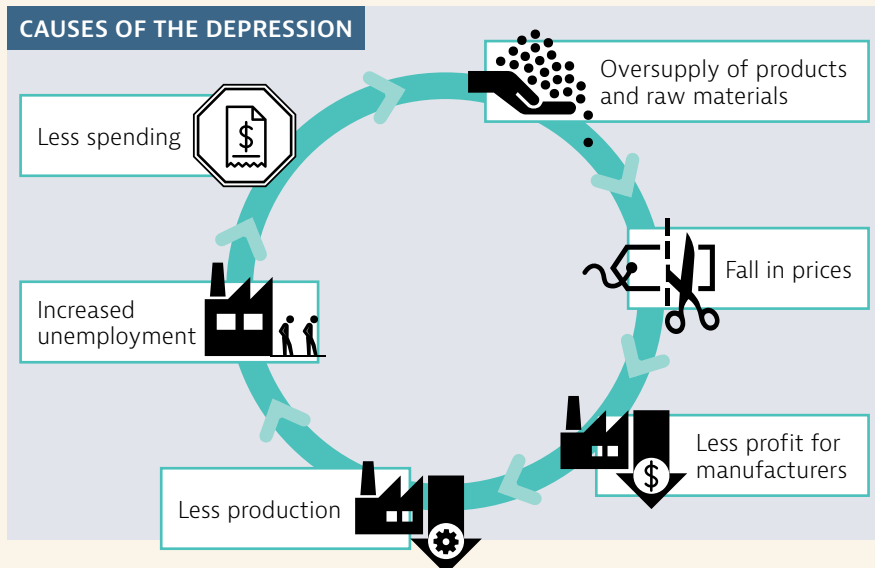
tariff
A duty or custom imposed on imports or exports. A tariff on imports is designed to protect local industry or production.

CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

There were three long-term causes of the 1930s Great Depression. To finance World War I, Britain and Europe borrowed heavily from the US; in the 1920s, the US continued to lend money, for example, to Germany to help its reparations payments. This meant that, in the 1920s, whatever happened to the US economy was bound to seriously affect the world economy. The US was a new financial power and its inexperience meant that it did not foresee problems that would result from the inflated 'bubble' of the stock market. At the same time, many countries desperately wanted to return to the economic stability of a prewar world. However, the 'old world' no longer existed: economies such as those of Britain were now more dependent on industrial growth than on agriculture. In the 1920s, agricultural products and raw materials were overproduced, which led to a serious fall in prices for these goods. Governments imposed **quotas** and **tariffs** on imported goods to protect their own jobs and industries.

Due to these events, the world economy began to spiral towards a severe depression by about 1927. As workers had their wages cut or lost their jobs altogether, people bought less and manufacturers reduced their production—thus, increasing unemployment. Unemployed people spent even less money than wage-earners. In an effort to help local employment, governments imposed greater tariffs or quotas on imported goods, so every industrialised country found it more difficult to sell their goods. And so it went on.

The US suffered the same effects. By 1928, the US started to recall its overseas loans, which meant that countries that had borrowed heavily—including Germany—could no longer fund their recovery. At the same time, the US stock market was booming. People borrowed money to speculate, and share prices spiralled upwards. However, this pattern could only continue if people had confidence that it would continue. In October 1929, panic set in: few people wanted to buy shares, and most wanted to sell. Share prices crashed and millions of people lost their money. Those who had borrowed to speculate could no longer repay their loans. There was a run on the banks, and many people and institutions—including a number of large European banks—defaulted. And so the spiral continued.



EFFECTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The most noticeable effect of the Wall Street collapse and the deflationary economy was the number of unemployed workers. The increase was rapid. For example, in Germany there were just under two million unemployed workers in 1928, nearly three million in 1929 and over six million in 1932. Every Western industrialised country suffered similar unemployment rates. By the height of the Depression (in 1932 or 1933 for most countries) national unemployment was generally between one-fifth and one-quarter of the workforce.



Source 3 Former farmer William Swift in his squatter shack in Circleville, Ohio, 1938.

There had been economic depressions before, but nothing on this scale. Governments had few ideas about how to respond to it. Many believed in a laissez-faire approach—that is, do nothing and let the economy repair itself. In Australia, Labor premier of New South Wales, Jack Lang, suggested Australia should refuse to repay some of its interest on loans from Britain. This created bitter controversy between those who believed the Bank of England was cruel to insist on loan repayments when Australian workers and their families suffered, and those who believed the government should reduce its own expenditure rather than default on its loans.

As unemployment continued to rise, wages fell. Families that could not pay rent or mortgages were sometimes evicted, forcing them to move in with relatives or, in the worst cases, to makeshift shanty towns. In Australia, the caves under the Sydney Domain housed unemployed people, families lived in tents or shacks made from discarded materials such as hessian bags, and there were frequent sightings of men ‘carrying their swags’ as they walked along roads seeking work.

IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON POPULAR ATTITUDES AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

As a result of the unprecedented Great Depression, some people turned to extreme political solutions. In Germany, Hitler and the Nazi Party’s promises were very appealing, and after Hitler took power in 1933 unemployment fell rapidly. Even in established democracies such as Britain and Australia, people flirted with political parties of the extreme left or right. In Australia, some unemployed people found socialism appealing and were encouraged by reports of full employment in the Soviet Union. Residents of shanty towns were often referred to as ‘Red Ragers’, and right-wing groups such as the New Guard and the White Army also gained more support. In Britain, Oswald Mosley’s British Union of Fascists, formed in October 1932, initially attracted support.

Another visible result of years of depression was marches of unemployed workers. One of the better known is the Jarrow March in October 1936. More than 200 unemployed men walked 480 kilometres from Jarrow in north-east England to the British Parliament in London. The marchers carried a petition from the unemployed people of Jarrow, calling for government aid for the poverty-stricken town. Although famous—and well supported by the local communities that provided shelter and food to marchers as they passed through their towns—the Jarrow March was not successful in gaining government aid for Jarrow. There were numerous shorter marches and demonstrations by unemployed people to raise awareness of their plight and to call for improved support.

As the Depression deepened, governments were forced to provide relief for long-term unemployed people and their families. In Australia, ‘sustenance’ or ‘susso’ was provided in the form of rations and vouchers. It was strictly *means-tested* and gave only meagre provisions. Australian governments, including local governments, sometimes provided jobs on public works programs, such as road building.

means-tested

Investigating someone’s financial position to determine if they are eligible for assistance.

Source 4

Ian Turner (ed.), *Cinderella Dressed in Yella* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1969), 109.

A popular ‘skipping song’ sung by Australian children in the 1930s

We’re on the susso now,
We can’t afford a cow,
We live in a tent,
We pay no rent,
We’re on the susso now.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 4 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

S.29 ‘Translate’ this ditty into one or two lines that would be understood by:

- an Australian student today
- an American in 1934.

S.30 Would the ditty have been readily understood by most Australians in the 1930s? Explain your response.



Source 5

Unemployed relief workers building the Yarra Boulevard in Melbourne

During the Depression, unemployed men worked on construction or landscaping projects so that they would receive sustenance. Melbourne’s Yarra Boulevard was built by sustenance workers, and nicknamed ‘Susso Drive’.



Today, most economists agree that the best way out of an economic depression is to spend money, but this was not a widely recognised solution in the early 1930s. In 1931, economist John Maynard Keynes suggested that government spending was the solution, as saving money actually helped put men out of work. At first, this idea was met with incredulity, and few governments implemented policies that reflected Keynes's suggestions.

Unemployment rates in eight countries

COUNTRY	PEAK YEAR	% UNEMPLOYED	FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE 1930–1934
Germany	1932	43.8	31.8
Australia	1932	28.1	23.4
Canada	1933	26.6	20.7
United States	1933	24.9	19.0
Sweden	1933	23.3	18.5
United Kingdom	1932	22.1	19.2
Poland	1935	16.7	12.3
Japan	1932	6.8	5.6

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 6 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- S.31** Which of the countries listed in Source 6 suffered the worst unemployment between 1930 and 1934? Which suffered the least?
- S.32** Explain how the table supports the statement that 1932–1933 was the low point of the Great Depression.

Source 6

C.B. Scedvin, *Australia and the Great Depression: A Study of Economic Development and Policy in the 1920s and 1930s* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1970), 46.

In most capitalist countries, unemployment began to fall from the mid-1930s, although it rarely fell to the level it had been in the early 1920s. In Australia, unemployment peaked at 30 per cent in 1932, then fell to about 9 per cent of the workforce in 1938. In 1940, one year after Australia entered World War II, the unemployment rate was still 8 per cent, approximately where it had been in 1927. Even the effects of World War II took time to lower the unemployment rate.

TIMELINE

S.33 Create a simple timeline for key events in the Great Depression, including its causes and effects. Your timeline should include one or two key events for each year from 1918 to 1939.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- S.34** Why was there bitter difference of opinion about whether Australia should repay interest on its loans to Britain in the 1930s?
- S.35** Drawing on evidence in this Snapshot, explain why socialist or fascist political parties appealed to some people during the 1930s.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

S.36 When interviewed about their experiences in the Great Depression, many older Australians describe the times as 'good in some ways'. What positive experiences might people have taken from the Great Depression?

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS

S.37 Historian Geoffrey Blainey refers to the stock market crash of October 1929 as 'the fire-bell' of the Great Depression. Explain what he means and why he chose that term to describe the events.



RUSSIA / USSR

1905–1941

- Why did revolution break out in Russia?
- How did ideologies contribute to change?
- What was life like for ordinary Russian people?
- How was social and political change reflected in art and culture?
- What role did key individuals and groups play in shaping Russia's history?

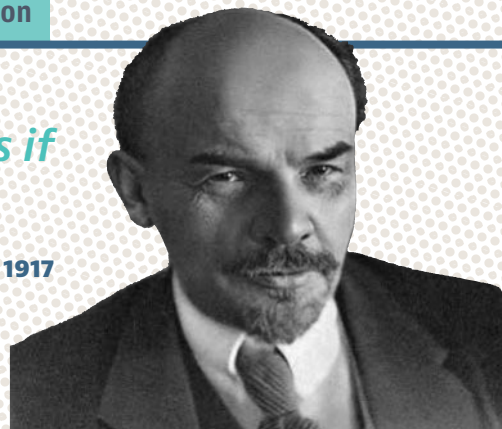
'How are we to explain the [Romanov] dynasty's collapse? Collapse is certainly the right word to use. For the Romanov regime fell under the weight of its own internal contradictions. It was not overthrown. As in all modern revolutions, the first cracks appeared at the top.'

Historian Orlando Figes on the February Revolution

500,000
NUMBER OF NEW
COMMUNIST PARTY
MEMBERS FROM 1923–1925

'History will not forgive us if we do not assume power.'

LENIN, SEPTEMBER 1917



'We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it or we will be crushed.'

Stalin, 1931



*'Let the ruling class tremble at a Communistic revolution ...
Workers of the world, unite!'*

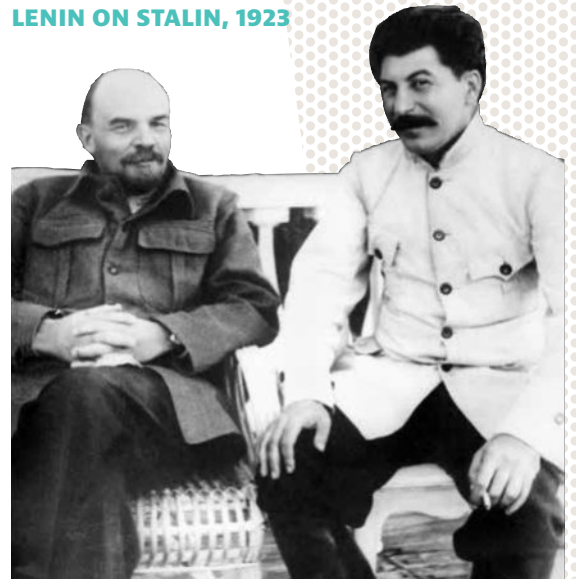
**KARL MARX,
THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO**

'So long as there are kulaks, so long will there be sabotage of grain procurements.'

Stalin, 1928

'Stalin is too rude ... That is why I suggest he be removed from his post.'

LENIN ON STALIN, 1923



HEAD OF CATTLE IN THE SOVIET UNION

1928
70.5 MILLION
1933
38.4 MILLION

HORSES IN THE SOVIET UNION

1928
34.0 MILLION
1934
16.5 MILLION



*'I am not prepared to be a tsar ...
I know nothing of the business of ruling.'*

Tsar Nicholas II, 1894

THE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES DURING THE **BLOODY SUNDAY MASSACRE**, 9 JANUARY 1905
200 killed
800 wounded

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION, 1905–1924

**'Let the ruling class tremble
at a Communist Revolution.'**

KARL MARX, 1848

The Russian Revolution saw the complete reorganisation of the way life had been lived in Russia for centuries. Ruled by Tsar Nicholas II (of the Romanov dynasty) with absolute power, Russia was the largest country in the world. The rich minority enjoyed privilege and high social status, while the peasant majority endured a miserable existence, their lives at the mercy of each year's harvest or the cycle of plague and disease that routinely ravaged the country. As the world changed and advanced around it, Russia seemed stuck in its old ways. While most European countries were rapidly industrialising, the Russian economy relied mainly on subsistence farming.

Poor leadership, the onset of World War I, severe economic problems and political opposition from all sides saw Russia slide into war and industrial unrest, leading to a revolution of values and politics. In 1917, the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, brought to Russia the idea of 'revolution from below' and a classless society. Years of destructive civil war left millions of people dead and an economy reeling from one disaster to another. The poor seemed to be no better off than they had been under the tsar. Ultimately, the revolution transformed Russia from a decaying monarchist backwater into an industrialised communist state—and one of the world's great superpowers—but at great human cost.

A word about dates: Until 1918 Russia used the Julian calendar, which was thirteen days behind the Gregorian calendar used in the Western world. The Bolshevik government adopted the Gregorian calendar on 24 January 1918. In this chapter we have used the dates that applied in Russia at the time of the event. Thus, the 'October Revolution' is listed as such, even though it occurred in November according to the rest of the world. Dates after February 1918 follow the Gregorian calendar.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1905

9 JANUARY — Bloody Sunday

17 OCTOBER — October Manifesto

1914

1 AUGUST — Germany declares war on Russia

1917

2 MARCH — Abdication of Tsar Nicholas II;
Provisional Government formed

25 OCTOBER — Bolsheviks assume power

1924

MARCH — Death of Lenin

KEY QUESTIONS

- What were the political, economic and social problems faced by Tsar Nicholas II throughout his rule?
- What were the causes and consequences of the 1905 Revolution?
- How did World War I affect the rule of Tsar Nicholas II and life in Russia?
- What alternative political groups rose up to challenge the tsar?
- Why did the revolutions of February and October 1917 happen?
- How did the Bolsheviks consolidate their power between 1918 and 1924?



Source 3.01
Lenin addressing a crowd in the Red Square, Moscow, 1917.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS



TSAR NICHOLAS II

Tsar of Russia (1894–1917)

Abdicated in March 1917

Brutally executed in 1918



ALEXANDER KERENSKY

Second and final Prime Minister of the

Provisional Government



VLADIMIR LENIN

Leader of the Bolsheviks

Head of the new Soviet Union

Died in 1924



LEON TROTSKY

Leading Marxist revolutionary

Crucial to the success of the October Revolution

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

Some historians have argued that the success of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in establishing the world's first communist state was the result of a combination of factors, such as poor leadership by Tsar Nicholas II and the hardships endured by the people during World War I. Others claim a revolution was inevitable according to Marx's interpretation of history, and that Lenin's leadership was a key element in attracting support for the new regime. As you read through this chapter, develop a response to one of the following questions.

3.01 Was the success of the Bolsheviks largely due to circumstances, such as World War I and the poor leadership of Tsar Nicholas II, or primarily due to the attractiveness of communism?

3.02 Were the Bolsheviks interested in establishing a true communist state, or were they more concerned with gaining power and then maintaining it? How did the tsarist regime respond to this rising unrest?

TSARIST RUSSIA

TSAR NICHOLAS II: 'I know nothing of the business of ruling.'

Did you know? At an 1896 festival celebrating the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II, over 1300 peasants were crushed to death in a stampede for free food and drink—a bad omen for the new emperor.

It would be a mistake to study the Russian Revolution without first examining the events that led up to 1917. The seeds of revolution had been planted as early as the previous century. Nicholas Romanov was thrust into the position of tsar following the unexpected death of his father, Alexander III, in 1894. Often described as a charming but weak man, Nicholas was not prepared for the enormity of the task in front of him. He inherited the rule of Russia—the world's largest country—at a time when it was undergoing significant social and economic change.

TSAR NICHOLAS II

Nicholas Romanov was a contradiction—a man who did not want to rule and understood his own unpreparedness, yet still held strongly to the principle of autocracy. Historians hold wildly differing views about Nicholas and his suitability as a leader. Orlando Figes has said that Nicholas's mild temperament, good memory and sense of decorum would have made him an excellent constitutional monarch. However, Russia was not a constitutional monarchy; it was ruled by an autocrat who made the rules.¹ Trotsky, perhaps predictably, summed up Nicholas as 'dim, equable, well-bred ... and cruel'.² Nicholas's own tutor claimed that he would stick 'to his

insignificant, petty point of view'.³ He was an especially **devout** man, and loved his family dearly. His own diaries and letters are full of evidence of his devotion to his family, yet a complete indifference to the matters of the state. He seemed to mourn the loss of the family dog more than the loss of life on Bloody Sunday in 1905. He could be charming and diplomatic, endearing himself to those around him, but then turn into a vicious **tyrant** behind the backs of those same people. Some of Nicholas's odd habits, from an obsession with looking after his own filing to licking the flaps of all of his envelopes, was overshadowed by his anti-Semitism, his ruthless crushing of any opposition, and his unhealthy fascination with military life.

devout
Very religious.

➔ **Source 3.02** Tsar Nicholas II.

tyrant
An absolute ruler who is often cruel and unjust.















THE RISE OF OPPOSITION GROUPS

Tsar Nicholas II's ban on political criticism, strikes and demonstrations, combined with heavy censorship of the media and tough penalties for anyone who dared to raise their voice against the government, led to the formation and development of a number of small, underground opposition groups. Many of these groups formed at the universities, where dangerous ideas could be shared and discussed secretly. Some of the more significant groups are detailed in the table on p. 67.



KEY OPPOSITION GROUPS

LEFT-WING RADICALS (MARXISTS)				RIGHT-WING MODERATES (LIBERALS)	
SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (SDs)		SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARIES (SRs)		KADETS	OCTOBRISTS
BOLSHEVIKS	MENSHEVIKS	LEFT SRs	RIGHT SRs		
					
Supported by industrial urban workers.	Supported by industrial urban workers.	Supported by the peasants.	Supported by the peasants.	Supported by the professional class, landowners and big business.	Supported by wealthy, pro-tsar industrialists.
Policies: A centralised party should lead workers and peasants in an overthrow of the tsar: a proletarian revolution.	Policies: The middle class should lead a bourgeois revolution in an overthrow of the tsar, controlled by an open democratic government; a workers' revolution would follow on from this.	Policies: Use terror tactics and assassinations of government officials to roll out radical land reforms, taking the land from the upper classes and distributing it to the peasants.	Policies: Use persuasion and negotiation to roll out radical land reforms, taking the land from the upper classes and distributing it to the peasants.	Develop a constitutional monarchy, retaining the tsar but increasing free speech, freedom of the press, education and a just legal system.	Supporters of the 1905 October Manifesto and the Duma, with elected officials and a powerful tsar, focusing on legislative reforms to improve Russia.
					



Source 3.03

'Pyramid of Capitalist System', original Marxist image, 1900. The labels read (clockwise, from top):

CAPITALISM
 WE RULE YOU
 WE FOOL YOU
 WE SHOOT AT YOU
 WE EAT FOR YOU
 WE FEED ALL
 WE WORK FOR ALL

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 3.03 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 3.03 List the social groups of tsarist Russia.
- 3.04 Explain the impact capitalism had on the Russian people.
- 3.05 Explain the appeal that Marxism might have for the people at the bottom of the social pyramid.
- 3.06 Analyse the significance of the social structure of Russia as a cause of *grievances* up to 1900. Use evidence to support your response.

grievances A hardship suffered, or complaint.



KARL MARX AND THE STAGES OF HISTORY

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO:
'Workers of the world unite!
You have nothing to lose
but your chains!'

bourgeoisie

The property-owning middle class.

proletariat

The working class; wage-earners.

oppressor

Someone who treats others cruelly or unfairly.

oppressed

The person being treated cruelly or unfairly.

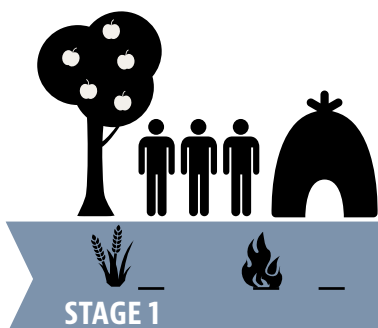
In 1848, the German political theorist Karl Marx, together with Friedrich Engels, wrote the *Communist Manifesto* in response to the horrendous conditions experienced by workers in factories. They blamed industrial capitalism for the woes of the working class. They came up with a solution to the problem: a new social system that would eventually be known as communism.

Marx believed that all history was a 'history of class struggles.' He saw consistent themes throughout history: the oppressors always owned the means of production (land, natural resources and factories), while the oppressed relied on their oppressors for survival. Marx called these two groups the **bourgeoisie** (the **oppressors**) and the **proletariat** (the **oppressed**). Marx saw society splitting into these two hostile camps: a growing divide between the middle/upper class bourgeoisie and the working class proletariat. In Marx's view, this struggle had just one inevitable outcome—a revolution in which the proletariat would overthrow the bourgeoisie. The economic differences that created separate social classes would be abolished, with the result being a classless utopia. Marx saw society pass through six stages on the road to revolution.

MARX'S SIX STAGES OF REVOLUTION

PRIMITIVE COMMUNISM

1 Prehistoric human hunter-gatherers live in small groups. There is no concept of leadership. Everyone is roughly equal in standing and there is no exploitation. In this first stage, humans are only concerned with survival, and only gradually begin to bend nature to its will with discoveries like fire and basic agricultural principles. This forms the basis of future concepts such as ownership of private property and profit.



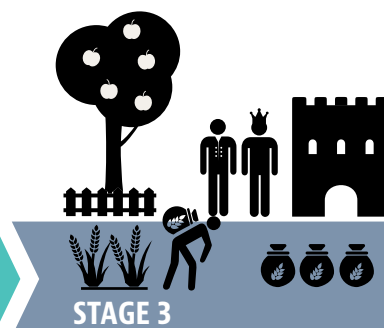
SLAVERY

2 In this stage we see the beginning of a class-based society, and the first appearance of personal property. The slave-owning class owns the land and rules the slaves, using the state as a mechanism to enforce control. Agricultural practices develop to support a large population. This stage is exemplified by ancient Egypt and ancient Rome.



FEUDALISM

3 The monarch (king, tsar) and a small number of wealthy landowners exploit the peasants, who work the land to which they are bound. This stage sees the rise of a merchant class that wants to grow its businesses but are held back by a primary focus on agriculture. Over time the merchants seize power and the means of production from the monarch and the nobles in a bourgeoisie revolution, as in the 1789 French Revolution.



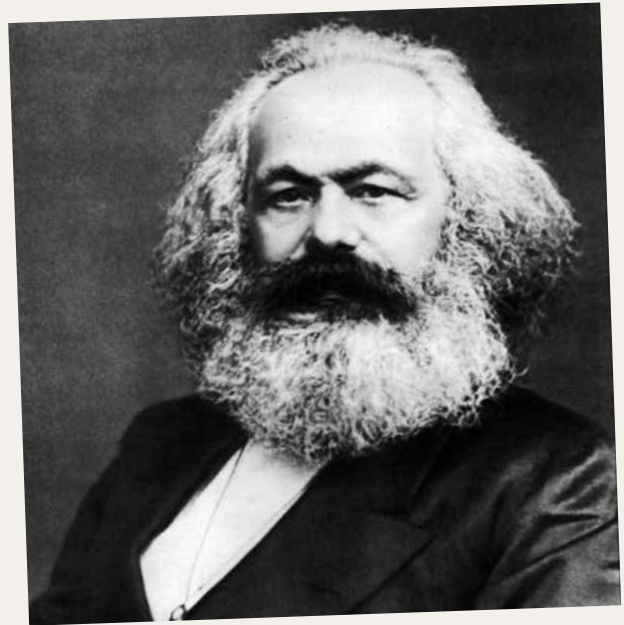
CAPITALISM GAME

3.07 Get into pairs and designate one person as rich and one person as poor. Share out some tokens unevenly to reflect social inequalities. Play a few games of Rock, Paper, Scissors, with the loser of each game handing over one of their tokens until one person runs out of tokens.

What were the results across the class? Did the poor players stay poor or lose everything? What were the overall class results? Was the game unfair to the poor?

Write a paragraph explaining the extent to which this game illustrates the basic principles of capitalism, including private ownership, exploitation and inequalities.

Do you think, as Marx did, that capitalism provides a breeding ground for revolutionary ideas such as socialism?



↑ Karl Marx.

CAPITALISM

- 4** After the bourgeoisie revolution, the means of production are no longer owned by a monarch but by private businesses. The bourgeoisie who own the factories, mines and banks invest heavily in them in order to maximise profits. To do this, they must exploit the workers—the proletariat. Marx believed that the capitalist drive for profit above all else would see the oppressed workers develop a class consciousness. This state of affairs inevitably leads to a proletarian revolution in which the workers rise up and overthrow their capitalist bourgeoisie masters.



STAGE 4

SOCIALISM

- 5** If the working class is successful in overthrowing the capitalist bourgeoisie, it moves from class consciousness to revolutionary consciousness. Characteristics of socialism include a centralised planned economy, state ownership of property, and a form of democracy called 'the dictatorship of the proletariat' in place to ensure the old capitalists do not rise up again. Marx believed society would make decisions democratically based on what was needed. It is understood that the last traces of capitalism would take some time to disappear, requiring strong revolutionary leaders who ensure history progresses smoothly to the final stage.



STAGE 5

COMMUNISM

- 6** The final stage of history is a classless utopia—communism in its purest form. In this stateless, classless society in which property belongs to the state, there will be no political power and no big business. Marx expected communism would spread around the entire world. The masses would make decisions for the benefit of the masses. This is when real human society begins—everything that has gone before has been a prelude. At the turn of the century, with living and working conditions for Russia's millions of workers and peasants so horrendous and primitive, it is easy to see why the ideas of Karl Marx began to attract the attention of men like Vladimir Lenin.



STAGE 6

1905

FATHER GEORGI GAPON: 'We are ... treated as slaves, who must bear their fate and be silent.'



While the 1917 Russian Revolution is the most noted, there was already considerable unrest in Russia by 1905. On top of the widespread hunger and division in Russian society, the loss to Japan in the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War had severely dented the pride of Europe's largest country. Tsar Nicholas II had proved to be a poor leader, seemingly unable or unwilling to act to improve the lives of his people. Whenever there was resistance to his rule, he refused to deal with the problem directly; instead, he sent in security forces to sort things out. This usually resulted in violent clashes, which further frustrated his people. Such action only encouraged the growing political unrest throughout the country.

Did you know? In 1906 Father Gapon was possibly murdered by Socialist Revolutionaries Party assassins after being suspected of spying on exiled revolutionaries for the tsar's secret police, the Okhrana.

The year 1905 brought the most extreme examples of Nicholas II's perceived indifference, brutality and weakness. On 7 January, a huge strike took place at the Putilov steelworks in response to the sacking of four workers. Overseen by the pro-tsar yet radical Father Gapon, more than 100,000 workers made a number of demands, including:

- an eight-hour day and freedom to organise trade unions
- improved working conditions, free medical aid and higher wages for women workers
- elections to be held for a **constituent assembly** by universal, equal and secret **suffrage**
- freedom of speech, press, association and religion
- an end to the war with Japan.

Gapon, encouraged by the radical workers involved in the strike, organised a **petition** to be presented to Tsar Nicholas II. On Sunday, 9 January, a crowd of more than 100,000 people marched peacefully through the centre of St Petersburg to deliver the petition to the tsar. The security forces' solution was to open fire on the crowd, causing panic and a stampede in which many were trampled. Estimates

of the death toll range from 200 people to a few thousand, including women and children. This day became known as 'Bloody Sunday'. Although the tsar was absent and unaware of the massacre until afterwards, this did nothing to appease his angry subjects. Continuing strikes, protests and mutinies within the armed forces meant that Tsar Nicholas II had to act fast to restore his credibility as the leader of the Russian people.

CAUSES OF THE 1905 REVOLUTION

While it was the protest and subsequent repression of Bloody Sunday that sparked the 1905 Revolution, many long- and short-term factors had combined to create a revolutionary situation.

THE ECONOMY

An international recession, beginning in 1900, had a devastating effect on all areas of the Russian economy. The gains that had been made under Finance Minister Sergei Witte's modernisation were lost, as rising unemployment and falling wages took their toll on the poor working class.

The rapid industrialisation of the Russian economy, particularly in heavy industries, had achieved stunning results, but it was the investors—who were mainly from overseas—who benefited. The workers themselves had to endure working days of up to sixteen hours in dangerous and harsh conditions. Laws to protect children from exploitation were passed during the 1880s, but these were not enforced properly. Strikes, although banned, started to become more frequent and significant.

LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Major cities such as St Petersburg and Moscow grew so fast that development of the urban facilities required for their increasing populations lagged behind. Families lived in crowded, unsanitary conditions. The water in major cities was undrinkable because of the industrial waste that was pumped into the river systems each day.

constituent assembly

A representative government body elected by the people based on a constitution; similar to Australia's parliament.

suffrage

The right to vote.

petition

A note, list or document that outlines demands or requirements that is delivered to authority.



IMPACT OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

Defeat in the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War had left the nation reeling. Russia had gone into the war assuming victory would come easily due to their belief in European superiority. The Russian leadership had not accounted for Japan's own modernisation efforts. The Baltic Sea Fleet sailed halfway around the world to deal with the Japanese nuisance, only to see the bulk of their ships sent to the bottom of the sea in a matter of hours at the Battle of Tsushima. The old idea of European superiority over Asia had been crushed.

THE TSAR'S STYLE OF LEADERSHIP

Tsar Nicholas II's style of leadership had worn his people down. Apart from the loss of prestige associated with the defeat by Japan, his policy of forced **Russification** of significant minority groups led to feelings of ill will throughout the country. This policy went against the rising tide of nationalism that was being felt all across Europe. Millions of Jews, Muslims, Catholics and Lutherans also felt discriminated against. The tsar was opposed by workers, students, peasants, ethnic and religious minorities and alternative political groups. All opposition was handled ruthlessly by Tsar Nicholas II, who used his secret police (the Okhrana), loyal **Cossacks** and the army to repress any dissent.

NEW POLITICAL GROUPS

A number of revolutionary political groups had sprung up amidst the discontent, spreading their ideas among the poor and generally causing havoc. Together, these groups promoted revolution, supported trade unions, engaged in terror tactics and assassinations, and demanded more freedoms and rights.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 3.08** What sort of leader was Tsar Nicholas II? Explain your response.
- 3.09** Describe the key characteristics of capitalism, socialism and communism.
- 3.10** Why did the Bloody Sunday massacre occur?
- 3.11** What were the causes of the 1905 Revolution?

Russification

The policy of enforcing Russian language, culture and religion on non-Russians, especially ethnic minorities in Imperial Russia.

Cossacks

People from Ukraine and southern Russia who served in the tsar's army on horseback.



← **Source 3.04**
Bloody Sunday in
St Petersburg.

Father Gapon's account of the events of Bloody Sunday

We were not more than thirty yards from the soldiers ... when suddenly, without any warning and without a moment's delay, was heard the dry crack of many rifle-shots. I was informed later on that a bugle was blown, but we could not hear it above the singing, and even if we had heard it we should not have known what it meant.

Vasiliev, with whom I was walking hand in hand, suddenly left hold of my arm and sank upon the snow. One of the workmen who carried the banners fell also. Immediately one of the two police officers to whom I had referred shouted out, 'What are you doing? How dare you fire upon the portrait of the tsar?' This, of course, had no effect, and both he and the other officer were shot down ...

I turned rapidly to the crowd and shouted to them to lie down, and I also stretched myself out upon the ground. As we lay thus another volley was fired, and another, and yet another, till it seemed as though the shooting was continuous. The crowd first kneeled and then lay flat down, hiding their heads from the rain of bullets, while the rear rows of the procession began to run away. The smoke of the fire lay before us like a thin cloud, and I felt it stiflingly in my throat ...

A little boy of ten years, who was carrying a church lantern, fell pierced by a bullet, but still held the lantern tightly and tried to rise again, when another shot struck him down. Both the smiths [metal workers] who had guarded me were killed, as well as all those who were carrying the icons and banners; and all these emblems now lay scattered on the snow. The soldiers were actually shooting into the courtyards of the adjoining houses, where the crowd tried to find refuge and, as I learned afterwards, bullets even struck persons inside, through the windows.

At last the firing ceased. I stood up with a few others who remained uninjured and looked down at the bodies that lay prostrate around me. I cried to them, 'Stand up!' But they lay still. I could not at first understand. Why did they lie there? I looked again, and saw that their arms were stretched out lifelessly, and I saw the scarlet stain of blood upon the snow. Then I understood. It was horrible. And my Vasiliev lay dead at my feet.

Horror crept into my heart. The thought flashed through my mind, 'And this is the work of our Little Father, the tsar.' Perhaps this anger saved me, for now I knew in very truth that a new chapter was opened in the book of the history of our people. I stood up, and a little group of workmen gathered round me again. Looking backward, I saw that our line, though still stretching away into the distance, was broken and that many of the people were fleeing. It was in vain that I called to them, and in a moment I stood there, the centre of a few scores of men, trembling with indignation amid the broken ruins of our movement.

Source 3.05

Georgi Gapon, *The Story of My Life* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1906).

Government report on Bloody Sunday

The fanatical preaching of the priest Gapon, forgetful of the sanctity of his calling, and the criminal agitation of persons of evil intent excited the workers to such an extent that on January 9 they began heading in great throngs toward the center of the city. In some places bloody clashes took place between them and the troops, in consequence of the stubborn refusal of the crowd to obey the command to disperse, and sometimes even in consequence of attacks upon the troops.

Source 3.06

Cited in George Vernadsky, ed., *A Source Book for Russian History From Early Times to 1917*, vol. 1–3 (London: Yale University Press, 1972), 743.

Tsar Nicholas II, diary entry, 22 January 1917

A painful day. There have been serious disorders in St Petersburg because workmen wanted to come up to the Winter Palace. Troops had to open fire in several places in the city; there were many killed and wounded. God, how painful and sad.

Source 3.07

Cited in Lionel Kochan, *Russia in Revolution* (London: Paladin, 1970), 92.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Sources 3.05–3.07 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

3.12 Explain the role of Father Gapon in the events of Bloody Sunday.

3.13 Explain why the soldiers opened fire on the protesters.

3.14 Evaluate the significance of the Bloody Sunday massacre as a cause of the Revolution of 1905. Use evidence to support your response.



CONSEQUENCES OF THE 1905 REVOLUTION

STRIKES

As news of the events of Bloody Sunday spread throughout Russia, chaos ensued. Strikes, riots, demonstrations and acts of terrorism became commonplace. The bond between Tsar Nicholas II and his people had been broken.

MUTINY

With Russia teetering on the brink of full-scale revolution, Tsar Nicholas II needed the support of his armed forces. On 14 June, the worst possible outcome for the tsar occurred—a **mutiny** by the crew of Russian battleship *Potemkin*. Morale was already low on the ship, but after being served rotten meat, the crew complained, leading to an officer shooting a sailor. The tsar reacted harshly, but civilians were once again caught in the crossfire, with nearly two thousand people killed in the port city of Odessa.



SOVIETS

In October 1905, the Mensheviks became involved in a spreading general strike. In a meeting to decide the next step in the strike, the St Petersburg **soviet** was formed as an alternative government. While Russia suffered without electricity, telephones or running water, soviets began to form all over Russia.

ATTEMPTS AT REFORM

Tsar Nicholas II gave in—his attempts to suppress the discontent with force had no effect on the people. His trusted advisor, Witte, suggested two solutions: increase the bloodshed or introduce reforms. Under pressure from all sides, and with Witte enthusiastically promoting wide-ranging reform, Tsar Nicholas II issued the October Manifesto. This document promised (at least on the surface) significant political changes that would liberalise Russian politics.

A constitution was written and the **duma**, a parliament of elected officials, was established. It was agreed in principle that people of all classes could vote in the elections, and that the tsar would have his power limited.

Did you know? Many of the early revolutionaries adopted aliases to protect themselves and their families from the secret police. Even the famous names 'Lenin' and 'Trotsky' were false.

mutiny

Similar to a strike, when soldiers and sailors refuse to fight or to obey orders.

Source 3.08 The story of the *Potemkin* mutiny was later turned into the movie *Battleship Potemkin*.

soviet

A council or committee of the Soviet Union. The term emerged from the various revolutionary councils of workers and soldiers during the 1917 Russian Revolution. When used as 'Soviets', it refers to the Soviet Union of Socialist Republics.

duma

The Russian Parliament, established in 1905.



RETURN TO AUTOCRACY



↑ Pyotr Stolypin.



↑ Tsarina Alexandra was the wife of Tsar Nicholas II.

PYOTR STOLYPIN, 1906: ‘Suppression first and then, and only then, reform.’

Tsar Nicholas II survived the events of 1905. He had given the liberals what they wanted—a constitution, freedom of speech and the duma. The promise of a duma seemed to have pleased the majority of the people to the extent that the radicals lost support and the tsar took the opportunity to crush his opposition, rounding up revolutionary leaders and exiling them to the remote region of Siberia.

Unsettled by the freedom and power being wielded by the dumas, Tsar Nicholas II issued the Fundamental Laws in 1906, a move designed to restore his power. He could veto anything the duma wanted to do, appointed half the members of the State Council (the upper house of the duma) and appointed his own ministers. He also gave himself control of the army and foreign policy. He had managed to hold off revolution through a combination of repression and reform.

While the duma proved too radical for the tsar’s liking, it was a step towards Russia becoming a functioning democracy. The economy began to prosper, and the peasants were appeased to an extent by Prime Minister Pyotr Stolypin’s land reforms.

However, strikes broke out almost everywhere in 1906. There were several attempts on the lives of members of the Romanov family and of high government officials. The tsar was forced to compromise and give the country a constitutional government by establishing the duma. Tsarina Alexandra violently opposed this. She did not realise the seriousness of the situation, and would not admit that there was no other solution.

The First Duma opened on 27 April 1906. This was a moment of great anxiety for all, as everyone knew the duma was a double-edged sword that could prove either helpful or disastrous to Russia, depending on the course of events.

From the tsar’s perspective, if all members of the duma had been ‘loyal’ Russians, the Assembly might have done great service to the government, but certain ‘questionable’ elements—among which were many Jews—made it a hotbed of revolutionary ideas.



CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

3.15 The October Manifesto promised so much—but did life change for the better or for worse? Read pp. 74 and 75, then create a table like the one below and consider what life was like before the events of Bloody Sunday, the hope offered by the tsar in the October Manifesto, and what happened afterwards.

	CONTINUITIES	CHANGES
Politics		
Law and order		
Agriculture—farm life		
Industry—city life		

3.16 Based on the information you included in your table, write 300 words explaining the extent to which the tsar’s reaction to the 1905 Revolution led to meaningful and positive change in Russia. Use evidence to support your response.



LIMITED REFORMS

Law and Order

After Bloody Sunday, unrest spread throughout Russia. Tsar Nicholas II responded by appointing Pyotr Stolypin as prime minister to restore law and order. While urban areas had quickly returned to normal, the countryside remained unsettled. Stolypin had a reputation for tough tactics, and this was reinforced by the establishment of military courts that could try a person on the spot and pass a death sentence. The *Okhrana* remained active, and all Russians were required to carry internal passports and register with the police when travelling. The freedom of speech and the press that had been granted in 1905 was gradually curtailed, with fines and censorship dealt out to newspapers that criticised the government.

The Dumas

The First Duma sounded good in theory, but in reality it was extremely limited. It could not pass laws or appoint ministers, nor could it control finance or national defence. Elections were unfair: there was one duma representative for every 2000 nobles, but just one for every 90,000 workers. In spite of these limitations, the early dumas demanded radical changes, including more land for peasants, free education and more civil rights. Stolypin responded by reorganising the Third Duma to grant more representation to the wealthy and noble classes. The Third Duma persisted with a reform agenda, and managed to make a number of changes between 1907 and 1912, including the provision of accident insurance for workers. The Fourth Duma had no opportunity to make an impact due to the onset of World War I.

Source 3.09 Duma in session, 1917.



Agriculture

Peasants were allowed to buy strips of land and combine them together to make plots. This was to encourage more efficient and productive farming. The year 1913 saw a record harvest. Some peasant farmers did so well out of this they became *kulaks*—wealthy land-owning peasants. The government introduced bank loans to enable peasants to buy land. Peasants who sold their land became even poorer labourers wandering the countryside looking for work.



Source 3.10 Russian peasants.

Industry

There was an industrial boom in Russia between 1906 and 1914. Output doubled, making Russia the largest producer of coal and iron in the world. Factories began to use mass production techniques, and Russia's oilfields were second only to those in the US. Workers gained little from this boom, and wages were as low as they had been in 1903. Prices of basic goods rose and working conditions remained poor. Workers who dared to strike faced harsh treatment from the military, and many were killed.

Okhrana

The tsar's secret police.

kulaks

A term initially used to describe peasants who were wealthy enough to own land and hire labour; later used as a label for any member of the peasantry identified as a threat to the regime.



WORLD WAR I

TSAR NICHOLAS II IN A LETTER TO TSARINA ALEXANDRA: 'If we should have three days of serious fighting we might run out of ammunition altogether'

Did you know? Russian military commanders communicated with each other over unprotected radio channels, providing the German codebreakers with early and detailed plans of attacks.

World War I was catastrophic for almost all countries involved, but for Russia it was especially devastating. Apart from the loss of millions of men, huge swathes of territory and natural resources, it was the event that finally, if indirectly, brought centuries of tsarist rule to an end. As in most countries, the declaration of war was greeted positively, as most Russians were caught up in the old belief that war was good for nations. Even many socialists were happy to put aside ideological differences and support the tsar's defence of Russian territory.⁴ However, Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin held the view that the best outcome for Russia was a defeat, which would hopefully provoke a civil war and revolution—a view that saw all known Bolsheviks detained for the duration of the war.⁵



➔ **Source 3.11**

Approximately 150,000 Russian prisoners were taken by the German army in 1914.

Russia's army had traditionally been a symbol of pride for the nation, and was the largest standing force in Europe at the start of World War I, numbering more than a million men. However, a series of losses from the Crimean War during the 1860s through to the disaster of the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War had damaged its reputation as an effective fighting force. When the Russian army eventually came up against German forces, they were found to be lacking tactically and technologically. While they achieved early success against the Austro-Hungarian forces, within weeks Russia suffered a number of terrible defeats, particularly at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes. The combined statistical losses were overwhelming.

➔ **Source 3.12**

Ian F. W. Beckett, *The Great War: 1914–1918* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 76.

Russian losses at the Battles of Tannenberg and Masurian Lakes, August–September 1914

	CASUALTIES	CAPTURED	TOTAL
Tannenberg	50,000–70,000	92,000	142,000–162,000
Masurian Lakes	70,000	70,000	140,000
Combined	120,000–140,000	162,000	282,000–302,000



As a result of such massive early defeats, Tsar Nicholas II himself took command of the army by August 1915. In a decision that was heavily criticised at the time, Nicholas created a situation in which subsequent military failures would be directly linked to him and his leadership. General Brusilov claimed that the tsar 'knew next to nothing about military matters'.⁶

Mikhail Rodzianko, letter to Tsar Nicholas II, 1915

The nation longs for and impatiently awaits that authority which will be capable of instilling confidence and leading our native land onto the path of victory. Yet at such a time, Your Majesty, you decide to remove the supreme commander-in-chief, whom the Russian people still trusts absolutely. The people must interpret your move as one inspired by the Germans around you, who are identified in the minds of the people with our enemies and with treason to the Russian cause.

Your Majesty's decision will appear to the people to be a confession of the hopelessness of the situation and of the chaos that has invaded the administration.

Sire! The situation will be even worse if the army, deprived of a leader enjoying its complete confidence, loses courage.

In this event, defeat is inevitable, and within the country revolution and anarchy will then inevitably break out, sweeping everything from their path.

Your Majesty! Before it is too late, revoke your decision, no matter how hard it may be for you.

[...]

The President of the State Duma
Mikhail Rodzianko



HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 3.13 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

3.17 Outline Rodzianko's perspective on how the Russian people will view the tsar's decision to take command of the armed forces.

3.18 Explain why the tsar's decision was so damaging to his relationship with the Russian people.

3.19 Evaluate the significance of World War I as a cause of the tsar's abdication in March 1917. Use evidence to support your response.

Source 3.13 Cited in George Vernadsky, ed., *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917* (London: Yale University Press, 1972), 844–845.

CONSEQUENCES OF WORLD WAR I FOR RUSSIA

POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

Due to the hardships of war, peasants became much more radical, looking to extremist groups and new political ideas.

With so many men at war, farming was left to women and the elderly.

Food shortages led to inflation of up to 300 per cent in the towns and cities.

Incidences of strikes and protests increased.

Landowners saw a crash in the value of their land, and a severe shortage of workers.

There was a growing resentment at the government's increased intervention in daily life.

RUSSIA AND WORLD WAR I

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

Tsar Nicholas II's decision to take control of the army was poorly received.

The influence of the 'Mad Monk' Rasputin over Tsarina Alexandra's decision-making demoralised the government.

The unpopular Tsarina Alexandra was left in charge while Tsar Nicholas II was at the front; because she was German, she was considered untrustworthy.

Tsar Nicholas II rejected political reforms suggested by the duma and dismissed it in 1917.



FEBRUARY 1917

PAVEL MILYUKOV, KADET DEPUTY: 'Is this stupidity or treason?'

By February 1917, Russia was on the brink of revolution. The war had produced conditions that exponentially increased the hardships being suffered by the Russian people. The food shortages resulted in mass demonstrations, with the people blaming the tsar for their hunger. The upper classes felt abandoned, as the tsar gave them no significant political role to play, despite their heavy and costly involvement in the war as officers. By taking command of the army, Tsar Nicholas II tied his own fate to the success of the war and, as defeat followed defeat and millions suffered, his reputation as the father of his people was irreversibly ruined.

The tsar had left his wife, Tsarina Alexandra, in charge of the country in his absence. The fact the tsarina was of German birth meant she was not trusted by the Russian people, especially during the war with Germany. Her fondness for the mystic holy man Rasputin clouded her judgement about domestic affairs. In the end, Tsar Nicholas II had no option but to abdicate on 2 March 1917, saying, 'There is no sacrifice

TIMELINE: MARCH TO AUGUST 1917

2
MARCH

Abdication of Tsar Nicholas II.
Provisional Government formed.

3
APRIL

Lenin delivers the April Theses, uniting the Bolsheviks against the government, calling for an immediate end to the war and a worldwide Bolshevik revolution, and promising power to the Soviets and land reform for the people.

that I would not be willing to make for the welfare and salvation of Mother Russia.'⁷ Tsar Nicholas II wished to pass power to his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, but his brother declined. Three centuries of Romanov rule had come to an end.

Significant individual →

TSAR NICHOLAS II, 1868–1918

Tsar Nicholas II is one of the tragic figures of history. In his desperate desire to pass on his autocratic powers to his son, Alexei, he inadvertently helped bring down his own government. Europe and Russia were changing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Economies were moving from agriculture to industry, cities were growing rapidly, and the political ideologies of liberalism and socialism had been eroding the legitimacy of divine-right autocrats.

Rather than accommodating with these forces, Nicholas resisted them. Little was done to alleviate the plight of the urban workers and peasants. Imperial Russia's first experiment with parliamentary democracy—the dumas—produced an assembly with no real authority. The tsar's autocratic powers essentially remained intact.

However, World War I proved to be too great a burden for the regime, and it was overthrown by a combination of workers' and soldiers' revolts, along with middle- and upper-class rejection of the regime. By February 1917, the 304-year-old Romanov dynasty was swept away.



He said: 'I shall never, under any circumstances, agree to the representative form of government because I consider it harmful to the people whom God has entrusted to my care.'

Said about: 'It was not a "weakness of will" that was the undoing of the last tsar, but on the contrary, a willful determination to rule from the throne, despite the fact that he clearly lacked the necessary qualities to do so.'⁸
(Orlando Figes, historian)



JUNE

Kerensky, now the war minister, orders a major offensive aimed at driving Germany out of Russia. A major disaster for Russia leaves hundreds of thousands dead and millions of square miles of Russian territory lost.

JULY

The 'July Days' see the Kronstadt Garrison march against the government, but without strong support from Lenin, who wanted to 'wait and see'. The uprising is defeated with help from the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. Key Bolshevik leaders are arrested, including Trotsky.

25
AUGUST

The Kornilov Affair sees Kerensky clash with the man he appointed to head the armed forces, General Lavr Kornilov. Kornilov, a right winger with an aim of suppressing unrest in Petrograd, stages what looks like an attempted military coup, only to be arrested on Kerensky's order, with help from the Soviet and freed Bolshevik prisoners.

The **Provisional Government** took control of Russia, led initially by Prince Georgy Lvov and, after July 1917, by Alexander Kerensky. The Bolsheviks were in no state to take power; they were too disorganised, and Lenin was out of the country (and had been for a decade). In December 1916, Lenin had said that there would be no revolution in his lifetime.⁹ The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) believed a bourgeois revolution needed to take place before the soviets took power, and saw the Provisional Government as a good opportunity for the country to settle down and avoid civil war.

The Provisional Government, for its part, made the promises the people needed to hear: they would roll out land reforms, take Russia out of the war, and work towards free elections by the end of the year. They fulfilled none of these promises, and instead became embroiled in a tussle for power with the powerful Petrograd Soviet. This system of **dual authority** led Kerensky to state, 'The Soviet had power without authority ... the Provisional Government had authority without power'.¹⁰ As the government began to spiral out of control, the Bolsheviks prepared for the next revolution.

Throughout these tumultuous months, Kerensky had fallen from his unique position as a man who appealed to both the right and left sides of politics, to a situation in which he was trusted by no one. Kerensky was now seen as a weak and ineffectual leader, and an alternative was sought. The Bolsheviks, for their part, had gained credibility, and were armed and ready to stage a revolution of their own.



Source 3.14 The nine members of the provisional executive committee. Some went on to serve in the Provisional Government. Seated on the right at the desk is Mikhail Rodzianko; seated next to him is Alexander Guchkov; standing in the back row (right to left) are General Nikolai Ruzski, Alexander Kerensky, Georgy Lvov and Pavel Milyukov.

Provisional Government

The temporary government established to administer Russia after the abdication of the tsar.

dual authority

The period from March to October 1917 when the Provisional Government and Petrograd Soviet ruled Russia.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

3.20 Why was Russia on the brink of revolution by the start of 1917?

3.21 Why were the Russian Marxist revolutionary parties, including the Bolsheviks, not ready to take power in March 1917?

3.22 What problems did the Provisional Government face when it assumed power?



OCTOBER 1917

VLADIMIR LENIN: 'History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they can be victorious today, while they risk losing much, in fact, everything, tomorrow.'

SEIZING THE WINTER PALACE

The ineptitude of the Provisional Government, along with continuing losses in the war, desertions, food shortages and a general sense of social breakdown across the countryside, had set the scene for the Bolshevik takeover of power. Kerensky formed another government in September, but it was populated with incapable politicians who could not turn around Kerensky's flagging fortunes. At the same time, the Bolsheviks were on the rise. They had gained a majority on the Petrograd City Council, and took control of the Moscow Soviet.¹¹ On 25 September 1917, Leon Trotsky was elected as leader of the Petrograd Soviet. Lenin himself had been absent up to this point, having fled to Finland after a warrant was issued for his arrest following the July Days. He returned to Petrograd in disguise, and began agitating for an armed Bolshevik overthrow of the Provisional Government. However, he did not get the support he wanted, as other leaders such as Kamenev advised a more cautious approach. A meeting of the Bolshevik Central Committee on 10 October eventually agreed that the time was ripe for a takeover.

Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks began their takeover on the night of 24 October. Trotsky sent **Red Guard** units to seize control of key points in Petrograd, such as bridges, railway stations and the telephone exchange. They faced minimal resistance, and the next day life on the streets of Petrograd looked normal, with people going about their everyday business. The Bolsheviks moved next on the Provisional Government, taking the Winter Palace with a minimum of fuss and arresting any members of the government who happened to be unlucky enough to still be working at 2 am. While Soviet historians have written about the events of 25–26 October as a great act of heroism featuring the mass participation of the proletariat, in reality the task was completed with minimum effort. That same evening the Congress of Soviets met to **denounce** the Bolsheviks, but Trotsky's defiant speech offended the opposition Mensheviks and SRs so much that they stormed out, leaving the Bolsheviks alone with a few stray leftists. Lenin's declarations of 'Soviet power' and 'Peace, bread, and land' were read out, and that was that—political power in Russia was now in the hands of the Bolsheviks.

Red Guard

The armed wing of the Bolshevik Party. It was made up mainly of armed factory workers.

denounce

To publicly condemn, or to inform against or accuse.

Did you know? On the night of the Bolshevik takeover, the assault on the Winter Palace was delayed when the Bolsheviks could not find a red lantern to signal the attack. They made do with a purple flare instead.



Did you know? The Bolshevik takeover in Petrograd led to widespread looting and mass displays of drunken behaviour as gangs helped themselves to the stores of alcohol found in the cellars of the Winter Palace and in the homes of the rich.

Source 3.15 Storming of the Winter Palace, St Petersburg.



SOVNARKOM, INITIAL DECREES AND THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The events of October 1917 were momentous, but the Bolsheviks controlled very little of the country, mainly Petrograd and Moscow. There was much to do. Lenin proceeded to issue a number of decrees through a new body—the Council of People’s Commissars, or *Sovnarkom*, which was populated exclusively by Bolsheviks. The new Constituent Assembly held elections in November 1917, and the Bolsheviks found themselves with just 24 per cent of the popular vote and less than half the seats.¹² The election was dominated by the SRs, although they lacked an outright majority. Lenin dismissed the Constituent Assembly in January 1918, calling it redundant. The deputies were forced to go home, and while a small protest indicated some displeasure at this turn of events, it was quickly silenced.

Lenin proceeded to announce a number of *populist* decrees. Some of his most popular decisions indicated a willingness to compromise his ideals to retain power. These included land reform, workers’ reforms and self-determination.

- **Land reform:** The peasants were invited to confiscate the land of the nobles, and to decide for themselves how it was to be divided up. However, Lenin did not agree with the concept of privately owned land.
- **Workers’ reforms:** These included a new eight-hour working day, social security, and increased worker control of factories and railways. Bolshevik leaders did not want to give too much control to the workers, but they could not ignore the rising activism of the working class.
- **Self-determination:** The many ethnic minorities within Russia were granted a measure of self-government. This didn’t mean much in a practical sense, as most of these regions lay outside Bolshevik control at the time.

TREATY OF BREST-LITOVSK, MARCH 1918

World War I had been a key factor in bringing about the circumstances that led to the revolution. It had destroyed the economy, brought an end to the rule of Tsar Nicholas II, and led to unimaginable suffering and death. Lenin was determined to follow through on his promise of peace, and he duly delivered. However, the terms under which Russia withdrew from World War I were widely condemned, both within Russia and by its allies.

- Lenin believed peace at any price was necessary for the Bolsheviks to successfully consolidate their power.
- More radical communists wanted to fight back as revolutionaries, encouraging a European revolution.
- Trotsky himself was keen to draw out the negotiations, as he believed revolution in Germany was brewing.



Source 3.16 A decree about land redistribution being read in a rural village.

Sovnarkom

The Soviet government that came to power in the October Revolution.

populist

A political approach that aims to appeal to the concerns of the common people.

Did you know? The Bolshevik Party officially changed its name to the Communist Party in March 1918 during the Seventh Party Congress. However, for the next couple of years, both names were used.

Did you know? Fearing German invasion or Western foreign intervention in the looming civil war, on 12 March 1918 Lenin moved the capital of Russia from Petrograd back to Moscow (which had been the Russian capital until 1712).

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

3.23 How did Lenin and the Bolsheviks seize power?

3.24 What did Lenin do to gain support from the Russian people?

3.25 Why did the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk create more problems than it solved?

Lenin got his way, but the cost to Russia was significant. Germany instead benefited greatly from the terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

Under the treaty, Russia lost:

- sixty million people
- more than 25 per cent of its farmland
- more than 25 per cent of its rail network
- the majority of its access to coal and iron ore reserves.

In addition, many former regions of the empire were granted either independence (Poland, Finland, the Baltic states) or semi-independence (Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia). Lenin got his 'peace' but at great cost to Russian territory, resources and the population. His opponents were outraged, and the stage was set for the Civil War.

CIVIL WAR, WAR COMMUNISM AND THE NEP

LEON TROTSKY, 1918: 'Cowards, dastards and traitors will not escape the bullet.'

The 1918–1920 Civil War presented the Bolsheviks with their biggest crisis, as internal and external opponents fought to destroy them. It was a complex war, and a devastating one, as Lenin, Trotsky and the **Red Army** campaigned against numerous enemies to ensure the survival of the revolution.

One of the reasons the war was so confused and hard to explain is the sheer number of armies involved in the conflict. Throughout history, the Civil War has been presented as a 'Red v. White' conflict, but that reflected the simple Bolshevik view that it was them against everyone else, presenting a false unity among their opponents. In reality, with more than twenty armies fighting on Russian soil, it was much more complex. For our purposes it is necessary to organise these armies into three groups.

1. The Reds (the Bolsheviks) included workers, peasants and former tsarist soldiers. The Red Army, led by Trotsky, was determined to preserve the revolution.

2. The Whites included a vast array of groups, from Mensheviks, former tsarists, SRs, nationalists, foreign interventionists and others, each with different views of what they wanted to achieve. Arguably the key thing holding the White Army together was the common aim of destroying the Bolsheviks.

3. The Greens were a group of peasant armies who fought against the Reds, the Whites and foreign forces, and occasionally with the Reds and Whites. Their primary goal was to protect what was theirs. Lenin acknowledged that the Greens were more dangerous than anything the Whites had to offer.

Red Army

The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army was founded during the Civil War by Leon Trotsky in February 1918. In 1922 it became the army of the Soviet Union. 'Red' symbolises the blood of the workers in their struggle against capitalism.



Source 3.17 Leon Trotsky, Commissar for War, rallies his Red Army soldiers.



WAR COMMUNISM

The freedoms handed to the workers and peasants in the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution were a hindrance to a government trying to fight a civil war. The industrial sector collapsed because the workers' councils were unable to turn back the looming economic disaster. Consumer goods such as food staples and fuel were in short supply, leading to dire shortages and an increasingly popular black market. The wheat-rich region of Ukraine had been lost in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Rationing of bread led to rioting, and a subsequent exodus of civilians from the major cities led Lenin and the Bolsheviks to embark on a program of increased nationalisation of the economy called *War Communism*. The nation—or at least those areas under Bolshevik control—was focused by Lenin on answering Trotsky's rallying cry: 'Everything for the Front!'¹³

War Communism

A series of economic policies serving the militaristic and political objectives of the Bolshevik Party in civil war conditions.

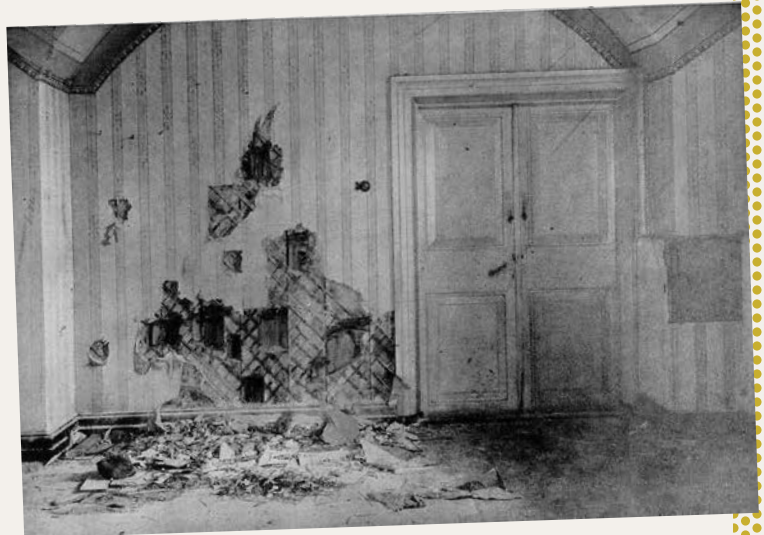
War Communism was characterised by centralised decision-making and discipline as the Bolsheviks struggled to consolidate their power and defeat their many enemies.

- Private trade was banned outright, although the black market ensured its survival to a degree.
- Grain-requisitioning units were tasked with sourcing grain in rural areas and bringing it to the cities.
- All industry was nationalised and administered by a new body, the Supreme Economic Council (*Vesenkha*).
- Discipline in the workplace was increased.
- Prioritised rationing was introduced, with preference given to those who were perceived as directly supporting the war effort, notably soldiers and workers.

These measures were unpopular, and dissent began to rise in the cities in the form of protests, graffiti and terrorist attacks on the Bolsheviks themselves. Even Lenin became a target; he was wounded by a gunshot in August 1918.

EXECUTION OF THE TSAR AND HIS FAMILY

Tsar Nicholas II and his family had remained under arrest since the tsar's abdication in 1917, although Kerensky had moved the family to Siberia for safety. A decision on the tsar's fate had been pushed aside because the Bolsheviks had more immediate problems. However, on 17 July 1918, *Cheka* agents, acting on Lenin's orders, entered the basement of the Yekaterinburg house in which the Romanov family was huddled and, in a confusion of gunshots, smoke and blood, slaughtered the entire family and their servants. Right up until the end of the Cold War, the Soviet regime insisted the execution was the result of the actions of independently motivated agents, but historical documents show that Lenin and top-level Bolsheviks sanctioned the killing, mainly so the White Army would have nothing for which to fight.



↑ **Source 3.18** One of the rooms in the Yekaterinburg house where the Romanovs were murdered.

Cheka

Soviet secret police service.



OUTCOME AND IMPACT OF WAR

The Civil War was ultimately won by the Bolsheviks, despite great opposition. The Civil War was different to the static, trench-based warfare of World War I, with ever-changing frontlines, rapid incursions and retreats, and a much heavier toll taken on non-combatants. It is almost impossible to

assess the full effect of the war, but probably more than ten million Russians died, perhaps half of these as a result of famine blamed on crop failure and grain requisitioning, and another million from disease. The Bolsheviks triumphed because of a number of factors in their favour.

WHY DID THE REDS WIN?

	WHITES	REDS
Geography	The Whites were scattered throughout rural Russia across vast distances in areas with low population. They had little access to transport or communication systems.	The Bolsheviks held key cities and operated out of a centralised area. They controlled the rail system hub, industry, the most populated regions, and the bulk of the armaments factories.
Leadership	The Whites were primarily led by ex-tsarist generals who treated their troops with disdain. Many soldiers were reminded of the tsar, and deserted. In general, the White armies were corrupt and poorly disciplined.	Lenin and Trotsky provided strong, if brutal, leadership. Trotsky proved to be an inspiring and focused leader who could get the most out of his troops. He insisted on tough discipline, and the death penalty was used frequently to ensure order.
Support	The Whites were unable to provide their followers with a vision for the future. As the war progressed, the leadership made it clear that land reform would be reversed and self-determination of ethnic groups would also be scaled back.	While the peasants generally hated the war and both sides, Lenin's land reforms held more promise than a return to the old ways under the Whites. Despite the anger brought about by War Communism, most saw the Bolsheviks as best able to preserve the gains won in the revolution.
Organisation	The Whites were made up of many factions with wildly different ideas and beliefs. They could not settle on a cause, and refused to cooperate with each other over military or political strategies.	The Bolsheviks implemented and maintained a clearly defined command structure, and were focused on winning the war at any cost. The implementation of War Communism and the use of secret police and propaganda helped the Bolshevik cause.
Other	The Whites did not understand or use propaganda very well. Foreign intervention should have helped, but it was insufficient and poorly coordinated.	The Bolsheviks used propaganda to depict themselves as defenders of Russia and the Whites as traitors who would return to the old ways. They were also able to portray themselves as more patriotic, as they received no foreign aid.

propaganda

An organised means of spreading a particular philosophy. It uses art, literature, radio, film, media releases, education and other forms of communication to transmit a message that a government or organisation wishes to relay.

➔ **Source 3.19** Leon Trotsky, 'Order no. 65', trans. David Walters, *Marxists' Internet Archive*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1918/military/ch36.htm>

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 3.19 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 3.26** Explain who has to be shot according to Trotsky.
- 3.27** Explain why deserters existed in the Red Army.
- 3.28** Evaluate the significance of the role played by Trotsky in the Red Army's eventual triumph in the Russian Civil War. Use evidence to support your response.

Trotsky's orders to Red Army troops, southern front, November 1918

Krasnov and the foreign capitalists which stand behind his back, have thrown onto the Voronezh front hundreds of hired agents who have penetrated, under various guises, Red Army units and are carrying on their base work, corrupting and inciting men to desert ...

I declare from now on, an end must be put to this by using merciless means ...

1. Every scoundrel who incites anyone to retreat, to desert, or not to fulfil a military order, will be shot.
2. Every soldier of the Red Army who voluntarily deserts his military post will be shot...

Death to the self-seekers and to traitors!

Death to deserters and to the agents of Krasnov!

Long live the honest soldiers of the Workers' Red Army!



➔ **Source 3.20** 'The Bolshevik snake strangles the heart of Russia.'

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Sources 3.20 and 3.21 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

3.29 Describe how both sides in the Russian Civil War depicted themselves.

3.30 Explain how the Whites depicted the Bolsheviks.

3.31 Analyse the significance of propaganda in contributing to the outcome of the Russian Civil War. Use evidence to support your response.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

3.32 Explain why the Russian Civil War was such a complex conflict.

3.33 How unified were the White armies? Explain your response.

3.34 Why did the Bolsheviks institute the policy known as War Communism?

3.35 What effect did the Civil War have on the Russian people?

EXTENDED RESPONSE

3.36 Write a 250–350-word extended response to the topic below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence and a clear conclusion.

- 'The Reds did not win the Russian Civil War; the Whites lost it.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?



➔ **Source 3.21** 'Defend Petrograd with your life!'



THE TERROR

FROM A RED ARMY NEWSPAPER, 1918: 'Let there be floods of blood of the bourgeoisie—more blood, as much as possible.'

During the Civil War and for decades afterwards, the Bolsheviks made extensive use of terror tactics and the Cheka to weed out enemies and dissenters. Faced with challenges and opposition in the cities and in the countryside, terror was used systematically and ruthlessly on the entire population. The assassination attempt on Lenin in August 1918 simply gave the Cheka the motivation to intensify what they had been slowly building up to. While the Romanov family was certainly the most famous victim of Bolshevik wrath, it is estimated that at least 300,000 Russians—and possibly up to 500,000—were murdered by the secret police.¹⁴ Members of the Cheka became almost an elite class within Russia, headed up by 'Iron Felix' Dzerzhinsky, who was an odd combination of Polish aristocrat and firebrand Bolshevik revolutionary.

The tactics employed by the Cheka to enforce the rule of the Bolsheviks went beyond cruel. Wholesale shootings and hangings were carried out across Russia for crimes ranging from genuine deception to being acquainted with enemies of the Bolsheviks. Chekists employed a number of tactics designed to bring the victim to mental disintegration, seemingly for the sole purpose of sadistic pleasure. Such behaviour had a negative effect on the general population, as well as on Cheka agents themselves, many of whom became mentally ill or alcoholic. Dzerzhinsky enjoyed the support of Lenin, who personally sent telegrams ordering the Cheka to 'hang Kulaks

... in full view of the people'.¹⁵ The freedom and hope offered by Lenin to the Russian people in October 1917 must have seemed far away when terror and violence were delivered by the same people who had liberated them from tsarist repression.

Source 3.22 Pedestrians being searched on the streets of St Petersburg.



Source 3.23 <http://spartacus-educational.com/RUSterror.htm>

Eyewitnesses to the Terror

Dzerzhinsky, 14 July 1918

We stand for organized terror—this should be frankly admitted. Terror is an absolute necessity during times of revolution. Our aim is to fight against the enemies of the Soviet Government and of the new order of life. We judge quickly. In most cases only a day passes between the apprehension of the criminal and his sentence. When confronted with evidence, criminals in almost every case confess; and what argument can have greater weight than a criminal's own confession.

Walter Duranty, journalist

The fear of the Cheka was so great those early days in Moscow that people made a detour rather than step on the sidewalk in front of its main building on Lubyanka Square.



Manager of a British-owned company

The Bolsheviks continue to hold power by a system of terrorism and tyranny that has never before been heard of. It has made the history of the French Reign of Terror, or the Spanish Inquisition, appear mild by comparison. People were arrested wholesale, not merely on individual orders on information received from spies, but literally wholesale—people arrested in the streets, theatres, cafes, every day in hundreds.

Maxim Gorky, author

If the trial of the [SRs] will end with a death sentence, then this will be a premeditated murder, a foul murder. I beg of you to inform Leon Trotsky and the others that this is my contention. I hope this will not surprise you since I had told the Soviet authorities a thousand times that it is a senseless and criminal to decimate the ranks of our intelligentsia in our illiterate and lacking of culture country. I am convinced, that if the SRs should be executed, the crime will result in a moral blockade of Russia by all of socialist Europe.



Source 3.24 Felix Dzerzhinsky.

THE DEATH OF LENIN

With the Civil War won but his new communist state in chaos, Lenin set about restoring order. Going against his ideological beliefs, he reversed some of the policies of War Communism, claiming that they were no longer necessary, as the war had been won. Grain requisitioning stopped and small businesses were allowed a measure of freedom, opening up the market and increasing demand for manufactured goods. However, Lenin retained state control over heavy industry and other key sectors. The Bolsheviks then ensured their political control of Russia, punishing Menshevik and SR leaders, and stacking the soviets all across the country with Bolshevik loyalists, as well as increasing censorship and marginalising religion. In 1922, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (**USSR**) was proclaimed, including some of the territory originally lost to Germany in 1918. The rest would be brought back under Soviet influence during World War II.

In some respects, life began to improve for the Russian people. Lenin's **New Economic Policy (NEP)**, rolled out in 1921, began to reap dividends as the economy recovered. While this plan involved a measure of private enterprise, which surprised committed communists, Lenin was determined to keep it as a temporary measure to preserve the unity of his party. It would not last forever. Food became so plentiful that food prices plummeted while the price of manufactured goods soared. The government resolved this crisis quickly, and some balance was restored to the economy. The production of coal, steel, iron, cotton and other raw products—which had declined or even ceased during the Civil War—recovered slowly, although it was not until after Lenin's death that production was restored to pre-World War I levels.

Lenin had suffered from a series of health setbacks since the attempt on his life in 1918. A number of strokes plagued him afterwards, but he was able to recover and continue his work. However, in March 1923, a major stroke left him paralysed and unable to speak, and his influence began to diminish. Before his stroke, Lenin had been worrying about the influence and power of General Secretary Joseph Stalin. Lenin's condition continued to deteriorate, and he died on 21 January 1924, leaving no clear indication about who should take over the leadership. Lenin's body lay in state in Moscow and was visited by hundreds of thousands of mourners paying their respects to the man who had released Russia from the burden of tsardom but imposed a new one of his own.

USSR

Acronym for the confederation, eventually comprising fifteen states, which was dominated by Russia and lasted until 1991.

New Economic Policy (NEP)

Lenin's pragmatic compromise to promote economic recovery by allowing concessions to the market economy.

Did you know? Thanks to an untested embalming technique involving a small amount of vodka, Lenin's corpse looks better today than when he died. His body is visited by more than one million people every year.



The body of Vladimir Lenin.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

3.37 Explain why Lenin abandoned the policies of War Communism.

3.38 How did the Bolsheviks increase their control over Russia at the end of the Civil War?

3.39 What impact did the NEP have on Russian society?

3.40 What was Lenin's chief concern for the party as his health began to fail?

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS

3.41 How do historical interpretations of Lenin's role in the Russian Revolution differ? Investigate the work of four historians and write one sentence summarising their views on:

- Lenin's leadership
- Lenin's achievements
- Lenin's mistakes and limitations.



Lenin's legacy is a mixed one. While he has not been as condemned as much as his successor Stalin, Lenin remains a polarising historical figure on both sides of politics. To some he was a heroic revolutionary who brought tsarist repression to an end, bringing the promise of a better life to millions of downtrodden workers and peasants. To others he unleashed the evils of the Bolsheviks and communism on Russia—and the world—which contributed to the start of World War II, and then to the Cold War.

Historian Christopher Hill

The attempt to overthrow the Bolsheviks after the revolution produced cruelties indeed; but the revolutionary process abolished a regime of despair and created a new world of hope.

Source 2.25 Christopher Hill, *Lenin and the Russian Revolution* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1947), 221.

Historian Dmitri Volkogonov

Lenin wanted earthly happiness for the people, at least those he called the 'proletariat'. But he regarded it as normal to build this 'happiness' on blood, coercion, and the denial of freedom.

Source 2.26 Dmitri Volkogonov, *Lenin: A New Biography* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), xxxix.

Significant individual →

VLADIMIR LENIN, 1870–1924

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, better known as Lenin, was the leader of the Bolshevik Party, which had split from the SDs in 1903. For years, the Bolsheviks were illegal fringe dwellers on the Russian political spectrum, with its leaders frequently in exile or imprisoned. After the February Revolution, Lenin's April Theses outlined his goals for a second revolution and attracted the support of the urban workers. His successful takeover of Russia in 1917 would have drastic consequences for his own country and the entire world.



He said: 'We shall now proceed to build on the space cleared of historical rubbish, the airy, towering edifice of socialist society.'

Said about: 'At his death in 1924, Lenin bequeathed the Soviet state a legacy of totalitarianism, economic experimentation and Soviet hostility towards the outside world.'¹⁶ (*Michael Lynch, historian*)



CHAPTER 3 REVIEW

With victory in the Civil War, the Bolsheviks had succeeded in protecting their revolution. However, ordinary Russians could have been excused for wondering if life was now worse than it had been under Tsar Nicholas II. The tsar had been brutal, certainly, but not to the extent of the rivers of blood set flowing by the Red Army and the Cheka. It is estimated that about ten million Russians died during the Civil War as a result of military action, terror, famine and disease. There were numerous atrocities committed on all sides. Estimates of the number of people killed by the Cheka vary, with some sources claiming 500,000 people. Millions of people fled the war-torn country. By 1922 there were about seven million homeless and abandoned children living in Russia.

As historian Orlando Figes put it, the Russian Revolution was 'a people's tragedy'.¹⁷ The promises of 1917—of bread, peace and land—had all been broken. From the dismissal of the Constituent Assembly through to the centralisation of War Communism, the Bolsheviks consolidated their power at the expense of the Russian people. The failures of the tsarist regime to modernise and listen to the people led to a revolution that would reverberate around the world and would unleash some of the bloodiest episodes of the twentieth century.

KEY SUMMARY POINTS

- Tsarist Russia was a backwards, old-fashioned country where discontent seethed in the cities and countryside.
- Tsar Nicholas II survived the 1905 Revolution but was forced to abdicate, as the pressures of World War I proved too much.
- Lenin and the Bolshevik Party capitalised on the weaknesses of the Provisional Government and seized power in October 1917.
- Lenin started to create the world's first state based on Marxist principles, but faced strong opposition from within Russia and abroad.
- The Bolshevik Party used ruthless methods to consolidate its control and eliminate opposition.
- By the time of Lenin's death in 1924, it is questionable whether a truly socialist system had been set up and whether the Russian people were better off.

REVIEW

3.42 How successful were Lenin and the Bolsheviks at establishing a communist society according to the ideals of Karl Marx? Write a one-page response justifying your contention.

3.43 Do you think the Russian people were better off under the autocratic rule of Tsar Nicholas II or the ideology of Lenin and the Bolsheviks? Support your point of view with evidence.

3.44 Who do you think were the three most influential individuals in the Russian Revolution? Write a paragraph for each of your choices, justifying your selection with historical evidence.

EXTENDED RESPONSE

3.45 Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence and a clear conclusion.

- Explain to what extent the failures of Tsar Nicholas II and the Provisional Government were a key factor in Lenin's rise to power.
- Describe how the Bolsheviks' use of violence helped to consolidate the revolution. You should consider the Civil War and the Terror, as well as Trotsky and Dzerzhinsky.

ESSAY

3.46 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- 'The Russian Revolution succeeded only in replacing one dictatorial regime with another.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?
- 'Judged in terms of its own aspirations, the communist regime was a monumental failure.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

EXTENSION

3.47 Using what you have learnt, write a series of journal entries detailing the life of a peasant or worker at various stages of the revolution. Suggested stages include after Bloody Sunday, World War I (up to the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II) and under the rule of the Bolsheviks.

3.48 Create a collection of different historical interpretations of the key individuals, events and groups involved in the revolution. Present your work in a table or slideshow to be shared with the rest of the class.



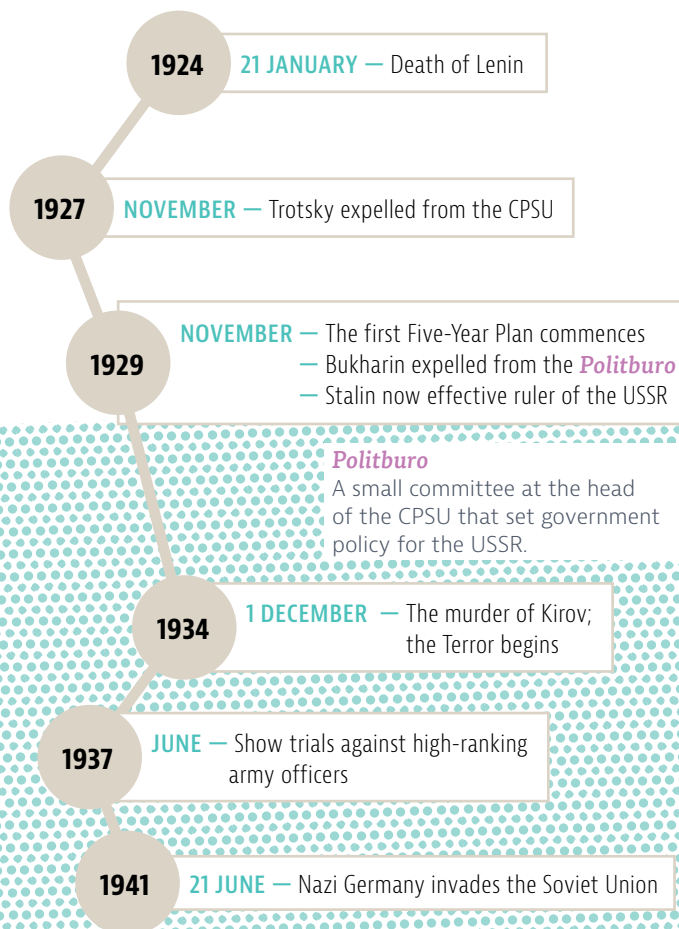
STALIN'S RUSSIA, 1924–1941

'We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it or we will be crushed.'

JOSEPH STALIN, 1931

Upon Lenin's death in January 1924, a bitter power struggle broke out among the leading members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU; formerly the Bolshevik Party). By 1929, after five years of jockeying for position, alliances and betrayals, Joseph Stalin emerged as the effective ruler of the Soviet Union. Stalin had already implemented his Five-Year Plans, through which he aimed to modernise and industrialise the Soviet Union. Initially this required the state to requisition more grain from the peasants. The ruthlessness of the collectivisation and procurement programs in the 1930s led to one of the worst human-induced famines in history. Millions of Soviet citizens were taken from their homes and transported to factories, refineries and mines over the vast distances of the USSR. To consolidate his personal rule, Stalin also eliminated thousands of CPSU members and army officers. The result was a demographic catastrophe but an economic success. By the time of the Nazi invasion on 22 June 1941, the Soviet Union had industrialised and modernised to the point that it could halt and drive back the Nazi war machine. By May 1945, the red flag of the USSR was unfurled over Berlin as the USSR helped secure Allied victory over Germany in World War II.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS



KEY QUESTIONS

- How did Stalin become leader of the Soviet Union by 1929?
- Why did Stalin embark on a mass collectivisation and requisitioning program in the late 1920s?
- What effect did this have on the Russian peasantry?
- What was the aim of the Five-Year Plans, and to what extent were they successful?
- Why did Stalin launch the Great Purge in 1936?
- To what extent did life improve for the average Soviet citizen during the 1930s?

**Source 4.01**

A propaganda poster from 1933. The caption on the lower right reads, 'Captain of the nation of Soviets leads us from victory to victory'. The letters on the wheel stand for 'USSR'.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS**JOSEPH STALIN**

General Secretary of the CPSU (1922–1953)

Becomes undisputed leader of the USSR by 1929

**LEON TROTSKY**

Exiled by Stalin in 1927–1928

Assassinated by Stalin's agents in 1940

**NIKOLAI BUKHARIN**

Leading member of the Politburo

Exiled by Stalin in 1927–1928

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

The period of Stalin's rule examined in this chapter presents historians and students of the past with challenging and confronting questions. The sheer number of deaths, not to mention the millions of lives turned upside down by the regime, naturally invite us to pose the following questions. Reflect on these as you work through this chapter.

4.01 Why did Stalin embark on such a rapid and wide-ranging modernisation program?

4.02 What was the effect of this on the lives of ordinary Soviet men, women and children? Did their lives get better or worse under Stalin's reign?

THE GREAT POWER STRUGGLE

LENIN (ADAPTED): 'Stalin is too rude ... That is why I suggest he be removed from his post.'

Even before Lenin died on 21 January 1924, it was evident to him that a power struggle to replace him was occurring at the highest level of the Communist Party. On 25 December 1922, Lenin drafted a letter to be read at the next Party Congress following his death, in which he outlined his thoughts on his potential successors.

Each of the potential candidates had at least some chance of being Lenin's successor. There was even a strong likelihood that the party would move towards collective leadership through Sovnarkom or the Politburo. Regardless of the potential outcome, Stalin was overlooked by his potential rivals as lacking in intellect, as well as being somewhat dull and too eager to take on dreary administrative roles within the party. However, what they did not know was that Stalin had already positioned himself as the frontrunner in the race to replace Lenin.¹

Comintern

The Communist International, established in 1919, was an umbrella organisation for communist parties.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

4.03 Based on the information presented on this page, and any other research you conduct, who do you think was best qualified for the leadership of the Communist Party and the USSR after Lenin's death? Discuss your answer with a partner and share your views with the class.

LENIN'S POTENTIAL SUCCESSORS

LEON TROTSKY

- Joined the party in August 1917.
- As head of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, planned and carried out the October Revolution.
- Commissar for Foreign Affairs.
- Negotiated the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.
- Commissar for War during the Civil War.



Comments in Lenin's letter

Comrade Trotsky ... is distinguished not only by his outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most capable man in the present Central Committee but he has displayed excessive self-assurance and shown excessive pre-occupation with the purely administrative side of the work.

NIKOLAI BUKHARIN

- Joined the party in 1904.
- Chairman of *Comintern* from 1926.
- Chief Editor of *Pravda* ('Truth'), the newspaper of the CPSU.



Comments in Lenin's letter

[Bukharin] is the most outstanding figure and the following must be borne in mind about him: Bukharin is not only the most valuable and major theorist of the Party; he is also rightly considered the favourite of the whole Party, but his theoretical views can be classified as Marxist only with great reserve.

LEV KAMENEV

- Joined the party in 1905.
- Opposed the October Revolution in an article co-authored with Zinoviev in *New Life* magazine.
- Head of the party in Moscow.
- Commissar for Foreign Trade.



Comments in Lenin's letter

Recall that the October episode with Zinoviev and Kamenev was no accident, but neither can the blame for it be laid upon them personally.

JOSEPH STALIN

- Joined the party in 1902.
- Commissar for Nationalities.
- Liaison Officer between the Politburo and the Orgburo.
- Head of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate.
- General Secretary of the CPSU.



Comments in Lenin's letter

Comrade Stalin, having become Secretary-General, has unlimited power concentrated in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that power with sufficient caution ... Stalin is too rude and this defect ... becomes intolerable in a Secretary-General. That is why I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from this post.

GRIGORI ZINOVIEV

- Joined the party in 1903.
- Opposed the October Revolution in an article co-authored with Kamenev in *New Life* magazine.
- Head of the party in Leningrad.
- Chairman of Comintern until 1926.



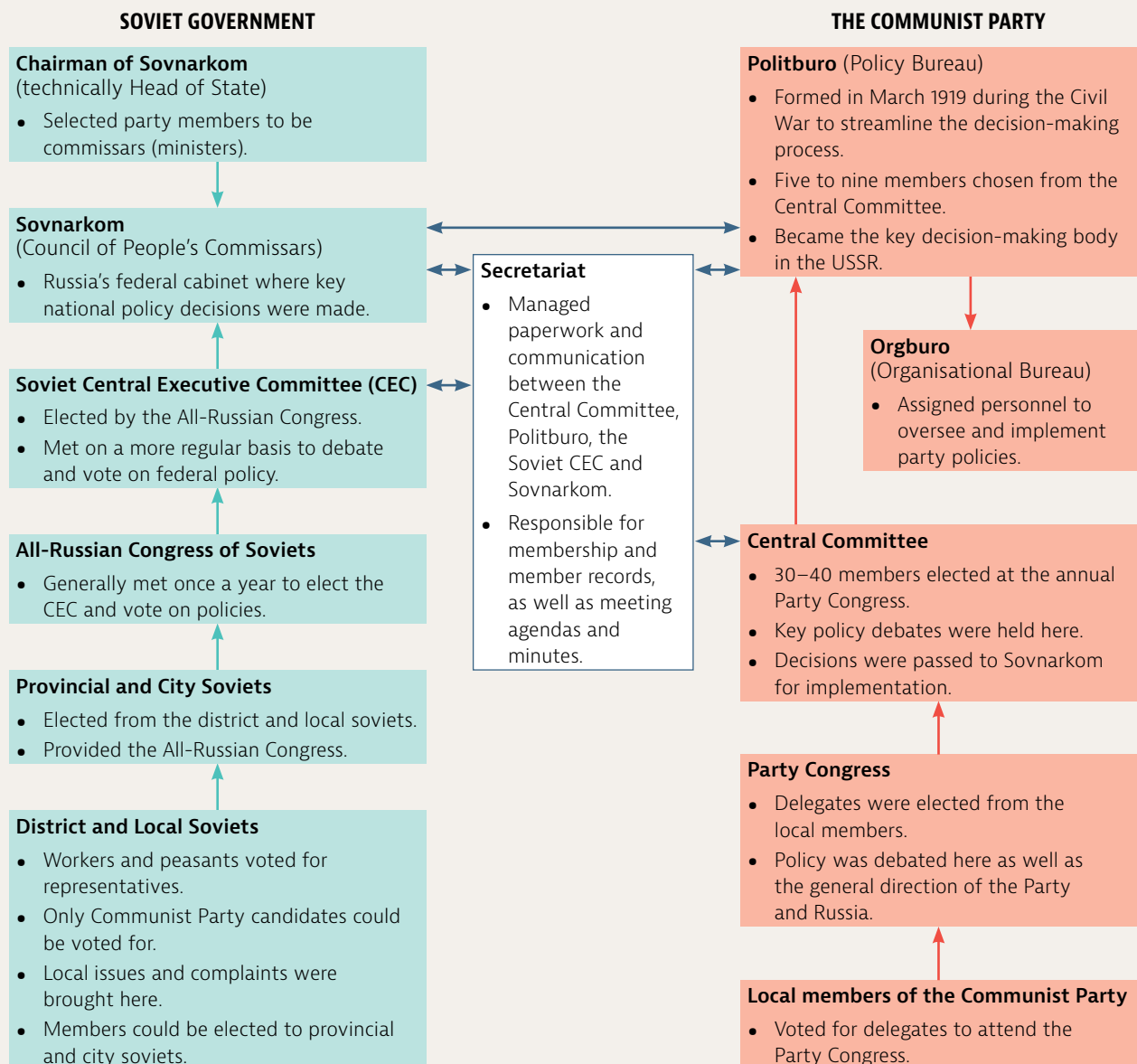
Source 4.02 Extracts from Lenin's Testament in V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works* vol. 36 (Moscow: Progress Press), 594–596.



THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE SOVIETS

It can be difficult to understand the structure of the political system in the Soviet Union and how it differed from the structure of the CPSU. It can also be challenging to understand where power actually lay in this system, as usually the most powerful individual was not Head of State (i.e. Chairman of Sovnarkom) but the General Secretary of the CPSU. This diagram has been designed to help clarify the inner workings of the Soviet and CPSU structures. This will also help you understand how Stalin came to dominate the USSR by the late 1920s.

It is important to note that the Soviet system was the government structure (similar to Australia's federal and state governments) that could have been led by multiple parties (which they were initially). However, by the time of Lenin's death, the Communist Party was the only legal political party, making Russia a one-party state. In that way decisions made by the party automatically became government policy.



In the contest to succeed Lenin as head of the Communist Party and Soviet Russia, Stalin had several advantages that gave him a significant head start over his more intellectual but less politically astute rivals. In fact, some of Stalin's rivals thought they could use him in their own bid for power. They did not realise that Stalin was using them. Stalin established several advantages over his rivals.

- **Administration:** Stalin was appointed general secretary of the party in 1922. This gave him access to files and correspondence of 26,000 party members. He was also responsible for recruitment and promotions.²
- **The 'Lenin Enrolment':** More than 500,000 new members joined the party between 1923 and 1925. Most of these were ordinary workers who identified with Stalin's humble upbringing. Stalin promoted these new members who voted for his policies at crucial meetings.³
- **The 'Lenin Legacy':** Lenin was seen as almost godlike after his death, and Stalin claimed to be carrying on Lenin's work towards socialism. This made Stalin popular and difficult to challenge politically.
- **The Ban on Factionalism:** Lenin imposed this decree on the party in March 1921 to prevent opposition to the NEP. One of the punishments was banishment from the party. Stalin used this against his political rivals.
- **Suppression of Lenin's Testament:** Lenin had asked that his Testament be read at a party conference, but Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky prevented this. They feared the damage it would do to their reputation, but they also protected Stalin from the criticism Lenin aimed at him.⁴

STALIN THE SURVIVOR

From 1924 to 1929, Stalin outwitted all of his rivals to become the undisputed ruler of the Communist Party and the USSR. He used all of his political talents, as well as astute changes in policy, to turn his rivals against each other to ensure that he was the last man standing. Stalin achieved this in a number of steps.

1

DEFEAT OF THE LEFT OPPOSITION

- In 1924, Trotsky attacked the growing bureaucratisation of the party.
- This threatened the position of many leading Communist Party members.
- Stalin sided with Zinoviev and Kamenev (who saw Trotsky as the greater threat) to force Trotsky to resign his powerful post as Commissar for War in 1925.

3

DEFEAT OF THE RIGHT

- By the end of 1927 Stalin began exploring the idea of ending the NEP (which had been the policy of the Left Opposition).
- Seeing the threat to his position as a supporter of the NEP, Bukharin attempts or organise a final attempt to remove Stalin from power.
- Stalin was too strong by now, as he had too many supporters—and their votes—in various levels of the Party and Soviet structure.
- In early 1929, Bukharin was voted out of the Politburo and his supporters on the right lost all their influence in Party affairs.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

4.04 Explain why decisions made in the Communist Party committees automatically became government policy.

4.05 What were Stalin's strengths at the beginning of the contest to replace Lenin? What advantages and disadvantages did each of his rivals possess?

4.06 How did Stalin's rivals inadvertently help him rise to the top by 1929?

THE UNITED FRONT

2

- Realising too late the threat posed by Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev join forces with Trotsky in April 1926 in the so-called 'United Front'.
- They call for an end to the NEP and the resumption of worldwide revolution.
- This was a challenge to Stalin's desire to continue the NEP and develop 'Socialism in One Country'.
- Stalin joined forces with Bukharin on the right of the party and, using Lenin's Ban on Factionalism from 1921, was able to defeat the United Front in a series of decisive Party Congress votes.
- By December 1927 Trotsky was exiled to Alma Ata in Kazakhstan. Zinoviev and Kamenev were expelled from the party at the same time.

END GAME

4

- By 1929, the year of his fiftieth birthday, Stalin had removed all of his main rivals from important posts or forced them into exile.
- Stalin was now the undisputed master of the party and the USSR, and would remain so until his death in 1953.



➔ **Source 4.03** Lenin and Stalin in September 1922.



WHAT WAS THE USSR?

The USSR was officially formed in December 1922 and lasted until 25 December 1991, when it voted itself out of existence. It stands for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and started as a union of six states that formed at the end of the Russian Civil War (1918–1920). Although theoretically a union of equals, Russia (or the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, or RSFSR) was the dominant country. Over the next eighteen years, neighbouring countries were brought into the Union, usually against their will.

In textbooks and other works of history, historians will often use the terms USSR, Soviet Union and Soviet Russia interchangeably. When the term 'Russia' is used in the context of the period 1922–1991, it usually stands for the USSR, though this is not technically accurate.

NATION	ENTERED THE USSR	LEFT THE USSR
Russian Federation	28 December 1922	12 December 1991
Ukraine	28 December 1922	24 August 1991
Belarus	28 December 1922	25 August 1991
Georgia*	28 December 1922	9 April 1991
Armenia*	28 December 1922	21 September 1991
Azerbaijan*	28 December 1922	30 August 1991
Tajikistan	14 October 1924	9 September 1991
Uzbekistan	27 October 1924	31 August 1991
Turkmenistan	13 May 1925	27 October 1991
Kazakhstan	5 December 1936	16 December 1991
Kyrgyzstan	5 December 1936	31 August 1991
Moldova	2 August 1940	27 August 1991
Latvia	August 1940	21 August 1991
Lithuania	August 1940	11 March 1990
Estonia	August 1940	20 August 1991

* Known collectively as the Transcaucasian Republic from 1922 to 1936.

Source 4.04



THE FIVE-YEAR PLANS

STALIN: 'We do not want to be beaten. No, we refuse to be beaten!'

By the mid-1920s, the NEP (which had been unveiled by Lenin at the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921) had seemingly stabilised the Soviet Union, which had been on the brink of economic collapse only a few years earlier. In pure statistical terms, the NEP had been a success.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE NEP			
	1913	1922	1925
Sown area (millions of hectares)	105.0	77.7	104.3
Grain harvest (million tons)	80.1	50.3	72.5
Horses (million head)	35.5	24.1	27.1
Cattle (million head)	58.9	45.8	62.1
Pigs (million head)	20.3	12.0	21.8

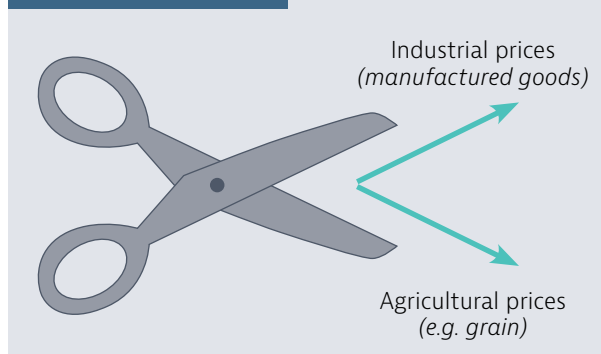
Source 4.05 Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 101.

However, a number of events in the mid to late 1920s convinced Stalin to abandon the NEP and embark on a vast and rapid modernisation program of Soviet industry and agriculture.

THE 'SCISSORS CRISIS'

A significant gap emerged between the price that farmers could get for their grain and the cost of manufactured goods. This was a result of the rapid recovery of the agricultural sector and the much slower recovery of the industrial sector. (When graphed on a chart, it resembled a pair of scissors.) Stalin believed that the solution was to take greater control of the economy to increase industrial production, which would drive down the price of manufactured goods so that peasants could afford to buy them.

THE 'SCISSORS CRISIS'



ECONOMICS

In 1927–1928 the 'procurement crisis' occurred. The grain harvest of that season was two million tons short of estimates. This was a result of the low price of grain—which made farmers reluctant to sell, and instead store their surplus in the hope that the price would rise in the future—as well as the inefficient methods used by the peasants.⁵ There was bread rationing in the cities in 1928, and Stalin was well aware of the consequences of not having enough affordable bread for the workers.⁶

IDEOLOGY

The NEP had caused a deep division within the Communist Party between those on the right (who saw it as the only way to build up socialism) and those on the left (who perceived it as a betrayal of Marxist principles). The NEP had seen the rise of the NEPmen (middle-class merchants who made money buying and selling goods) and a better-off class of peasant known as the kulaks (Russian for 'fist'). By ending the NEP, Stalin could eliminate these two social classes and bring Russia closer to the idea of true socialism.

POLITICS

By first supporting and then abandoning the NEP, Stalin was able to wrong-foot and isolate his opponents on the left, then the right, in the contest to become party leader after the death of Lenin.

SECURITY

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Stalin was deeply concerned in the late 1920s that the West would once more invade the Soviet Union. They had already done so during the Civil War (1918–1920), and in 1927 Stalin believed they would do so again—particularly when the British government raided the Soviet trade mission in London.⁷

procurement

When the state takes the resources or produce of its citizens; requisitioning.

surplus

More than what is needed.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

4.07 List and explain the factors that convinced Stalin to begin a rapid modernisation program.

4.08 In your opinion, which would have been the most significant factor? Justify your choice.




Stalin on Soviet modernisation

[Stalin delivered this speech to Industry Managers on 4 February 1931 (when the first Five-Year Plan was already underway). He outlines one of the main reasons for ending the NEP and embarking on the Five-Year Plans]

To slacken the tempo [of the Five-Year Plans] would mean falling behind. And those who fall behind get beaten. But we do not want to be beaten. No, we refuse to be beaten! One feature of the history of old Russia was the continual beatings she suffered because of her backwardness. She was beaten by Mongol khans. She was beaten by the Turkish beys. She was beaten by the Swedish feudal lords. She was beaten by the Polish and Lithuanian gentry. She was beaten by the British and French capitalists. She was beaten by the Japanese barons. All beat her because of her backwardness, military backwardness, cultural backwardness, political backwardness, industrial backwardness, agricultural backwardness. They beat her because to do so was profitable and could be done with impunity [fear from punishment or consequence] ...

In the past we had no fatherland, nor could we have had one. But now that we have overthrown capitalism and power is in our hands, in the hands of the people, we have a fatherland, and we will defend its independence. Do you want our fatherland to be beaten and to lose its independence? If you do not want this you must put an end to its backwardness in the shortest possible time and develop a genuinely Bolshevik tempo in building up its socialist system of economy. There is no other way. That is why Lenin said on the eve of the October Revolution: 'Either we perish, or overtake and outstrip the advanced capitalist countries.'

We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or we shall be crushed.

 **Source 4.06** Joseph Stalin, *Problems of Leninism* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1945), 455–456.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 4.06 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

4.09 Why, according to Stalin, could the pace of the Five-Year Plans not be slowed?

4.10 Stalin uses very specific terms when he describes the foreign powers that invaded Russia (such as 'beys' and 'gentry'). Why do you think Stalin used these terms?

4.11 Explain why Stalin's comment at the end of this extract is strangely prophetic.

4.12 Evaluate the extent to which fear of foreign invasion was the factor that drove Stalin to the Five-Year Plans. Use evidence to support your response.

THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN, 1928–1933

Much like Finance Minister Sergei Witte in the 1890s, Stalin wanted to increase the Soviet Union's industrial development rapidly so that advanced weaponry could be built to defend the country from future attack. This would be Stalin's 'revolution from above'. However, people would be flocking to the cities to work in the new factories, and foreign currency was needed to purchase technical equipment and hire foreign engineers. To achieve this, Stalin knew that he had to increase drastically both the amount of grain grown in the Soviet Union *and* the percentage of the harvest procured by the government. In 1928, the last harvest grown under the NEP, the government collected 15 per cent from the peasantry,⁸ which was only three-quarters of what had been procured in 1926.⁹ Stalin would have to increase this sharply if he were to meet his modernisation plans.

COLLECTIVISATION AND REQUISITIONING

The answer to the procurement crisis, and what would become the opening stage of the first Five-Year Plan, was **collectivisation** and **requisitioning**. In 1928 approximately 97.3 per cent of farms in the USSR were privately owned. These small plots were inefficiently farmed, and the peasants were reluctant to sell their grain to the state for artificially low prices. The way around this obstacle was, as Stalin announced at the

collectivisation

A Soviet program initiated in the late 1920s to consolidate small peasant farm holdings into large-scale collective farms.

requisitioning

Another term for procurement.



Fifteenth Party Congress in December 1927, 'to turn the small and scattered peasant farms into large united farms based upon cultivation of the land in common'.¹⁰ This effectively marked the end of the NEP. Collecting smaller plots of privately held farms into fewer, larger collective farms would make farming more efficient and greatly simplify the process of gathering grain from the peasants. It would facilitate the use of heavy farming machinery (such as harvesters and tractors operated in state-run motor transport stations), and release peasants from the land to work in the new factories.¹¹ It would also be easier for state-trained agricultural experts to visit large farms to pass on their advice to the peasants.

There would be two types of new farms under this program:

1. *Kolkhozy* were farms run as cooperatives in which peasants pooled their resources (e.g. land, animals, farming implements) and shared the labour and the wages
2. *Sovkhozy* were farms worked by peasants employed and paid directly by the state.

In purely statistical terms, the collectivisation program was successful. In the 1920s, the Soviet Union's 124 million peasants lived in 614,000 villages and worked on approximately twenty-five million privately owned plots of land.¹² By 1936, 90 per

cent of farms (which amounted to more than 94 per cent of the sown acreage) had been merged into 250,000 collective farms. As historian David Christian notes, 'rural capitalism was dead in the Soviet Union'.¹³ This would, in theory, make the gathering—or requisitioning—of a portion of the harvest easier for the government. However, the reality was a social and economic catastrophe.

THE LIQUIDATION OF THE KULAKS

Stalin determined that collectivisation had to occur as quickly as possible. At first the process was voluntary, but by the autumn of 1929 coercion was used to increase the pace. Inevitably there was widespread resistance, sometimes violent. Many of the fiercest opponents of enforced collectivisation were the kulaks.

In economic terms, kulaks were peasants who were moderately more successful than their neighbours. Some had bought land under Stolypin's reforms of 1906–1907, while others had prospered under the NEP. Typically they were harder-working peasants who may have owned one or two horses, occasionally hired people to work on their farms, and produced a small surplus to sell on the open market.¹⁴ According to historian S.A. Smith, the kulaks made up about 3.2 per cent of the peasant population.¹⁵ The kulaks were blamed, quite wrongly, for the harvest and procurement shortages of the late 1920s.

Source 4.07 A Soviet propaganda picture of peasants harvesting hay in Ukraine, 1933.



Did you know? The term 'kulak' means 'fist' in Russian, referring to the fact that kulaks held land as private owners. It also stemmed from the belief of poorer peasants and the Communist Party that the kulaks 'held' power over the other farms in the village in terms of lending farming implements and money, and paying poorer peasants to work on their land.


CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 4.13 What was the overriding purpose of Stalin's modernisation program?
- 4.14 What was the main obstacle he faced in implementing this program?
- 4.15 What was the purpose of Stalin's collectivisation scheme?
- 4.16 What were the outcomes of this scheme?



Stalin blames the kulaks, speech in Siberia, 1928

You have had a bumper harvest ... Your grain surpluses are bigger than ever before. Yet the plan for grain procurement is not being fulfilled. Why? ... Look at the kulak farms: their barns and sheds are crammed with grain ... You say that the kulaks are unwilling to deliver grain, that they are waiting for prices to rise, and prefer to engage in unbridled speculation. That is true. But kulaks ... are demanding an increase in prices to three times those fixed by the government ... But there is no guarantee that the kulaks will not again sabotage the grain procurements next year. More, it may be said with uncertainty that so long as there are kulaks, so long will there be sabotage of grain procurements.

 **Source 4.08** Cited in J. Bassett and P. Baker, *Stalin's Revolution: The USSR 1924–1927* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1988).

Stalin initiated a **dekulakisation** campaign that encouraged Party officials and poorer peasants to seize the land and property of the kulaks and turn it over to the collective farm. This played upon the jealousy of the *bedniaks* (the poorest peasants with no livestock or farming implements of their own), and fulfilled Stalin's desire to eliminate the last vestiges of capitalism in the countryside.¹⁶ Half of the farms in the USSR were collectivised from December 1929 to March 1930. However, in that time Soviet records note that there were 30,000 acts of arson and 229 organised uprisings in the countryside.¹⁷ For political reasons, anyone who resisted was now labelled by the regime as a kulak.¹⁸ This identified them as an enemy of both the state and the poorer peasants. This justified brutalisation and dispossession of the kulaks and, eventually, their elimination. Stalin made very clear his thoughts on what should be done with them in a speech on **agrarian** policy on 29 December 1929.

Eliminate the kulaks

Until recently the Party adhered to the policy of restricting the exploiting habits of the kulaks; [now] we have passed ... to the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class. We are able to carry on a determined offensive against the kulaks, break their resistance, eliminate them as a class and replace their output by the output of the collective farms and state farms. Now dekulakisation ... is an integral part of the formation and development of the collective farms ... There is another question which seems no less ridiculous: whether the kulaks should be permitted to join the collective farms. Of course not—for they are the sworn enemies of collectivisation.

Other forms of resistance included the burning of crops and killing of livestock before the government could take them; the destruction of homes, barns and farming tools; and recapturing requisitioned harvests and animals from state convoys. Government officials and requisition squads were sometimes beaten up or even killed.¹⁹ To combat this resistance, which was most pronounced in the resource-rich Ukraine and Caucasus, the regime sent in soldiers with armoured vehicles and machine guns. Agents of the **OGPU**, the secret state police, were sent in to arrest ringleaders and deport them to remote areas of the USSR such as Siberia. When local party officials proved reluctant to enforce collectivisation methods, Stalin created dekulakisation squads by enlisting 25,000 party

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 4.08 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 4.17** What problem does Stalin identify at the start of this extract?
- 4.18** Who does Stalin blame for this?
- 4.19** According to Stalin, what has this group been doing to create and exacerbate the problem?
- 4.20** What warning does Stalin make? What might be the consequences of failing to heed this warning?

Using Source 4.09 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.


- 4.21** According to Stalin, what had the party policy been in relation to the kulaks?
- 4.22** What had it changed to?
- 4.23** What words and phrases does Stalin employ to portray the kulaks as an enemy?
- 4.24** What will be the fate of the kulaks under the collectivisation program according to Stalin?

dekulakisation

Soviet campaign to eliminate the kulaks as a class.

agrarian

A society whose economy is predominantly based on farming instead of industry.

 **Source 4.09** Joseph Stalin, *Problems of Leninism* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1945), 391–393, 408–409, 411–412.

Did you know? Stalin was known for his callous remarks about the fate of his enemies. In his speech on the elimination of the kulaks in December 1929, Stalin said, 'When the head is off, one does not mourn the hair!'

OGPU

Replaced the Cheka as the secret state police of the USSR.



HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 4.10 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

4.25 Do you think it likely that the protest depicted in the source was spontaneous? Explain your response.

4.26 If this protest were not organised by the peasants, who would have organised it and for what purpose?

4.27 Explain how the Russian peasants responded to the collectivisation and requisitioning programs.

4.28 Evaluate the degree of support among Russians for the collectivisation and requisitioning programs. Use evidence to support your answer.

➔ **Source 4.10** Peasants marching in a 'spontaneous' protest against the kulaks in 1930. The banner reads, 'We demand collectivisation and the extermination of the kulaks as a class'.



THE CONSEQUENCES OF COLLECTIVISATION

The consequences of the collectivisation and requisitioning programs for the peasantry of the USSR were devastating. While it is impossible to know the exact number of deaths, historians have estimated that the number of Soviet citizens who died as a result of famine (caused by collectivisation and requisitioning) and execution by the **NKVD** is somewhere between five and ten million, with modern historians such as Davies and Wheatcroft putting the figure at approximately six million.²⁰ Michael Ellman gives a higher figure of 8.5 million.²¹ The slaughter and consumption of livestock before it fell into the hands of requisitioning squads also had a profound impact on Russian society.

In addition, the number of horses fell from thirty-four million in 1928 to 16.5 million in 1934.²² According to historian David Christian, this severe decline in livestock 'condemned a whole generation of Russians to a meatless diet'.²³

NKVD

The secret police organisation that replaced the OGPU.

⬇ **Source 4.11** Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 176.

Head of livestock in the USSR, 1928–1935

	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Cattle (million head)	70.5	67.1	52.3	47.9	40.1	38.4	42.4	49.3
Pigs (million head)	26.0	20.4	13.6	14.4	11.6	12.1	17.4	22.6
Sheep and goats (million head)	146.7	147.0	108.8	77.7	52.1	50.2	51.9	61.1



THE GREAT FAMINE

A combination of the loss of draught animals (i.e. those that pull ploughs), the deportation or execution of millions of farmers, the increased requisitioning of the harvest, and the transportation of grain to the cities sparked one of the worst human-induced famines of the century. In 1928 the harvest was 73.3 million tons, of which the government requisitioned 15 per cent. In 1936, the harvest had fallen to fifty-nine million tons, yet the government requisitioned 47 per cent. The result was a rural famine in which, during the mid-1930s, possibly five to six million people starved to death.²⁴ Particularly hard hit was Ukraine, with its vast wheat fields. Other areas such as the North Caucasus and Kazakhstan were also badly affected. In Ukraine the catastrophe known as the *Holodomor* ('death by hunger') is commemorated to this day.

By the end of the 1930s, the Soviet government had won what was essentially a civil war against the peasantry. In 1940 (the year before the Nazi invasion), the grain harvest was 86.2 million tons, and 42 per cent of this was requisitioned by the state. This was sufficient to support Stalin's industrialisation schemes, but the peasantry had paid a terrible price.

INDUSTRIALISATION IN THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Stalin regarded it as necessary that the USSR be prepared for the next war with the capitalist powers, which he regarded as inevitable. The weapons of twentieth-century warfare, such as aircraft, artillery, tanks and armoured cars, all required the exploitation of iron, coal, oil and steel resources. The first Five-Year Plan (1928–1932) would focus on a massive increase in the mining and processing of these raw materials. Russia's own Industrial Revolution (Witte's 'great spurt' of the 1890s) was much later and less comprehensive than those in the West. Stalin was determined that the USSR would catch up rapidly with its enemies through a massive, state-planned and state-organised heavy industry program. This would be directed by *Gosplan*, the State Planning Authority, which set the targets to be reached in each area of the economy. It was up to regional governments and factory managers to determine how best to meet those targets. Initial success in 1929 saw the optimal targets amended upwards to absurdly high levels that were impossible to achieve.

CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

Answer the following questions by writing a 300-word response for each. Use evidence to support your response.

4.29 Why did Stalin initiate the collectivisation and requisitioning programs?

4.30 What was the effect of these programs on the people of the USSR?

Holodomor

Meaning 'death by hunger' in Ukrainian, the term refers to the starvation of millions of people in Ukraine in 1932–1933, as a result of Soviet policies.

Gosplan

The Soviet agency responsible for setting quotas in the Five-Year Plans.

HOLODOMOR

While Stalin's Five-Year Plans had a terrible effect on all of the nations within the USSR, it was particularly devastating for the people of Ukraine. This country has long been known as the 'bread basket of Europe', and Stalin needed its grain-growing capacity to feed the workers streaming into the factories and cities across the Soviet Union. The requisitioning of grain from the fields of Ukraine was particularly harsh, leaving virtually no food for the peasants. Estimates vary, as no accurate records were kept, but somewhere between 3–5 million Ukrainians died of starvation between 1932 and 1933. Some sources suggest that the figure might be even higher.²⁵ This is called the *Holodomor*, which means death by deliberate starvation. This tragic episode in human history is commemorated in Ukraine today and by Ukrainian communities all around the world.



↑ A Holodomor memorial in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine.



The goals and actual output of the first Five-Year Plan

	1927–1928 (ACTUAL OUTPUT)	1932–1933 GOAL (OPTIMAL)	1932 GOAL (AMENDED)	1932 (ACTUAL OUTPUT)
Coal (million tons)	35.0	75.0	95–105	64.0
Oil (million tons)	11.7	21.7	40–55	21.4
Iron ore (million tons)	6.7	20.2	24–32	12.1
Pig iron (million tons)	3.2	10.0	15–16	6.2
Steel (million tons)	4.0	10.4	[not available]	5.9
Electricity (million kWh)	505	2200	[not available]	13.4

↑ **Source 4.12** Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 180, 183.

Despite the real advances, the actual output of the first Five-Year Plan fell far short of expectations. This was partly due to the unrealistic goals set and a result of the rapid pace and lack of experience of the party members who supervised the program. Different industries and factories competed for scarce resources and skilled labour as they scrambled to meet the quotas set by the party. The railway network could not cope with the increased demands placed on it, so factories often sat idle due to a lack of raw materials. At the same time, due to overall mismanagement there was overproduction of certain goods and parts that could not be used. The rush for quantity came at the expense of quality. The steel and pig iron produced in vast plants was often of such a poor standard that it could not be used.²⁶

Despite the setbacks and failures, there were some spectacular successes. Magnitogorsk, the massive iron and steel production centre in the Ural Mountains, grew from a tiny village of twenty-five people in 1929 to a sprawling industrial site of 250,000 in three years.²⁷ Work began on the world's then-largest hydroelectric dam on the Dnieper River in 1927, and projects such as the Moscow-Volga and Volga-White Sea canals made the transportation of goods across the country somewhat easier.



← **Source 4.13** The Magnitogorsk iron and steel plant in the Ural Mountains.

↓ **Source 4.14** Construction continues on the Dnieper River Dam in Ukraine.



MINER ALEXEI STAKHANOV

At 10 am on 30 August 1933, a miner named Alexei Stakhanov started his shift in a coal mine in the Donets Basin in eastern Ukraine. Six hours later, Stakhanov had mined 102 tons of coal, nearly fourteen times the expected quota. This remarkable feat was communicated throughout the USSR using propaganda as an example to all other Soviet workers. The 'Stakhanov Movement' was formed by the party to encourage workers to emulate Stakhanov, and to ridicule and punish those who did not. However, it was revealed in the 1980s that Stakhanov's achievement was not all it seemed. The whole event had been planned beforehand, and a team of miners was on hand to help Stakhanov remove the coal and prop up the walls as he dug deeper. Usually a miner had to do this by himself.



Source 4.15 Alexei Stakhanov, on the right, working in a coal mine with a colleague.

THE SECOND AND THIRD FIVE-YEAR PLANS

The second Five-Year Plan (1933–1937) attempted to rectify many of the problems that emerged in the First. More careful planning was carried out and realistic quotas set. Better training was offered to workers and managers, and a greater emphasis was placed on manufacturing consumer goods so that ordinary Russians could recognise the benefits of the program for which they were sacrificing so much. Some of the wastage and shortages of the first Five-Year Plan was also overcome. While there was still a focus on heavy industry, minerals such as zinc, lead and tin were mined more intensively. Emphasis was also placed on the transportation system, with many thousands of kilometres of railway track and canals built. The palatial underground Mayakovskaya train station in Moscow was built at this time as a showpiece to the world about the achievements of Soviet modernisation.²⁸



Source 4.16 The grand interior of the Mayakovskaya railway station, part of the Moscow Metro network, was opened in 1938.

The goals and actual output of the second Five-Year Plan

	1932 (ACTUAL)	1937 (PLANNED)	1937 (ACTUAL)
Coal (million tons)	64.0	152.5	128.0
Oil (million tons)	21.4	46.8	28.5
Pig iron (million tons)	6.2	16.0	14.5
Steel (million tons)	5.9	17.0	17.7
Electricity (million kWh)	1340	3800	3620

Source 4.16 Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 216.



The international situation had already started to deteriorate during the course of the second Five-Year Plan, and as a consequence the third Five-Year Plan (intended to run from 1938–1942) focused on the defence industry. With Hitler's blatant anti-communism and demands for expanded territory in the east, it became critical for the Soviet Union to start rearming. Government expenditure over the 1930s reflected this new emphasis.

➔ **Source 4.17** Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 216.

roubles
The currency of imperial Russia and the Soviet Union.

Government expenditure in the 1930s

EXPENDITURE OF ARMAMENTS	1933	1937	1940
Total spending (millions of roubles)	42,080	106,238	174,350
Defence spending (millions of roubles)	1421	17,481	56,800
Total spent on defence (per cent of GNP)	3.4	16.5	32.6

ASSESSING THE FIVE-YEAR PLANS

Evaluating the overall success of Stalin's Five-Year Plans is difficult because so much was accomplished at such an enormous cost. Historian Robert Service notes, 'The USSR under Stalin's rule had been pointed decisively in the direction of becoming an industrial, urban society. This had been his great objective.'²⁹ By 1940, the Soviet Union had become one of the great industrial nations of the world. Between 1927 and 1940, production of industrial goods in 1940 was 2.6 times greater than it had been in 1927. The size of the urban workforce (i.e. people living in the cities and working in factories) had increased rapidly, and unemployment dropped from approximately 1.7 million in 1928 to virtually zero on the eve of World War II. Compared to other Western nations, which were experiencing the worst effects of the Great Depression, the Soviet Union advanced steadily. The **Gross National Product (GNP)** of the Soviet Union increased by 12 per cent between 1928 and 1937, while that of the US was 1.3 per cent, Germany 2.6 per cent and Great Britain 2.5 per cent.³⁰

Gross National Product (GNP)
The approximate value of all goods and services produced by one country in a year.

➔ **Source 4.18** Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives* (London: Fontana Press, 1991), 296.

Historian Alan Bullock on the overall consequences of the Five-Year Plans

With all its shortcomings and failures, Soviet industry under the Five-Year Plans achieved the quantum leap which made good Stalin's premature boast of June 1930 that the USSR was on the eve of changing from an agrarian to an industrial society. If it had not, Russia could not have recovered sufficiently from the German attack of 1941 to continue the war and eventually carry it to the Elbe [a river in central Germany].

While Bullock notes the important role played by the Five-Year Plans in helping the Soviet Union absorb and then throw back the Nazis, he also comments on the profound impact of Stalin's plans on Soviet society.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 4.31 What was the overall purpose of the industrialisation component of the first Five-Year Plan?
- 4.32 What role did Gosplan play in this program?
- 4.33 Why were the targets of the first Five-Year Plan not met?
- 4.34 What successes did the first Five-Year Plan accomplish?
- 4.35 Why did the Soviet government promote the Stakhanov Movement?
- 4.36 How were the second and third Five-Year Plans different to the first?

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- 4.37 Write a 300-word response explaining the extent to which the industrialisation program under the Five-Year Plans was an economic success. Use evidence to support your response.



Robert Service on the impact of the Five-Year Plans

The First Five-Year Plan, scheduled to last to the end of 1933, was completed a year ahead of schedule. National income had nearly doubled since the tax-year 1927–8. Gross industrial output had risen by a remarkable 137 per cent. Within industry, the output of capital goods registered a still more impressive increase of 285 per cent. The total employed labour force had soared from 11.3 million under the New Economic Policy to 22.8 million. The figures had to be treated with some caution. Stalin and his associates were never averse to claiming more for their achievements than they should have done; and indeed they themselves derived information from lower echelons of party and government which systematically misled them. Disruption was everywhere in the economy. Ukraine, south Russia and Kazakhstan were starving. The **Gulag** heaved with prisoners. Nevertheless, the economic transformation was no fiction. The USSR under Stalin's rule had been pointed decisively in the direction of becoming an industrial, urban society. This had been his great objective. His gamble was paying off for him, albeit not for his millions of victims. Magnitogorsk and the White Sea–Baltic Canal were constructed at the expense of the lives of Gulag convicts, Ukrainian peasants and even undernourished, overworked factory labourers. ... Probably six million people died in a famine which was the direct consequence of state policy.

Source 4.19 Robert Service, *Stalin: A Biography* (London: Pan Macmillan, 2010), 274–275, 312.

gulag

A prison or forced-labour camp.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—INTERPRETATIONS

Using Sources 4.18 and 4.19 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

4.38 According to Bullock and Service, what were the positive and negative outcomes of the Five-Year Plans?

4.39 Using both sources, explain why Stalin embarked on a massive modernisation program in agriculture and industry.

4.40 Robert Service cites the figure of six million dead in the famine. Other historians (see p. 100) offer different figures. What might account for the different figures used by historians?

4.41 Evaluate the extent to which the positive outcomes of Stalin's economic policies were outweighed by the costs. Use evidence to support your response.

Significant individual

JOSEPH STALIN, 1878–1953

While he played a minimal role in the October Revolution, Stalin rose up through the ranks of the party to secure the seemingly harmless, but in reality very powerful, position of General Secretary in 1922. This gave Stalin the ability to outmanoeuvre his rivals to become the dictator of the Soviet Union by 1927. To protect the Soviet Union from foreign threats, Stalin implemented an agricultural and industrial revolution—the so-called 'Revolution from Above'. While Stalin's programs resulted in enormous growth, untold misery was unleashed on millions who were deported, executed or starved to death.

He said: 'We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or we shall be crushed.'

Said about: 'The USSR under Stalin's rule had been pointed decisively in the direction of becoming an industrial, urban society ... His gamble was paying off for him, albeit not for millions of victims.'³¹ (Robert Service, *historian*)



SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN STALIN'S RUSSIA

ANDRE VYSHINSKY, STATE PROSECUTOR: 'The traitors and spies who were betraying our country must be shot like dirty dogs.'

THE TERROR

The use of Terror in Russia against political opponents was nothing new. According to historian S.A. Smith, the tsarist secret police (the Okhrana) executed 14,000 people during the final fifty years of imperial rule. The Cheka executed up to 140,000 people and killed another 140,000 when suppressing peasant uprisings and rebellions.³² Stalin's reign differed only in severity and scale. Anyone who could be perceived as an enemy by Stalin—either to his Five-Year Plans or himself—could be **purged** from the Party, exiled to Siberian gulags or simply shot.

In 1928, fifty-five engineers from the Shakhty mines in the Donets Basin were arrested on charges of sabotage. Five were shot and the rest imprisoned.³³

Approximately 116,000 party members were expelled in April 1929 for **passivity**. In 1932 a senior Communist Party member named Martemyan Ryutin criticised the pace and effect of the Five-Year Plans. Ryutin was put on trial and exiled from the party. This was followed by the expulsion of a further 800,000 party members in 1933.³⁴

THE MURDER OF KIROV

However, the most brutal phase of the Terror did not begin until the murder of Sergei Kirov on 1 December 1934. Kirov was the head of the Leningrad branch of the party. His popularity and control over this important voting bloc made him a viable alternative to Stalin. Killed in his office, Kirov's death has never been satisfactorily explained. Nevertheless, Stalin took the opportunity to eliminate some of his rivals in the party. Fourteen men were executed, and Stalin's old foes Kamenev and Zinoviev were arrested, sentenced at trial and given lengthy prison terms. Thousands of other Communist Party members were arrested in the wake of Kirov's murder, including 40,000 from Leningrad alone. Kirov's post was filled by Andrei Zhdanov, a close supporter of Stalin.³⁵



➔ Sergei Kirov, head of the Leningrad branch of the CPSU.

THE GREAT PURGE, 1936–1939

After dealing with his opponents and challengers, Stalin intensified the Terror. In August 1936, Zinoviev and Kamenev were arrested again on charges of being complicit in the murder of Kirov, and subjected to a show trial (a public trial in a special court). The accused were labelled 'enemies of the people'. After torture at the hands of the NKVD, and threats to their families, Zinoviev and Kamenev confessed to their many 'crimes' and were shot.

In 1937 Stalin turned on the Red Army. There was deep discontent within the leadership of the Soviet armed forces about the impact of collectivisation on the peasantry, who were the traditional source of Red Army recruits. Stalin may also have been concerned about the growing power of the army due to the vast increase in military spending (see Source 4.17). There were also rumours that some generals



with links to Germany were plotting to overthrow Stalin (although, this has never been proven). In all, three out of five marshals were purged, and fourteen out of sixteen army group commanders and 37,000 officers of other ranks were either shot or imprisoned.³⁶ This almost proved fatal to the USSR when Nazi Germany invaded on 22 June 1941, as most of Russia's best and most experienced generals were either dead or in prison.

Even the NKVD, the institution most responsible for carrying out these arrests, exiles and executions, was not immune from the insidious reach of the Terror. Genrikh Yagoda, the former head of the NKVD, was arrested and shot in 1938. His replacement, Nikolai Yezhov, oversaw the bloodiest phase of the Terror until his own death in 1939. The final wave of the Terror prior to World War II also saw Bukharin accused of sabotage and plotting with Trotsky. He confessed his crimes in a show trial and was shot.³⁷

Even though he fled to Mexico in 1937, Trotsky could not escape Stalin's vengeance. On 20 August 1940, a Spanish-born NKVD agent named Ramon Mercader struck Trotsky in the head with a mountaineering ice pick. Trotsky died of severe head trauma and blood loss the next day.

The true impact of the Terror and purges carried out on Stalin's orders will never be known. Some records were not kept, and the NKVD destroyed many of its files as the German army approached Moscow in 1941. Historians generally put the number of arrests and executions in the millions. For example, historian Robert Conquest estimates that in 1937–1938 there were 7–8 million arrests and 1–1.5 million executions. Of the 7–8 million people sent to the gulags, two million died there from a range of causes.³⁸ Stalin's reign over the USSR was, in every sense, a tragedy.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 4.42** Why did Stalin embark on a reign of Terror and purges in the 1930s?
- 4.43** Which groups and individuals were most affected by this?
- 4.44** What effect did the Terror have on the Soviet Union?

LEON TROTSKY, 1879–1940

Significant individual

If Stalin was the political infighter and schemer of the Bolshevik Party, Trotsky was its intellectual shining star. A Menshevik for most of his political career, Trotsky joined the Bolsheviks only in August 1917. As head of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, Trotsky had control over all the soldiers and militia units of the capital. Hence, Trotsky was instrumental in organising and carrying out the October coup in Petrograd. Temporarily abandoning his dream of worldwide revolution, Trotsky signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and led the Red Army to victory in the Russian Civil War (1918–1920). Even though he objected to the NEP, Trotsky was seen as Lenin's logical successor. However, he did not perceive the threat posed by Stalin until too late.



He said: 'Had I not been present in 1917 in Petersburg, the October Revolution would still have taken place—on the condition that Lenin was present and in command. If neither Lenin nor I had been present in Petersburg there would have been no October Revolution.'

Said about: 'Trotsky was the type of person who attracted either admiration or distaste, but seldom loyalty.'³⁹ (*Michael Lynch, historian*)



DAILY LIFE IN THE SOVIET UNION

On 5 December 1936, Stalin offered a new constitution for all the people of the USSR (at that time it encompassed eleven countries). Soviet citizens were guaranteed a full range of civil rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right to work, the right to education and the right to welfare in sickness and old age.⁴⁰ While the CPSU did bring some benefits to the people of the USSR, these must be weighed against the devastating costs of economic upheaval, brutal political repression and declining living standards.

URBAN WORKERS

Despite claiming to establish a socialist society that would improve the lives of workers, life for urban workers did not materially improve under Stalin. The 'Stakhanovite movement' imposed unrealistic expectations on ordinary workers. There were also harsh penalties for those who failed to meet the high standards of the party. A law was passed in November 1932 that made absenteeism from work without a valid reason punishable by the loss of one's job, food rations or even housing. The following month, an internal passport system was introduced to prevent workers leaving their jobs in critical industries to look for better pay or conditions elsewhere.⁴¹ The chaos of collectivisation led to severe food shortages in the cities, which resulted in the price of food going up. Bread and eggs rose by 80 per cent in 1933, and butter by 55 per cent. While the number of workers in the industrial cities doubled in 1927–1932, living space only increased by 16 per cent. In the words of economic historian Alec Nove, this represented 'the most precipitous decline in living standards known in recorded history'.⁴²

WOMEN

In the immediate aftermath of the Russian Revolution, women made some genuine advances. As historian Richard Pipes notes, 'The Revolution was intended to bring fundamental changes in the status of women and the relationship of the sexes'.⁴³ Divorce was made easier to obtain for women in December 1917; in the Marriage Code of 1918, women were made the legal equals of men, including in terms of property ownership and inheritance. Abortion was made legal, safe and accessible for women in a law passed in November 1920. Women were encouraged to enter the workforce or continue with their education with the help of state-funded child care. By 1940, 58 per cent of all higher education places were held by women.⁴⁴ However, an official decline in the birthrate in the mid-1930s prompted the regime to make abortion illegal in June 1936 (except on medical grounds). Similar to Nazi Germany (see chapter 6, p. 166), women were given medals for the number of children they produced. If a woman had six children she would receive 2000 roubles every year for five years. The reimposition of traditional roles for women undermined the real gains that had been made early in the revolution.

CHILDREN

The Five-Year Plans were a disaster for the children of the Soviet Union. Thousands of children who lost their parents in the dekulakisation campaign or through mass deportations to Siberia drifted to the cities and formed gangs. Street crime soared. The problem became so bad that in 1935 the NKVD was given *jurisdiction* over juvenile crime. Parents could be fined heavily if their children were found to be a menace to society.⁴⁵ In the most extreme cases, children would be taken from their parents and sent to an orphanage. The parents had to pay for their child's food.

Did you know? A decree from the CPSU in the late 1930s stipulated that all female students must wear their hair in pigtails at school.

jurisdiction

The area over which an institution has authority or control.



As in Nazi Germany, young people were encouraged to join organisations formed by the government. The **Pioneers** was open to children under the age of fourteen, while those aged 14–28 could join the **Komsomol** (or Youth Communist League). Membership was not compulsory but it was a pathway to party membership later in life, with all the benefits and privileges that brought. Komsomol grew from two million members in 1927 to ten million in 1940,⁴⁶ and its enthusiastic but naive members were used by the state to spy on the adults around them. Komsomol members could have teachers removed, and some even denounced their own parents to the NKVD.

Nevertheless, some real achievements were made by the CPSU in the areas of education and literacy. Formal schooling had been greatly disrupted since the Revolution of 1917, and 51 per cent of the population was illiterate by 1926. Realising that a better educated working class was a more productive one, the government put particular emphasis on lifting school attendance rates and literacy levels. In 1916 only 49 per cent of children aged 8–10 went to school; by 1926–1927 this had increased to 80 per cent. By the time the Nazis invaded in 1941, illiteracy had been basically stamped out in the USSR.⁴⁷

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 4.20 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 4.45** What elements of this poster are related to the aims of the CPSU?
4.46 How might this poster inspire young people to join the Komsomol?
4.47 Evaluate the accuracy of this poster in its depiction of life for young people in the USSR. Use evidence to support your response.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

4.48 One of the ways to evaluate the significance of events in the past is to consider how many people were affected. Once you have read the information on the lives of Soviet citizens, write a 300-word response explaining the effect of government policies on the lives of the people of the USSR up to 1941. Use evidence to support your response.

ART AND CULTURE IN STALIN'S RUSSIA

The ideals and authority of the Soviet Union seeped into all aspects of life, including art and architecture. For both Lenin and Stalin, art had a social and political function. It had to reflect social values and aspirations while pointing the way to a glorious future. Under the dictatorship of Joseph Stalin, art (and artists) not only had to conform to his views but also had to convey his central role in 'improving' the lives of the people.

RUSSIAN CONSTRUCTIVISM

Russian **constructivism** emerged during World War I and, like **cubism**, reduced objects to simple, abstract forms and shapes. Reality was presented in the form of building blocks that aligned with the communists' stated desire to rebuild society for the benefit of the workers and peasants.



Source 4.20 A Soviet propaganda poster from 1924. The caption reads: 'Long live the Komsomol!'

Pioneers

The Communist youth organisation for children under the age of fourteen.

Komsomol

The Communist youth organisation for children aged 14–28.

constructivism

An artistic movement in the early twentieth century that reduced reality to simple objects and bright colours.

cubism

An art style, especially in painting, in which objects are presented in several superimposed views, almost as if the viewer is seeing the object from more than one side.



SOCIALIST REALISM

From 1932, *socialist realism* became the dominant, and state-approved, form of artistic expression in the USSR. Art moved from the abstract to more realistic depictions of the world. However, the content of the paintings was highly politicised. For example, peasants were depicted working happily in fields with bountiful crops, or enjoying enormous feasts in the village square; Stalin was frequently represented as a kindly and adored figure who was responsible for the good lives that the Russian people now enjoyed.

socialist realism

An artistic movement of the early to mid-twentieth century that features realistic depictions of nature and human activity but has overtly political overtones.

ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAI, REVOLUTIONARY FEMINIST

Alexandra Kollontai (1872—1952) was one of the most important women in the Bolshevik Party. She advocated strongly for equality not only between classes but also between genders. In her writing, Kollontai argued that there should be no distinctions between men and women, as there should be no distinctions between rich and poor. One of her most famous pieces of writing was a pamphlet entitled *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*, written in 1909. In it Kollontai criticised middle-class women who demanded equality for women within a capitalist society. Kollontai argued that true gender equality would only come in the wake of a genuine socialist revolution.

Alexandra Kollontai, *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*, 1909

The follower of historical materialism [i.e. Marxists] reject the existence of a special woman question separate from the general social question of our day. Specific economic factors were behind the subordination of women; natural qualities have been a secondary factor in this process. Only the complete disappearance of these factors, only the evolution of these forces which at some point in the past gave rise to the subjection of women, is able in a fundamental way to influence and change their social position. In other words, women can become truly free and equal only in a world organised along new social and productive [economic] lines.

Source 4.23 Alexandra Kollontai, *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*, Marxists Internet archive, www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1909/social_basis.htm



Source 4.21 *Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge* by El Lissitzky, 1920. This painting is an example of Russian constructivism.

Source 4.22 *Roses for Stalin*, Boris Vladimirski, 1949. This painting is an example of socialist realism.



COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Using Sources 4.21 and 4.22, respond to the following.

4.49 How are these two paintings different?

Draw upon specific details from both paintings in your answer.

4.50 Are these paintings similar in any way? Explain your answer.

4.51 Write a biography of an artist or writer who produced work in the Soviet Union during the reign of Stalin. Explain how that person's work supported or criticised the regime. Refer to the works in your response.



CHAPTER 4 REVIEW

Arthur Koestler was a Hungarian-born British journalist who travelled through Ukraine in 1932–1933. He recorded his observations in a book titled *The Invisible Writing* (1954) in which he described crowds of peasants begging for food. Their children were malnourished with swollen bellies and stick-like limbs. This was just a part of the horror to which Stalin subjected his people in the 1930s. Upon eliminating his rivals for party leadership, Stalin embarked on a collectivisation and modernisation program designed to strengthen the Soviet Union in preparation for a future confrontation with the capitalist West. Millions of lives were disrupted, uprooted or simply ended under Stalin's Five-Year Plans.

On top of the social and economic upheaval, Stalin and the NKVD unleashed a wave of political terror designed to eliminate rivals and suppress all opposition. Millions were deported to labour camps in Siberia, toiling on vast infrastructure projects until they died of malnutrition or mistreatment. Despite the promises of Marxism, general life for most Soviet citizens declined during the period of Stalin's rule. Life for workers and peasants became worse, and women lost many of the rights gained in the aftermath of the October Revolution. Official art whitewashed reality; only the 'glories' of Stalin's rule could be portrayed in blatantly propagandistic works of socialist realism.

KEY SUMMARY POINTS

- After Lenin's death, a power struggle broke out in the Soviet Union.
- Stalin was the victor in this struggle, and he was able to implement his vision for the Soviet Union.
- Collectivisation and requisitioning were successful, but led to a famine in which millions died.
- Industrial progress failed to meet high expectations, but great gains were made.
- Stalin ruthlessly eliminated rivals and threats in the Great Terror.
- Soviet ideology permeated every aspect of Soviet life in the 1930s—no dissent was tolerated.

REVIEW—CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

4.52 Stalin's Five-Year Plans had an enormous impact on the lives of the Russian people from 1928–1941. To demonstrate change over time, draw up a table like the one below. List the key elements of Russian society and describe the changes from the 1920s to the 1930s. Present this as a poster or slideshow so you can share your ideas with the class.

THE USSR BEFORE AND AFTER THE FIVE-YEAR PLANS		
ELEMENT OF SOCIETY	1920s	1930s
Industry and agriculture [for example]		
Women [for example]		
Artistic expression [for example]		

EXTENDED RESPONSE

4.53 Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence, and a clear conclusion.

- Explain why Stalin abandoned the NEP and embarked on the Five-Year Plans.
- Explain how artistic expression in the Soviet Union of the 1920s and 1930s reflected the dominant ideology of the time.

ESSAY

4.54 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- 'Stalin was able to gain control of the USSR and the Soviet Union chiefly because of the mistakes of his rivals.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?
- 'For all of its flaws, the Five-Year Plans prepared the Soviet Union for the Nazi invasion of 1941.' Is this a fair assessment of Stalin's economic policies?
- 'The Constitution of the Soviet Union (1936) is proof that Stalin was able to create the workers' utopia promised by Karl Marx.' To what extent do you agree?



GERMANY

1918–1939

- Why did the Weimar Republic fail to solve Germany's economic and social problems?
- How did Hitler and the Nazis take over Germany in 1933–1934?
- To what extent did the Nazis transform life in Germany?
- How did ideologies contribute to change?
- Why were Jewish people targeted for exclusion and discrimination?

'I was told of behaviour which, I openly confess, I should not have thought possible in the German army.'

GENERAL ERICH LUDENDORFF, 1918

13% THE AMOUNT OF GERMAN TERRITORY LOST UNDER THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE GERMANY LOST AS A RESULT OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES **10%**

'Only fools, liars and criminals could hope in the mercy of the enemy. In those nights hatred grew in me, hatred of those responsible for this deed.'

Hitler on the armistice, November 1918



'Instead of working to achieve power by armed coup, we shall have to hold our noses and enter the Reichstag against the opposition deputies. If outvoting them takes longer than outshooting them, at least the results will be guaranteed by their own constitution. Sooner or later we shall have a majority, and after that, Germany.'

Hitler speaking after the failed Munich Putsch, 1923



'It is not enough for people to be more or less reconciled to our regime ... we want to work on people until they have capitulated to us.'

JOSEPH GOEBBELS

NAZI ELECTION POSTER, 'OUR LAST HOPE: HITLER.'

VOTES FOR THE NAZIS

JULY 1932

37.3%

MAY 1928

2.6%

A GERMAN 50 MILLION MARK BANKNOTE, 1923

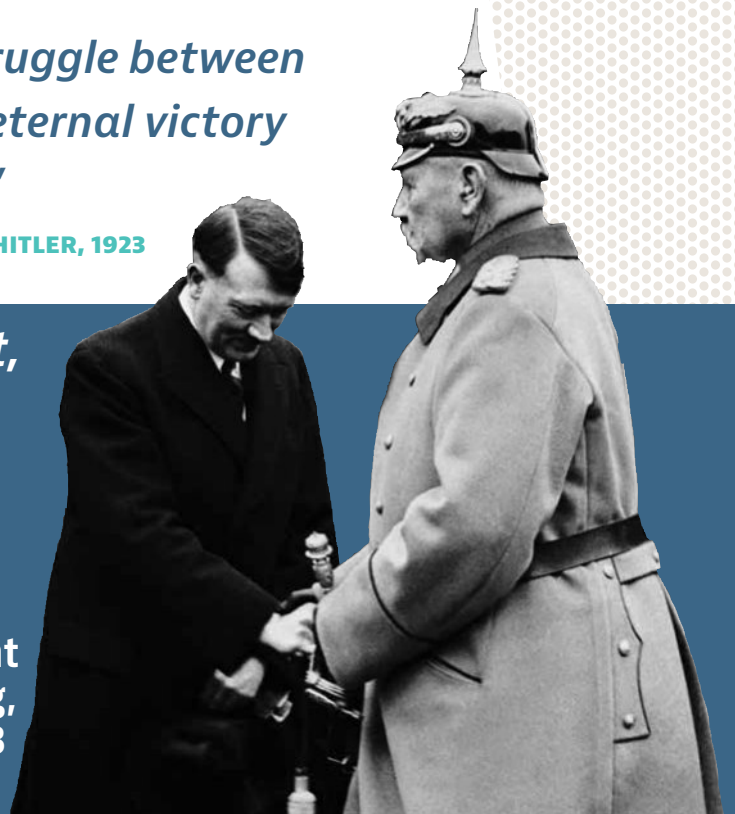


'All of nature is one great struggle between strength and weakness, an eternal victory of the strong over the weak.'

HITLER, 1923

'You cannot for one moment, gentlemen, imagine that I intend to appoint that Austrian corporal Reich Chancellor.'

President Paul von Hindenburg, January 1933



HINDENBURG APPOINTS HITLER AS CHANCELLOR, JANUARY 1933

THE RISE OF NAZISM IN GERMANY, 1918–1933

'Sooner or later we will have a majority, and after that—Germany.'

ADOLF HITLER

When Adolf Hitler shared the vision described above with a fellow Nazi Party member while serving time in Landsberg Prison in 1924, he was no doubt convinced that he would one day become the absolute ruler of Germany. Less than ten years later, on 30 January 1933, Hitler was offered the position of chancellor by President Paul von Hindenburg. It would then take just eighteen months for Hitler to establish a dictatorship and declare himself *Führer* of Germany.

Since the end of World War II, historians have asked how a man like Hitler—a failed art student who never rose above the rank of corporal in World War I—was able to take power in such a highly cultured nation. A weak democratic tradition, economic chaos and the all-consuming ambition of the Nazi Party combined in the early 1930s to thrust Hitler onto the political stage—and provided a platform for his ideology of extreme nationalism and racial hatred.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How did Germany's economic situation at the end of World War I affect the Weimar Republic?
- What were the key elements of the ideology of the Nazi Party?
- What was unique about cultural life during the Weimar period?
- Who voted for the Nazi Party, and why?
- Why was Hitler appointed chancellor in January 1933?

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1921

JULY — Hitler becomes leader of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP)

1923

NOVEMBER — Beer Hall *Putsch*

1929

OCTOBER — Wall Street Crash

1932

APRIL — Paul von Hindenburg elected President
SEPTEMBER — More than five million Germans out of work

1933

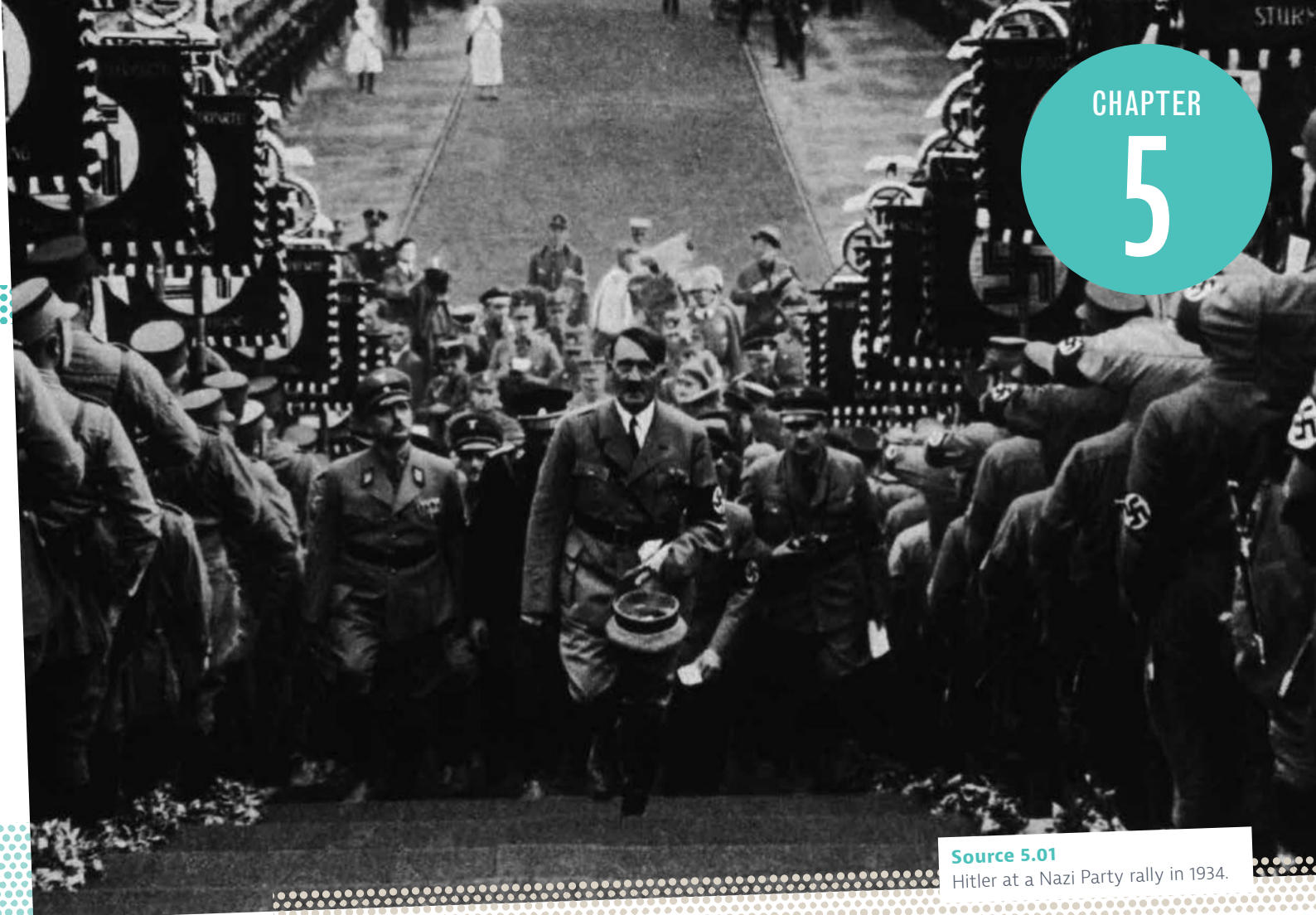
30 JANUARY — Hitler appointed Chancellor

Führer

'Leader' in German; the title used by Adolf Hitler to declare himself absolute ruler of Germany.

putsch

The German word for 'thrust' or 'knock'. An attempt to overthrow a government by force.

**Source 5.01**

Hitler at a Nazi Party rally in 1934.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS



ADOLF HITLER

Leader of the NSDAP

Became Chancellor of Germany in 1933



PAUL VON HINDENBURG

German General in World War I

President of Germany (1925–1934)



ERNST RÖHM

Leader of the Sturmabteilung

Murdered on Hitler's orders in 1934

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

Some historians have suggested that circumstances in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s made the emergence of a dictator both possible and likely. Others have argued that Adolf Hitler possessed particular traits and abilities that made his rise to power inevitable. Consider both arguments as you work through this chapter. Use the material and ideas that you have developed to answer one of the following questions.

5.01 To what extent was Hitler just in the right place at the right time?

5.02 How important were Hitler's personal attributes in determining his rise to power in Germany?

GERMANY IN THE WAKE OF WORLD WAR I

GENERAL ERICH LUDENDORFF: 'I was told ... of behaviour which, I openly confess, I should not have thought possible in the German army; whole bodies of our men surrendered to single troops.'

CHAOS AT THE FRONT AND AT HOME

When the armistice that ended the fighting on the Western Front was signed on 11 November 1918, Germany was in a state of political, social and economic turmoil. In an attempt to win the war before millions of American soldiers arrived in Europe, the German army launched a massive offensive on the Western Front called Operation Michael. Although it was initially successful, Allied troops eventually halted the German advance and began a counteroffensive. On 8 August 1918, Australian and Canadian troops launched a stunning attack that advanced twelve kilometres and captured 15,000 German soldiers. General Erich Ludendorff of the German High Command referred to this as 'the black day of the German army'.¹ Germany was now facing a series of crises that it could not overcome.

By the end of September 1918, the disastrous economic and military situation convinced the German High Command to seek peace terms. The Allies accepted the request, but only on the condition that Kaiser Wilhelm II was removed from power. With mutinies and strikes breaking out all over the country, a Soviet-style revolution seemed imminent. The *Reichstag*, led by Friedrich Ebert of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), demanded that the kaiser step down. On 9 November 1918, with massive strikes and protests in Berlin, Philipp Scheidemann, a member of the SPD, announced the abdication of the kaiser and the establishment of a German republic. Kaiser Wilhelm II fled to the Netherlands on 10 November 1918 and remained there in exile until his death in 1940. A German delegation signed the armistice with representatives from the Allies the next day. The fighting on the Western Front was over, but a new series of problems was about to begin for Germany.

Did you know? *Kaiser* is the German word for 'emperor'. It is derived from the Latin word *Caesar*. The Russian word for 'emperor', *tsar* (or *czar*), has the same origin.

Reichstag

The German Parliament.

THE COLLAPSE OF THE GERMAN WORLD WAR I EFFORT

THE HOME FRONT

British naval blockade.



Wages fall by 30 per cent.

Food production drops to half its pre war level.

Meat consumption falls to 12 per cent of pre-war levels; fish consumption drops to 5 per cent.

1916–1917: the 'turnip winter'.



700,000 people die of hypothermia or malnutrition.

THE WESTERN FRONT

Operation Michael fails.



By August there are 1.3 million American soldiers in France.

The Allied armies begin their counteroffensive.

German soldiers surrender in large numbers.



Allied armies advance to the German border.

Hindenburg informs the kaiser that Germany cannot win the war.



THREATS FROM LEFT AND RIGHT

Germany had a new government, but it was far from stable. Ebert was not sure if he had the support of the army and the German people. With workers, soldiers and sailors forming councils (known as the Republics of Councils, or the Councils Movement) to take control in many of Germany's major cities,² Ebert's new national government did not even control all of Berlin. Ebert decided to hold national elections for a new government on 19 January 1919, but there was no guarantee that his hold on power would last that long.



Source 5.02 German prisoners of war being watched by Australian soldiers, 1918.

Source 5.03 The Weimar Republic under siege from left-wing and right-wing factions.



THE FREIKORPS

The Freikorps (or Free Corps) consisted of groups of ex-soldiers recruited at the end of World War I to help the government crush uprisings. Its members were typically conservative and anti-communist; they were quite brutal in overpowering left-wing coups in Berlin (January 1919) and Bavaria (April 1919). Freikorps soldiers were responsible for the murders of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.³ Some Freikorps units took part in the right-wing Kapp Putsch in March 1920, which meant that the units used to defend democracy had actually become a threat to the new republic!



↑ **Source 5.04** Freikorps troops supported by an armoured car and a flamethrower.

ROSA LUXEMBURG AND KARL LIEBKNECHT

Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were revolutionary socialists. They criticised the social, political and economic features of imperial German society and wrote illegal anti-war pamphlets during World War I. Luxemburg and Liebknecht strongly opposed other German socialist parties' support of the conflict and tried to organise workers' strikes in opposition to the war effort. They formed the Spartacist League in 1916 and led a failed socialist uprising against the new German republic in January 1919. This was brutally repressed by the Freikorps; both Luxemburg and Liebknecht were captured and executed. The anniversary of their death is commemorated every year by those in Germany who hold left-wing ideals.



↑ Rosa Luxemburg.



↑ Karl Liebknecht.

Did you know? The Spartacist League was named after Spartacus, who led a slave rebellion in the Roman Republic.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

5.03 What state was Germany in at the end of World War I?

5.04 What political challenges did the new German government face?

5.05 Who joined the Freikorps at the end of World War I?

5.06 Why did they join the Freikorps?

5.07 What does the presence of these troops in a city street suggest about the state of Germany in the aftermath of World War I?




A TROUBLED BIRTH FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

To avoid the ongoing strife in Berlin, the new government first met in the town of Weimar on 6 February 1919. Friedrich Ebert had been chosen as the republic's first president, but no political party had a clear majority in the Reichstag. Governments would have to rule through coalitions. Not only did these parties represent a wide range of political and economic ideologies, some were also actively opposed to democracy and sought to bring down the republic from within.


Reichstag election results

PARTY	JANUARY 1919 (423 SEATS)		JUNE 1920 (459 SEATS)	
	% OF VOTES	NO. OF SEATS	% OF VOTES	NO. OF SEATS
KPD/USPD	7.6	22	19.7	84
SPD	38	165	22	102
DDP	18.5	75	8.3	39
Zentrum	19.7	91	13.6	64
DVP	4.4	22	13.9	65
DNVP	10.3	44	15.1	71

 **Source 5.05** Martin Collier and Philip Pedley, *Germany 1919–45* (Oxford: Heinemann, 2000), 9, 26.

The political parties of the Weimar Republic (1919–1933)

PARTY	PARTY NAME	LEADERS	POLITICAL STANDPOINT
KPD	German Communist Party	Ernst Thälmann	Extreme left wing; anti-Weimar
USPD	Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany	Kurt Eisner	Left wing; broke with the SPD over use of the Freikorps during the Spartacist revolt
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany	Friedrich Ebert; Philipp Scheidemann; Hermann Müller	Largest left-wing party; pro-Weimar
DDP	German Democratic Party	Walther Rathenau	Left-wing liberal; pro-Weimar
Zentrum	Zentrum Party	Matthias Erzberger; Heinrich Brüning	Catholic; liberal; anti-Marxist; pro-Weimar
BVP	Bavarian People's Party	Heinrich Held	Split from Zentrum in 1920
DVP	German People's Party	Gustav Stresemann	Right-wing liberal; became pro-Weimar
DNVP	German National People's Party	Karl Helfferich; Alfred Hugenberg	Conservative; monarchist; anti-Weimar
NSDAP	National Socialist German Workers' Party	Adolf Hitler	Extreme right wing; racist; anti-Weimar

 **Source 5.06** Martin Collier and Philip Pedley, *Germany 1919–45* (Oxford: Heinemann, 2000), 10.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

5.08 With a partner, discuss the significance of the information presented in Sources 5.05 and 5.06, as well as the annotated map on p. 117. What chance would there have been of forming a workable government in Germany in 1919?



THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

After the elections, the Weimar politicians faced a number of issues that demanded their immediate attention. The peace treaty—known as the Treaty of Versailles—was the first issue. The Paris Peace Conference began in January 1919 but, because of major disagreements between France, Great Britain and the US, the peace treaty with Germany was only ready to be signed in June. Most Germans were appalled when the terms of the treaty were finally presented to them. They had been under the impression that the armistice would be based on the terms of Wilson's Fourteen Points. However, the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were much harsher.

Under the threat of a renewed Allied offensive and continuation of the naval blockade, the German delegation to Paris, led by Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, signed the treaty on 28 June 1919 at the Palace of Versailles. The clauses of the Treaty of Versailles were to have a devastating effect on the perception of democracy and the republic in Germany.

The treaty became known as the *diktat* ('dictated treaty') in Germany, and gave rise to the 'stab-in-the-back' myth. This held that the German army had not been defeated by the Allied armies at the Western Front, but by politicians such as Ebert who had signed the armistice with the Allies in November. A German soldier, upon hearing that Germany had signed the Treaty of Versailles, wrote, 'We shivered from the terrible cold of abandonment. We had believed that our country would never betray us.'⁴

There were swift political consequences for Germany. In the June 1920 Reichstag elections, held in the aftermath of the right-wing Kapp Putsch, support increased for anti-Versailles, anti-Weimar political parties. The extreme right-wing DNVP increased its vote from 10.3 per cent in January 1919 to 13.9 per cent in June. Pro-treaty parties found their voter support falling from 76 per cent to 47 per cent. It seemed that Weimar was a 'republic without republicans'.⁵ Years later, Hitler would use this simmering resentment against the so-called *Schmachfrieden* ('shameful peace') of the Treaty of Versailles to propel himself to power.

diktat

An official order that people must obey.

Did you know? In the new Weimar Republic, voting was not compulsory but turnout was high. In 1919, 83 per cent of eligible women voted; in 1920, more than 79 per cent of eligible voters did so. In the two German elections in 1924, more than 77 per cent voted. In comparison, 71 per cent voted in the 1919 Australian federal election (compulsory voting was introduced in 1924), while the 1920 US presidential election saw fewer than 50 per cent vote.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.09** Explain why Germans were shocked by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
- 5.10** Who did many Germans blame for their defeat in World War I?
- 5.11** Explain how the treaty affected the way people voted in Germany.
- 5.12** Which parties gained and lost voter support between these elections?
- 5.13** Explain the factors that contributed to this change. Refer to Sources 5.03 and 5.05 in your response.

THE WEIMAR CONSTITUTION

In the wake of the Treaty of Versailles, the Weimar Republic had to draft a new German constitution. While the new constitution seemed to represent the best features of a modern democratic republic, it also contained the seeds of the republic's downfall. A great deal would depend on the willingness of politicians from the centre and moderate left- and right-wing parties to form coalitions and keep extremist anti-democratic parties, such as the KPD and DNVP, from having any influence. Article 48 of the constitution (see diagram opposite) could be used to defend the republic from its enemies. However, it could also become the means to 'create an *authoritarian* government'.⁶

authoritarian

A government that has total power over its citizens and rules by force or fear.



Chancellors and coalition partners of the Weimar Republic (1919–1923)

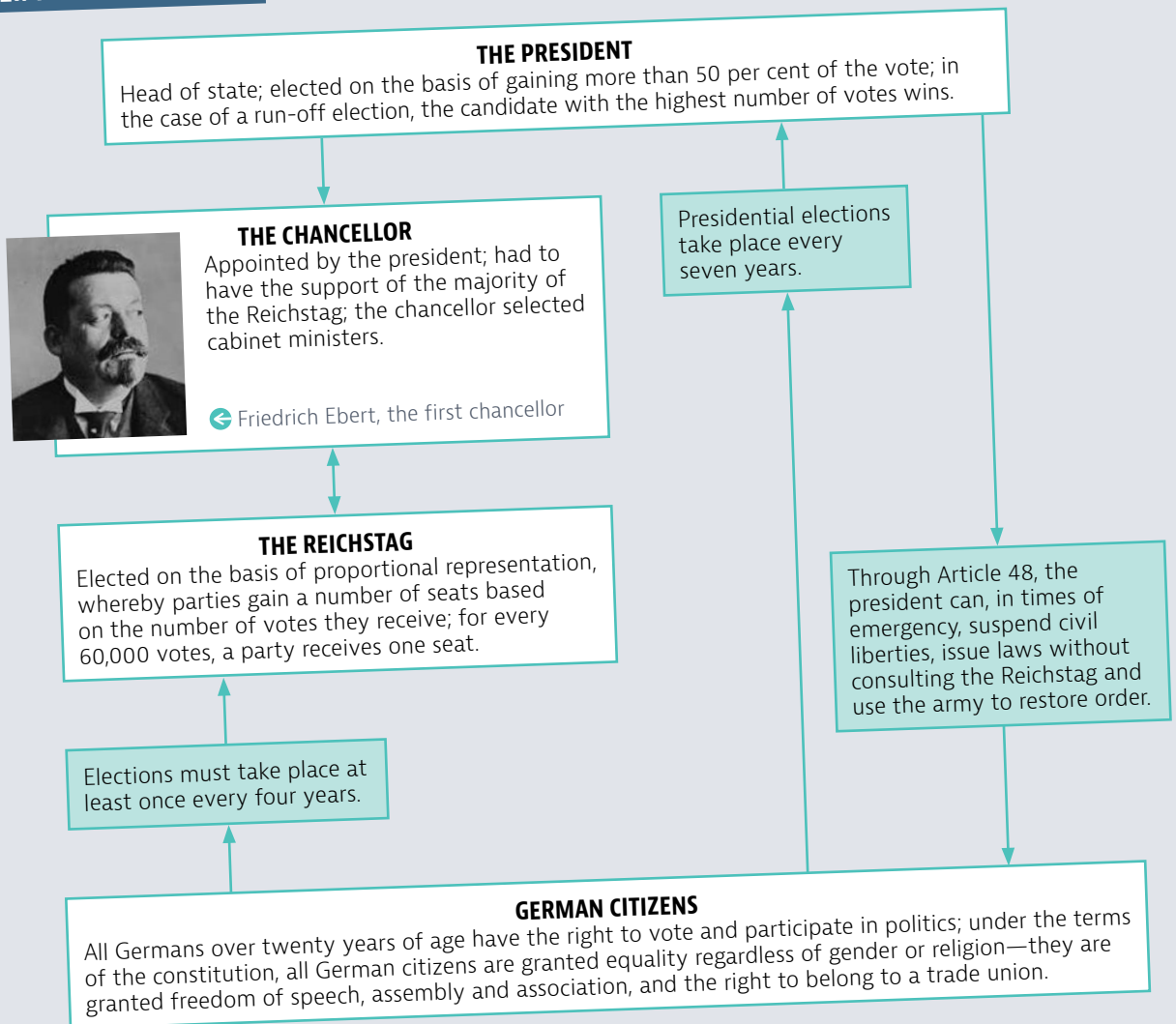
CHANCELLOR	DATE	COALITION PARTNERS
Friedrich Ebert (SPD)	November 1918–February 1919	Coalition of socialists
Philipp Scheidemann (SPD)	February 1919–June 1919	SPD, Zentrum, DDP
Gustav Bauer (SPD)	June 1919–March 1920	SPD, Zentrum, DDP
Hermann Müller (SPD)	March 1920–June 1920	SPD, Zentrum, DDP
Konstantin Fehrenbach (Zentrum)	June 1920–May 1921	DDP, Zentrum, DVP
Joseph Wirth (Zentrum)	May 1921–October 1921	SPD, DDP, Zentrum
Joseph Wirth (Zentrum)	October 1921–November 1922	SPD, DDP, Zentrum
Wilhelm Cuno (non-aligned)	November 1922–August 1923	DDP, Zentrum, DVP

HISTORICAL SOURCES

5.14 In 200–300 words, explain the significance of the information in Source 5.07. What does it suggest about the nature of politics in Germany in the years 1919–1923?

Source 5.07 Martin Collier and Philip Pedley, *Germany 1919–45* (Oxford: Heinemann, 2000), 10.

THE WEIMAR CONSTITUTION



Did you know? The number of seats in the Weimar parliament increased considerably from 423 in 1919 to 647 in 1933. This was because the number of seats was not fixed. Parties were granted a seat in the Reichstag for every 60,000 votes they received. So, the higher the voter turnout on election day, the more seats were offered.



TABLE

5.15 Copy and complete this table based on the information in the diagram on p. 121.

FEATURES OF THE CONSTITUTION	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Extending civil rights to all		
Proportional representation		
The chancellor and cabinet		
The president		
Article 48		

CREATIVE TASK

5.16 Imagine that you are an ex-German soldier, and it is the middle of 1919. Write a letter to the local newspaper expressing your views on everything that has happened since November 1918. Your letter must be based on real details of the Treaty of Versailles, the constitution, conflicts, people and events.

Did you know? The Ruhr region was the industrial heartland of Germany. After Upper Silesia had been ceded to Poland under the Treaty of Versailles, the Ruhr was responsible for 80 per cent of Germany's coal and steel production.

Did you know? The specific pretext the French gave for moving its troops into the Ruhr was that Germany had failed to deliver a shipment of timber for telegraph poles.

passive resistance

Defying oppression using non-violent tactics and non-compliance.

THE FRENCH OCCUPATION OF THE RUHR

The new government, formed after the June 1920 elections, faced immediate pressure from the Allies to honour the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. The total amount of reparations announced in the London payments plan on 1 May 1921 was 132 billion marks (equivalent to £6.5 billion or US\$32 billion at the time).⁷ Under threat of Allied invasion, the new German chancellor, Joseph Wirth, had no choice but to accept the terms. However, World War I had a devastating effect on the German economy, and having to make reparations made the problem worse. By the end of 1922, the German government had failed to meet its commitments under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, so the French government took decisive action.

Under the terms of the November armistice, the French army already had troops stationed in the Rhineland. On 11 January 1923 the French government, with Belgian support, ordered 60,000 soldiers to march into the Ruhr region and seize the material they were owed. The occupation was also intended to demonstrate France's resolve to uphold the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

A new German chancellor, Wilhelm Cuno, had been appointed in November 1922 (see Source 5.07). Cuno's response to the occupation was to encourage the miners and industrial workers in the Ruhr to engage in a campaign of *passive resistance*. This meant that the workers would refuse to work or, if they were forced, to work at a greatly reduced pace. The idea was to prevent the French from taking the region's valuable coal and iron reserves for themselves. The policy worked, and the presence of a foreign enemy meant that Germans were united in a way they had not been united since August 1914.⁸ However, there were unforeseen and severe consequences.



OCCUPATION OF THE RUHR: TENSIONS BETWEEN GERMANY AND FRANCE

Occupying armies are rarely popular with the local population, and the French troops sent into the Ruhr were no exception. German workers, encouraged and assisted by the army, went on strike and engaged in acts of sabotage. The French retaliated. On 31 March, French soldiers killed thirteen workers at the Krupp factory in Essen and wounded forty-one people during a violent protest.⁹ Overall, one hundred Germans were killed during the occupation and 100,000 Germans were expelled from the region.¹⁰



↑ **Source 5.08** The French occupation of the Ruhr, 1923. French soldiers set up a machine gun in front of a post office in Essen.

← **Source 5.09** A German poster encouraging workers to use passive resistance. The caption reads, 'No! You cannot force me!'

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Sources 5.08 and 5.09 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

5.17 Describe the appearance and demeanour of the French soldiers in Source 5.08.

5.18 What elements of Source 5.09 relate to the German response of passive resistance to the French occupation?

5.19 In 200–300 words, compare and contrast the two images. What are the similarities and differences between the two?

5.20 Explain the likely effect that the French occupation would have had on the German people's sense of national pride and their faith in the Weimar Republic.

Did you know? The value of the mark had fallen so much by the autumn of 1923 that it cost more to print a banknote than the note was worth. The government was printing so many notes that it had to use newspaper presses to maintain the supply.



Source 5.10 Piles of money in a German bank.

total war

A war fought without limitations, where no resources (including people) are exempt. War is prioritised over all other aspects of society.

inflation

A general increase in prices and a fall in the purchasing value of money. The opposite of deflation. People may have work, but their wages buy increasingly less.

hyperinflation

An economic situation when the value of a currency declines extremely rapidly due to overprinting. Prices soar and wages fail to keep up.

Source 5.11 A German banknote for ten billion marks.

HYPERINFLATION AND ECONOMIC COLLAPSE

Prior to World War I, the German economy had been one of the world's strongest. This was based on plentiful resources such as coal and iron ore, a highly developed industrial base, a sophisticated education system and advanced banking techniques.¹¹ Germany also had a navy that was second only to Britain's. However, four years of **total war** had put enormous strain on the economy. Germany was forced to supply its allies with food and other materials, and the Allied naval blockade ensured that Germany could not import necessary supplies or export its own goods as payment. The German government paid for its war expenses by borrowing money, and soon the national debt began to soar. As industry concentrated on military supplies rather than consumer products, prices began to rise much faster than wages.

The situation was made worse by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. By handing over territory to other European nations—or to the League of Nations as mandated territory—Germany lost 75 per cent of its iron ore reserves and 26 per cent of its coal reserves.¹² By 1919, the national debt was 144,000 million marks, and by December 1922 this had reached 469 billion marks. To reduce the debt level and make reparations payments without charging additional taxes, the Weimar government started printing more money. This only made the situation worse. The price of everyday goods, such as bread, started to rise faster than money could be injected into the economy. A vicious cycle of **inflation** had set in.

While the policy of passive resistance achieved its goal of denying France access to Germany's resources, it had a devastating effect on Germany's already struggling economy. Despite having almost no coal or iron ore to export, the government pledged to pay the workers' wages for the duration of the occupation. This forced the government to print even more money, which led to **hyperinflation**. There were so many marks in circulation that they became worthless.



Source 5.12 A woman uses worthless marks to light a fire.



The price of a loaf of bread in Berlin

DATE	PRICE (IN MARKS)
1918	0.63
1922	163
1923	
January	250
July	3465
September	1,512,000
November	201,000,000,000

Source 5.13 Ben Walsh, *Modern World History* (London: John Murray, 2001), 143.

Source 5.14 Ben Walsh, *Modern World History* (London: John Murray, 2001), 143.

Exchange rate of marks per US dollar

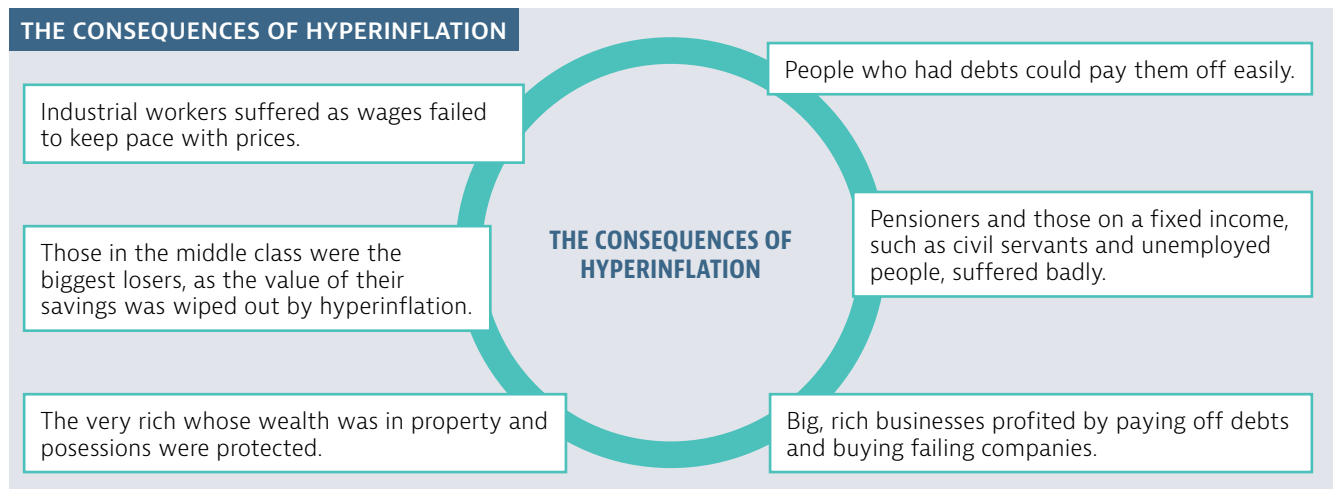
DATE	VALUE COMPARED TO US DOLLAR
1914 July	4.2
1919 January	8.9
1920 January	14.0
1921	
January	64.9
July	76.7
1922	
January	191.8
July	493.2
1923	
January	17,792
July	353,412
September	98,860,000
November	200,000,000,000

THE CONSEQUENCES OF HYPERINFLATION

Since banknotes were worthless, people traded items they possessed for goods that they needed. This tended to favour wealthy people who had more possessions to **barter**. The government’s health minister noted that there was an increase in a range of ailments caused by a poor diet. In addition, crime, suicides and attacks on minority groups—such as German Jews—all increased.¹³

barter

To trade goods or services for other goods or services instead of using money.



➔ **Source 5.15** The recollections of a woman who ran a relief centre that offered help to the poor. Cited in Greg Lacey and Keith Shephard, *Germany 1918–1945: A Study in Depth* (London: John Murray, 1997), 24–25.

➔ **Source 5.16** The recollections of a German writer. Cited in Greg Lacey and Keith Shephard, *Germany 1918–1945: A Study in Depth* (London: John Murray, 1997), 24–25.

➔ **Source 5.17** The recollections of a German writer. Cited in Greg Lacey and Keith Shephard, *Germany 1918–1945: A Study in Depth* (London: John Murray, 1997), 24–25.

➔ **Source 5.18** The recollections of a German university student. Cited in Greg Lacey and Keith Shephard, *Germany 1918–1945: A Study in Depth* (London: John Murray, 1997), 24–25.

The impact of hyperinflation on families

[There was] the widow of a policeman who was left with four children. She had been awarded three months of her late husband's salary. The papers were sent on, as required, to Wiesbaden. There they were again checked, rubber-stamped and sent back to Frankfurt. By the time all this was done, and the money finally paid out to the widow, the amount would only have paid for three boxes of matches.

The impact of hyperinflation on prices

One fine day I dropped into a café to have a coffee. As I went in I noticed the price was 5000 marks—just about what I had in my pocket. I sat down, read my paper, drank my coffee, and spent altogether about one hour in the café, and then asked for the bill. The waiter duly presented me with a bill for 8000 marks. 'Why 8000 marks?' I asked. The mark had dropped in the meantime, I was told. So I gave the waiter all the money I had, and he was generous enough to leave it at that.

A strange crime

Two women were carrying a laundry basket filled to the brim with banknotes. Seeing a crowd standing round a shop window, they put down the basket for a moment to see if there was anything they could buy. When they turned round a few moments later, they found the money there untouched. But the basket was gone.

A student remembers

You very often bought things you did not need. But with those things in hand you could start to barter. You went round and exchanged a pair of socks for a sack of potatoes. And this process was repeated until you eventually ended up with the things you actually needed.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Sources 5.15–5.18 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

5.21 Analyse the impact that hyperinflation had on a range of different people. How were people's lives adversely affected by the declining value of the mark?

5.22 Explain why the people mentioned in these sources would have been particularly vulnerable to hyperinflation.

5.23 What methods or strategies did people use to cope with the effects of hyperinflation?

5.24 Why do you think that hyperinflation led to attacks on minority groups such as Jews?



THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

The government realised that it had to do something to end the hyperinflation spiral. A new chancellor, Gustav Stresemann, had been appointed in August 1923, and he was determined to take measures to stabilise the economy and end the occupation of the Ruhr. He called off the campaign of passive resistance, and in September Germany resumed making reparations payments. The mark was abolished as a form of currency and replaced by the Rentenmark (later renamed the Reichsmark), which was much more stable. To save money, the government sacked 700,000 civil servants. Finally, Stresemann asked the Allies for an international conference to discuss Germany's dire economic situation and to reassess the reparations plan.

However, not all of the outcomes for the republic were positive. There was lasting resentment against the Weimar government, which was blamed for the crisis, particularly by members of the middle class who had lost all their savings. Workers who lost their jobs or were forced to sell their possessions for necessities such as food also carried deep grievances. This was reflected in the two Reichstag elections of 1924 (see Source 5.29). Amid the fury at the government's response there were political uprisings from the fringes of the political spectrum. KPD uprisings in Saxony and Thuringia had to be put down by the army. In Bavaria, an extremist group calling itself the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) and its new leader, Adolf Hitler, came to national attention for the first time.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 5.25** Design a flowchart or mind map to explain the causes of inflation and hyperinflation in Germany from 1914 to 1923.
- 5.26** Explain why the German government called for a campaign of passive resistance against the French occupation of the Ruhr.
- 5.27** What were the outcomes of the passive resistance campaign?

EXTENDED RESPONSE

5.28 Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence, and a clear conclusion.

- Explain the effect of hyperinflation on the German people.
- Explain the consequences of the Weimar government's response to the hyperinflation crisis.

Source 5.19 Hitler speaking in 1923.

HITLER FINDS HIS VOICE

ADOLF HITLER: 'I spoke for thirty minutes, and what before I had simply felt within me, without in any way knowing it, was now proved by reality: I could speak!'

JOINING THE DAP

The end of World War I found Adolf Hitler recuperating in a military hospital. His unit, the List Regiment of the Bavarian Army, had been stationed near Ypres in Belgium when, on the night of 13–14 October 1918, the British bombed their position with mustard gas. Hitler was temporarily blinded by the attack, and he was transported to Stettin in Pomerania (in north-east Germany) for treatment. He was still there when, on 10 November, the hospital chaplain informed the patients that Germany had agreed to sign an armistice with the Allies. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler recorded his reaction.

Did you know? Upon hearing Adolf Hitler speak for the first time at a German Workers' Party (DAP) meeting in September 1919, Anton Drexler said to a colleague, 'Goodness, he's got a gob [mouth]! We could use him!'



HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 5.20 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

5.29 Where was Hitler when he heard that Germany had signed the armistice?

5.30 Explain Hitler's reaction to the news of the armistice. Support your explanation with reference to Hitler's words and the tone of his response.

5.31 Who might be 'those responsible for this deed'?

5.32 Explain why Germany agreed to sign the armistice with the Allies.

5.33 Evaluate the extent to which this extract is useful in explaining how news of the armistice was received by the German population. Use evidence to support your response.

Hitler on the November 1918 armistice, from *Mein Kampf*, 1926

Was it for this that the German soldier had stood fast in the sun's heat and in snowstorms, hungry, thirsty, and freezing, weary from sleepless nights and endless marches? Was it for this that he had lain in the hell of the drumfire and in the fever of gas attacks without wavering, always thoughtful of his one duty to preserve the fatherland from the enemy peril? ... The more I tried to achieve clarity on the monstrous event in this hour, the more the shame of indignation and disgrace burned my brow. What was all the pain in me compared to this misery? There followed terrible days and even worse nights—I knew that all was lost. Only fools, liars, and criminals could hope in the mercy of the enemy. In these nights hatred grew in me, hatred for those responsible for this deed.

Source 5.20 Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 205.

indoctrinate

To force one's views (usually political) on another through education and propaganda.

Source 5.21 Adolf Hitler (seated on the right) with members of his unit in World War I, including Foxl, the unit's white terrier.



After being released from hospital, Hitler made his way to Munich, the city he had been living in when the war broke out. He had no prospects and his bank account contained only fifteen marks.¹⁴ The army was his salvation. Unlike almost all of his comrades, who were discharged as soon as the war ended, Hitler was permitted to stay on until 31 March 1920. In the wake of the socialist uprising in Munich in early 1919, the army units in Bavaria received special political education designed to 'root out any lingering socialist sentiments ... and indoctrinate them with the beliefs of the far right'.¹⁵ Hitler took to these ideas so quickly that by August 1919 he was

asked to give lectures to other soldiers. One of the main topics of his speeches was anti-Semitism. Hitler declared to his fellow soldiers that the purpose of laws in Germany 'must unshakably be the removal of the Jews altogether'.¹⁶

Given his talent as a speaker and his instinctive grasp of politics, Hitler was asked by his captain to attend meetings of the many political parties that had sprung

up in Munich after the war and report on their ideologies and activities. One such party was the *Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (German Workers' Party, or DAP). Started by Anton Drexler on 5 January 1919, the DAP blended socialism and nationalism. It had only a few dozen members when Hitler went along to one of its meetings in a Munich beer hall on 12 September 1919. Hitler was unimpressed by the speakers at the tiny meeting until one of them talked in favour of Bavarian *separatism*. Hitler attacked him so passionately that Drexler handed him a pamphlet, *My Political Awakening*, and asked Hitler to join the fledgling party. Hitler pondered the invitation for a few days until, in mid-September, he decided to join the DAP.

separatism

When a region seeks to break away from a state and form its own nation.



ADOLF HITLER: LIFE BEFORE WORLD WAR I

As historian Ian Kershaw notes, the events of Hitler's early years 'bear no hint of what would emerge'.¹⁷ He was born on 20 April 1889 in the small village of Braunau am Inn, on the border between Bavaria and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His father, Alois, was a mid-ranked customs official. His mother, Klara, was a housewife. In 1899 Alois purchased a small farm outside the town of Linz and moved his family there, including Hitler's younger sister Paula. The Hitlers had moved house several times, and the elementary school Hitler attended in Linz was his third. Initially a good student, by secondary school the young Hitler grew to despise his teachers; in turn, his teachers thought he was lazy and rude.¹⁸

Hitler's father died in 1903. Alois had wanted his son to follow him into the civil service, but Hitler dreamed of becoming an artist. He left school in 1905, aged sixteen, without graduating, and two years later applied to the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Hitler recalled being totally unprepared for the news: 'When I received my rejection, it struck me as a bolt from the blue.'¹⁹ By this time Hitler's mother was gravely ill with breast cancer; she died in December 1907. Hitler, who went back to Linz for the funeral, was grief-stricken: 'It was a dreadful blow, particularly for me ... My mother I had loved.'²⁰

Nevertheless, Hitler returned to Vienna determined to make something of himself. Living off an orphan's pension, Hitler spent his days wandering the streets and admiring the architecture. He read in the state library and went to the opera, where Wagner was his favourite composer. In September 1908 he applied again to the Academy, and was again rejected. Down and out, Hitler found lodgings at hostels for penniless men. He managed to make a little bit of money by selling watercolour paintings of Viennese street scenes.

At that time Vienna was a cosmopolitan city that was home to dozens of different nationalities. There were also 175,000 Jewish people in the city—about 9 per cent of the population.²¹ It was during his years in Vienna that Hitler formed his ideas on the purity of the German race and his rabid anti-Semitism. 'The longer I lived in this city,' he wrote, 'the more my hatred grew for the foreign mixture of peoples which had begun to corrode this old site of German culture.'²² Hitler left Vienna for Munich in 1913. When war broke out in August 1914, Hitler volunteered and in October, as part of the 16th Bavarian Reserve Regiment, he was sent to fight on the Western Front.²³



Source 5.22 Hitler's primary school class. Hitler is in the middle of the top row.

Did you know? Hitler's father, Alois, was an illegitimate child and took his mother's surname 'Schicklgruber'. Alois was only permitted to change his surname to 'Hitler', his biological father's surname, in 1876. Somehow 'Heil Schicklgruber!' doesn't have the same ring to it as 'Heil Hitler!'



House at a lake with mountains by Adolf Hitler, 1910.

swastika

The symbol used by the Nazi Party that, they believed, represented the pure Aryan race.

➔ **Source 5.23** Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 496.

Did you know? Hitler thought that the swastika represented the pure Germanic race, or Aryans, but the swastika is actually an ancient symbol used in the Buddhist and Hindu faiths, where it represents luck and prosperity. Due to its associations with Nazism and the Holocaust, the swastika is deeply



stigmatised in Western cultures; it is illegal to publicly display the swastika in Germany and Austria.

➔ **Source 5.24** Flags bearing the swastika at a Nazi rally in 1933.

IDEOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP

Soon after joining the party, Hitler became a member of the DAP's leadership committee. He quickly became one of the dominant personalities in the party, and in February 1920 he helped Drexler write its 25-Point Program (see Source 5.25). In April the DAP changed its name to the 'National Socialist German Workers' Party' (NSDAP). This was usually abbreviated to 'Nazi' (short for 'national socialists'). In mid-1920, Hitler personally designed a new banner for the NSDAP, consisting of a black *swastika* inside a white circle on a red background. Hitler commented on the significance of the colours and symbols in *Mein Kampf*.

Hitler on the Nazi banner

I myself ... after innumerable attempts, had laid a final form; a flag with a red background, a white disk, and a black swastika in the middle. After long trials I also found a definite proportion between the size of the flag and the size of the white disk, as well as the shape and thickness of the swastika ... What a symbol it really is! In red we see the social idea of the movement, in white the nationalist idea, in the swastika the mission of the struggle for the victory of the Aryan man!



Hitler was put in charge of the propaganda section of the NSDAP, and quickly began to attract larger crowds to its meetings. On 24 February 1920 nearly two thousand people listened as Hitler unveiled the Party's 25-Point Program.²⁴ He was also quite successful in securing funds for the party by encouraging donations. Hitler's own gifts as a public speaker helped fill the beer halls of Munich, where the party held its meetings. As Ian Kershaw notes, 'It was largely owing to Hitler's public profile that the party membership increased sharply from 190 in January 1920 to 2000 by the end of the year and 3300 by August 1921'.²⁵



THE 25-POINT PROGRAM

Key extracts from the 25-Point Program

- 1 We demand the union of all Germans in a Greater Germany on the basis of the right of national self-determination.
- 2 We demand equality of rights for the German people in its dealings with other nations, and the revocation [repeal] of the peace treaties of Versailles and Saint Germain.
- 3 We demand land and territory (colonies) to feed our people and to settle our surplus population [*Lebensraum*].
- 4 Only members of the *Volk* [Germanic people] may be citizens of the State. Only those of German blood, whatever their creed may be members of the nation. Accordingly no Jew may be a member of the nation ...
- 7 We demand that the State shall make it its primary duty to provide a livelihood for its citizens. If it should prove impossible to feed the entire population, non-citizens must be deported from the Reich ...
- 10 It must be the first duty of every citizen to perform physical or mental work. The activities of the individual must not clash with the general interest, but must proceed within the framework of the community and be for the general good ...
- 14 We demand profit sharing in large industrial enterprises.
- 15 We demand the extensive development of insurance for old age.
- 16 We demand the creation of a healthy middle class and its conservation, immediate socialisation of the great warehouses and their being leased at low cost to small firms.
- 17 We demand a land reform suitable to our needs, provision of a law for the free expropriation [use] of land for the purposes of public utility, abolition of taxes on land and prevention of all speculation in land.
- 18 We demand the ruthless prosecution of those whose activities are injurious to the common interest. Common criminals, *usurers*, profiteers must be punished with death ...
- 25 We demand the creation of a strong central power in the Reich.

Source 5.25

Lebensraum

Hitler used the term 'Lebensraum' to describe his desire to expand Germany's territory into eastern Europe.

usurers

People who lend money at extremely high levels of interest.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 5.25 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

5.34 Summarise in a few words each of the points presented.

5.35 Conduct a quick web search on the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and list its key points.

5.36 Draw up and complete a table similar to the one on the right. For each of the points presented in Source 5.25, place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate whether you think it is **nationalist** (in support of one's country), **socialist** (sharing the wealth equally) or **racist** (judgements made about a person's racial or religious background).

POINT	NATIONALIST	SOCIALIST	RACIST
1			
2			
3			
4, etc.			

5.37 Discuss with a partner the decision you made for each point and then share your ideas with the rest of the class.



However, this success sowed the seeds of resentment in the Nazi Party's founders. Drexler and other members of the leadership committee attempted to curtail Hitler's growing dominance by merging the NSDAP with other Bavarian nationalist parties. When Hitler heard this, he threatened to resign. He knew that he had the support of the vast majority of ordinary members and, at two meetings in July 1921, Hitler's resignation offer was rejected. He was appointed party president while Drexler was given the meaningless position of honorary president. Hitler was now master of the Nazi Party.

THE BEER HALL PUTSCH

ADOLF HITLER: 'The man who is born to be a dictator is not compelled. He wills it.'

Hitler started making rapid and significant changes to the Nazi Party. Soon after taking power he formed the SA (Sturmabteilung, or Assault Battalion). This was a **paramilitary** organisation led by Ernst Röhm, a captain in the German army during World War I. They were nicknamed the 'Brownshirts' after their distinctive uniform. Their primary function was to protect Nazi Party meetings and break up the meetings of political opponents. SA activities frequently led to massive street brawls.²⁶ Hitler recruited Hermann Göring, a World War I fighter pilot with connections to German aristocracy, and developed contacts with Erich Ludendorff. Göring and Ludendorff gave some much-needed respectability to the Nazi Party, which was often seen merely as a fringe-dwelling, rabble-rousing mob.

paramilitary

Forces that are armed and dressed like soldiers but are not part of the official army of the state.

Did you know? In the wake of the Beer Hall Putsch of 1923, Drexler left the Nazi Party. He lived in obscurity until he was asked to rejoin the party in 1933. This was purely a propaganda stunt engineered to suggest that Hitler had 'made up' with his old comrade. Drexler played no role in the Nazi Party or Germany's war effort, and he died in Munich in 1942.

Did you know? Ernst Röhm was badly wounded in the face during World War I. He bore the scars for the rest of his life.

↓ Ernst Röhm.



↓ **Source 5.26** Marienplatz in Munich during the Beer Hall Putsch, November 1923.



MUSSOLINI'S MARCH ON ROME, 1922

Benito Mussolini founded the Italian Fascist Party in March 1919. Like Nazism, *fascism* appealed to ardent nationalists and was violently anti-communist. In October 1922, Mussolini and his supporters, named the *Blackshirts*, marched on Rome to demand government authority. This was granted by King Victor Emmanuel III, and Mussolini was appointed prime minister on 30 October. Mussolini seized dictatorial powers in 1925. Hitler was greatly impressed by the 'March on Rome', and its success inspired him to undertake his own coup.

EXTENSION

5.38 Research Mussolini. Then, compare and contrast the lives of Hitler and Mussolini from their births to 1925. Include topics such as childhood, education, service during World War I, ideology and political activities. You could present this as a report or a detailed table.

fascism

A political movement or system of government that is led by a dictator. It features extreme nationalism, suppression of opposition, anti-liberalism and anti-communism.



Source 5.27 Hitler and Mussolini, depicted in 1937.

Blackshirts

The paramilitary force of Mussolini's fascists; named after the colour of their uniform.

Towards the end of 1923, Nazi Party membership had risen to 55,000.²⁷ Members came from all classes, and were attracted by Hitler's speaking style and his relentless attacks on the Weimar government. However, the party remained very much a Bavarian movement and had almost no effect at the national level. Hitler was inspired by Mussolini's 'March on Rome' in 1922, and sought to replicate the Italian dictator's success with his own 'March on Berlin'. The trigger was the Weimar government's decision in September 1923 to call off the campaign of passive resistance and resume paying war reparations.²⁸

On the night of 8 November, the Bavarian prime minister, Gustav von Kahr, and the chiefs of the Bavarian army (Otto von Lossow) and police (Hans von Seisser) were addressing a crowd of 3000 businessmen in a Munich beer hall named the Bürgerbräukeller. Hitler and Göring, along with 600 SA troops, stormed the meeting and announced that a national revolution had begun. Hitler coerced Kahr, Seisser and Lossow to join his uprising. The next day, Hitler and about three thousand Nazi supporters, including Göring and Ludendorff, marched on the Munich Town Hall where they hoped to gain the support of the army and police. This became known as the Munich Beer Hall Putsch. The goal after that was to somehow move on Berlin.

Did you know? As a World War I fighter pilot, Hermann Göring commanded *Jagdgeschwader 1* (Fighter Wing 1), the unit Manfred von Richthofen (better known as the Red Baron) led before his death on 21 April 1918. Göring scored twenty-two 'kills' during the war, thereby qualifying as an 'ace'.

Did you know? In *Mein Kampf* Hitler claimed he was the seventh member of the DAP. This is not true. He was the seventh member of the leadership committee, but his membership card number was 555. Even this is misleading. To give the impression that the DAP was more popular than it really was, the party started its membership at the number 501. Therefore, Hitler was the fifty-fifth member of the DAP.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PUTSCH

The putsch had little chance of success. It was poorly organised and did not have a realistic objective. The police, who had not gone over to the Nazis, lined the town square. As the Nazis entered, the police ordered them to halt and then opened fire. Some of the Nazis who were carrying guns returned fire. Fourteen Nazis and four policemen were killed. Hitler fell to the ground and dislocated his shoulder. He was taken away in a car and arrested two days later. Many of the leading Nazis, along with Ludendorff, were arrested in the town square.²⁹

In February 1924, the trial of the leading Nazis began. Hitler used the occasion as a platform to expound the Nazi ideology. 'There is no such thing as high treason against the traitors of 1918,' Hitler told the court during one of his lengthy monologues.³⁰ The judge, sympathetic to the Nazi cause, handed down lenient sentences. Hitler received a prison sentence of four years but ended up serving only nine months. Hitler served this time in relative comfort in Landsberg Prison, where he started dictating the first few chapters of what would become *Mein Kampf* to his faithful subordinate, Rudolf Hess. The most important outcome of the failed putsch was Hitler's realisation that he could not overthrow the state in a violent revolution. If he wanted to rule Germany he would have to work with the system rather than against it. In other words, he would have to become a legitimate politician.

➔ **Source 5.28** Hitler and his supporters during their trial for treason. Ludendorff is to the left of Hitler and Röhm is second from the right.



HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 5.28 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 5.39** Identify two elements of the image that suggest some military support for the Nazi Party.
- 5.40** Explain what prompted Hitler to launch the Beer Hall Putsch in November 1923. Refer to this image in your response.
- 5.41** List three outcomes of the Beer Hall Putsch.
- 5.42** Evaluate to what extent this image helps us understand the nature and extent of the support for the Nazi Party by February 1924.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 5.43** How and when did Hitler first come into contact with the DAP?
- 5.44** What effect did Hitler have on the Nazi Party membership? Refer to relevant statistics in your response.
- 5.45** What role did the SA play in the early years of the Nazi Party?
- 5.46** Why did Hitler stage the Beer Hall Putsch?
- 5.47** What were the consequences of the putsch for the Nazi Party and Hitler personally?



THE NAZI WORLD VIEW

Nazism was not really a political ideology. An ideology is a group of closely connected ideas that form an interpretative framework for analysing society and human activity. Marxism and liberalism are two classic examples of ideologies. Nazism, on the other hand, was a random collection of ideas cobbled together by Hitler during his years in Vienna. There was nothing particularly original or unique about them—most of his ideas were popular among some German-speaking people throughout the nineteenth century.³¹ The basic tenets of Nazism can be found in *Mein Kampf*, and Hitler remained committed to them until his death in 1945.

perversion

Change to or distortion of the original course, meaning or state of something.

subjugate

To bring under complete control or domination by submission or conquest.

Holocaust

A term used to describe the murder of six million European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II.

infallible

Someone or something that is never wrong or failing and not liable to fail or mislead.

RACISM

Hitler believed that the races of the world could be organised into a hierarchy that places the Aryans at the top as the master race (or *Herrenvolk*). Aryans should resist diminishing the purity of their blood by mingling with lesser races. In a *perversion* of Darwin's theories on evolution and the survival of the fittest, Hitler believed that there would be a struggle between the various races for world domination.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Closely linked to Hitler's racism was his hatred of Jewish people. Hitler believed they were the lowest form of humanity, and that they were seeking to corrupt and *subjugate* all races, particularly the Aryans. For Hitler, Jews represented an impure race that had to be destroyed to protect the pure Aryan people and their culture. This belief would eventually lead to the *Holocaust* during World War II.

NATIONALISM

Hitler believed that all true Germans should commit themselves to the fatherland, sacrificing their life if necessary. He also demanded the right of the German people to *Lebensraum*, particularly in eastern Europe and Russia. This, of course, would mean the total rejection of the Treaty of Versailles and the creation of a vast Germanic state in Europe.

THE IDEOLOGY OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

FÜHRERPRINZIP

This was the idea (or principle) that the leader, or *fürher*, was *infallible* and could not be questioned. Hitler ensured his dominance of the Nazi Party by adopting a structure that placed him at the top (see p. 144). All key decisions were either made personally or approved by Hitler. Once a decision had been made, no debate would be tolerated. This was essentially anti-democratic, and, hence, a direct threat to the Weimar Republic.

ANTI-MARXIST

Despite having 'socialism' in the party's name, Hitler was deeply opposed to the socialist ideas of Karl Marx as implemented during the Russian Revolution. Hitler felt that Marx's ideas were essentially un-German and linked to a Jewish plot to take over the world. Therefore, Hitler despised the Soviet Union and the left-wing parties in the German political system. The *Lebensraum* he demanded would come chiefly from Russia, and its people would toil as slaves for German settlers.

VOLKSGEMEINSCHAFT

This term roughly means 'the pure, Germanic nation'. Hitler thought that all members of the racially pure *volk* (people) should come together in a single community. They would put the collective good above the needs and desires of the individual. 'German values' would be promoted over divisive notions of class, politics and religion. This was a vague concept that appealed to many Germans across all social groups.



WEIMAR: THE YEARS OF STABILITY, 1924–1929

GUSTAV STRESEMANN: ‘German policy will be one of finesse.’

The twin crises of the French occupation and hyperinflation had an adverse effect on the moderate and liberal parties of the Reichstag. In the two elections of 1924, middle-class voters, who had suffered greatly when their savings were wiped out, abandoned the centre-right DDP and DVP for the nationalist DNVP (see Source 5.29). Voters on the left switched from the SPD to the more radical KPD. The anti-republican, anti-democratic parties were on the rise. Even the NSDAP, previously a non-entity in federal German politics, picked up a handful of seats in the Reichstag. Despite this, the years 1924–1929 are typically seen as an era of relative stability for the Weimar Republic.³²

➔ **Source 5.29** Martin Collier and Philip Pedley, *Germany 1919–45* (Oxford: Heinemann, 2000), 31.



HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 5.29 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

5.48 Which party received the most votes between 1924 and 1928?

5.49 Which parties received the least votes in the three elections between 1924 and 1928?

5.50 Explain the decline of support for the NSDAP over this time.

Reichstag election results during the 1920s

PARTY	MAY 1924 (472 SEATS)		DECEMBER 1924 (493 SEATS)		MAY 1928 (491 SEATS)	
	% OF VOTES	NUMBER OF SEATS	% OF VOTES	NUMBER OF SEATS	% OF VOTES	NUMBER OF SEATS
KPD	12.6	62	9.0	45	10.6	54
SPD	20.5	100	26.0	131	29.8	153
DDP	5.7	28	6.3	32	4.9	25
Zentrum	13.4	65	13.6	69	12.1	62
BVP	3.2	16	3.7	19	3.1	16
DVP	9.2	45	10.1	51	8.7	45
DNVP	19.5	95	20.5	103	14.2	73
NSDAP	6.5	32	3.0	14	2.6	12

ECONOMIC AND FOREIGN POLICY GAINS

The most prominent Weimar politician during this period was Gustav Stresemann. Stresemann was chancellor for only three months in 1923 (August–September), but he played a crucial role in bringing the French occupation of the Ruhr to an end. He was Germany’s foreign minister (1924–1929) and did a great deal to bring Germany back into the international community. As a founding member of the DVP, Stresemann was quite successful at holding together a coalition of moderate left-wing and right-wing parties. His first success was the Dawes Plan of 1924. Named after the American banker Charles Dawes, a committee of international economists tried to find a solution to Germany’s reparations problems. The committee devised a solution entailing:

- the French army leaving the Ruhr
- the establishment of a new national bank and currency, the Rentenmark
- the US loaning 800 million marks to aid German economic recovery
- reparations payments made over a longer period of time in amounts that would not ruin the German economy.



The plan was a success but relied heavily on a steady flow of money from the US. In 1925, Stresemann proposed a security pact with France. Under the terms, known as the Locarno Treaty, Germany and France agreed that the border between the two countries would remain permanent and the Rhineland would remain free of German troops. Violence was also renounced as a means of settling international disputes. Subsequently, Germany was admitted into the League of Nations on 8 September 1926.

Stresemann’s last diplomatic success was the Young Plan. Under the terms of this agreement, named after Owen D. Young (the American banker who chaired the negotiation panel), reparations were to be paid until 1988. The limit was set at two billion marks, 500 million marks less than the sum set under the Dawes Plan. In addition, Allied troops would be withdrawn from the Rhineland in 1930, five years ahead of schedule.³³ For Stresemann personally, and Germany generally, these deals represented significant successes. This was reflected in the election results of May 1928, which saw the pro-republic parties regain the votes they had lost in 1924 (see Source 5.29).



Another important development in this period was the election of former World War I Field Marshall Paul von Hindenburg as president of the republic in 1925. Hindenburg did not stand in the first round, but he was persuaded to run by other high-ranking officers and conservative politicians who were concerned about a victory by centre-left candidates. DVP candidate Karl Jarres withdrew his candidacy in favour of Hindenburg, who narrowly won the second round. Hindenburg did not represent any particular party, and he swore to faithfully uphold the constitution. Nevertheless, Hindenburg was deeply conservative, and his election was a victory for the nationalist, anti-democratic elements of German politics.³⁴

Did you know? In 1926, Stresemann shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Aristide Briand, the French foreign minister, for their work on the Locarno Treaty.



↑ Gustav Stresemann.

↶ Paul von Hindenburg, president of Germany, 1925–1934.

Results of the 1925 presidential election

FIRST ROUND		
CANDIDATE AND PARTY	NO. OF VOTES	% OF VOTES
Karl Jarres (DVP; DNVP)	10,416,658	38.8
Otto Braun (SPD)	7,802,497	29.0
Wilhelm Marx (Zentrum)	3,887,734	14.5
Ernst Thälmann (KPD)	1,871,815	7.0
SECOND ROUND		
CANDIDATE AND PARTY	NO. OF VOTES	% OF VOTES
Paul von Hindenburg (unaligned)	14,655,641	48.3
Wilhelm Marx (Zentrum)	13,751,605	45.3
Ernst Thälmann (KPD)	1,931,151	6.4

↶ **Source 5.30** 'Weimar Germany Presidential Election 1925,' Electoral Geography 2.0, www.electoralgeography.com/new/en/countries/g/germany/germany-presidential-election-1925.html

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 5.51** What effect did hyperinflation have on voting patterns in Weimar Germany?
- 5.52** What role did Gustav Stresemann have during the Weimar Republic’s years of stability? Refer to his foreign and domestic policies.
- 5.53** Who was elected president of Germany in 1925? How might his personal politics influence the direction of the republic?



WEIMAR CULTURE

A GERMAN POET IN THE 1920s: 'The atmosphere in Berlin was electric.'

The Weimar period from 1919 to 1933 is known for its extraordinary cultural and artistic flourishing. In almost every aspect of art and culture, Weimar Germany, especially Berlin, was considered among the world leaders. The period was characterised by:

- **visual arts:** German *expressionism* and the *new objectivity*
- **theatre:** Bertolt Brecht and Max Reinhardt and the world of cabaret
- **literature:** writers such as Thomas Mann and Erich Remarque
- **cinema:** films such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (1920) and *Metropolis* (1927)
- **music:** Kurt Weill and Arnold Schoenberg, as well as the adoption of American jazz
- **architecture and design:** the *Bauhaus* school of architecture and design
- **modern dance:** dance theorists and choreographers Rudolf von Laban and Mary Wigman.



↑ Max Reinhardt.



↑ Albert Einstein.

What was happening in arts and culture was also occurring in the sciences. The 'Frankfurt School' of philosophy included Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse. Other German philosophers with worldwide influence included Martin Heidegger and Max Weber. Physicist Albert Einstein gained prominence during his years in Berlin. The first complete and correct definition of quantum mechanics was formulated in Germany. The Institute for Sexology was established in Berlin in 1919. Education philosopher Rudolf Steiner established the first Waldorf school in Germany in 1919.

While there was a wide variety in the themes, techniques and approaches of the exponents of culture during the postwar period in Germany, there were also some common characteristics that distinguished Weimar culture from the periods that preceded and followed it. These included:

- an emphasis on ordinary people and everyday themes
- anti-war and anti-military attitudes
- a 'live for today' atmosphere
- *alienation*
- simplicity and practicality in building and design
- the use of art and literature as a vehicle for social criticism and comment.

Why was there an explosion of artistic and cultural talent in Weimar Germany? Historians have put forward various explanations for the flourishing of arts and culture after 1919.

- Berlin in the early years of the twentieth century had become a centre of commercial and business success, which supported the growth of more urban, middle-class interests. This continued after 1919.
- After 1919, censorship ceased and new ideas in the arts, sciences and philosophy were published, discussed and debated.
- All German universities were now completely open to Jewish students, who provided great stimulus in intellectual and academic pursuits. During the Weimar years, nine Germans were awarded the Nobel Prize—five of them were Jewish scientists.
- World War I, the attempted revolution in 1918–1919, the Treaty of Versailles and the hyperinflation of 1922–1923 challenged 'old' values. When so much of Germany's political, social and economic foundation seemed to have been destroyed, why was there any point in saving for the future? Spend now and enjoy: this encouraged experimentation and the adoption of new ideas.

expressionism An artistic movement of the early twentieth century that featured images of reality distorted by emotion and subjectivity.

new objectivity A variety of expressionism that was particularly significant in Germany. The most well-known form stressed political sentiments.

Bauhaus A highly influential German design school first established in the city of Weimar. The influence of the Bauhaus is evident in many fields of the arts, most notably architecture, interior and graphic design.

alienation The state of feeling isolated or cut off from one's social group or society.



SIMPLICISSIMUS

Simplicissimus was a **satirical** German weekly magazine. It published cartoons and articles that commented on current events in Germany, and was known for its modern graphics and daring content. Artists George Grosz and Käthe Kollwitz were key contributors.

Founded by Albert Langen in 1896, it only took two years before *Simplicissimus* was suppressed after it mocked Kaiser Wilhelm II with a **caricature** and accompanying article. Wilhelm II was outraged and took legal action. This led to Langen spending five years in exile. The cartoonist, Thomas Heine, spent six months in prison, as did the writer Frank Wedekind.

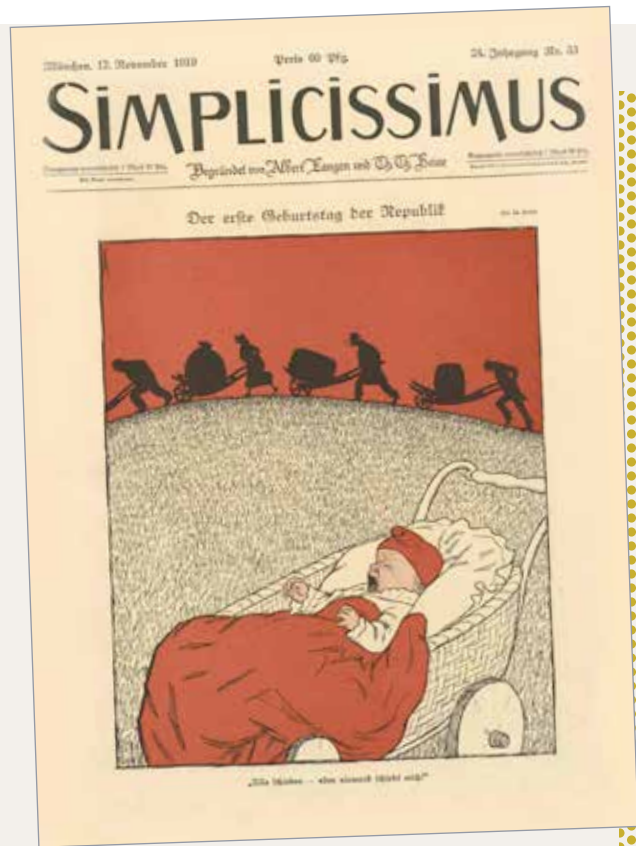
Simplicissimus ridiculed extremism on both the left and right, but faced threats and intimidation by the Nazi Party when it gained power in 1933. Due to declining circulation, *Simplicissimus* ceased publication in 1944 but was revived in 1954.

satirical

Something that uses humour to mock or criticise.

caricature

A drawing or impression of a person that exaggerates certain features or mannerisms in a humorous or critical way.



↑ Source 5.31 'The First Birthday of the Republic', *Simplicissimus*, 12 November 1919. The caption reads, 'All are pushing—but nobody pushes me.'

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 5.31 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 5.54** The cartoon is labelled 'The First Birthday of the Republic' and appeared on 12 November 1919.
- 5.55** Explain the course of events that led to the establishment of a republic in Germany.
- 5.56** What does the baby in the pram represent?
- 5.57** What are the figures on the horizon doing? What do they represent?

- 5.58** The caption reads, 'All are pushing—but nobody pushes me.' Explain how 'pushes' is applied in two different ways in the cartoon.
- 5.59** Evaluate the extent to which this cartoon is an accurate depiction of popular support for the Weimar Republic in 1919. Use evidence to support your response.

There are differing views on how extensively Germans accepted the new art styles.

One commentator, Paul Ortwin Rave, director of the Berlin Nationalgalerie in the 1930s, described the art scene from 1919 as 'a country filled with museums actively committed to modern art, to its acquisition and display'. Across Germany, museum directors obtained artworks from all major artists of the modern style, both international and German. Their exhibitions frequently travelled throughout Germany and exposed the general public to new German art.³⁵





CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

5.60 List the areas in which Weimar culture flourished during the 1920s.

5.61 Which individuals made key contributions to German culture during this time?

5.62 What were some of the themes common to the works produced in the Weimar Republic?

5.63 What were the causes of the artistic and cultural flourishing of the Weimar Republic?

Conversely, historian Eberhard Kolb identified the division within Weimar Germany, with a small, intense artistic and intellectual elite based in cities while the majority of Germans—mostly upper-class and working-class Germans, including peasants—remained conservative. This is supported by population statistics showing that, in 1925, only one-third of Germans lived in large cities while the other two-thirds lived in small towns and rural environments.³⁶

GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM

Expressionism was not uniquely German. It had emerged before 1914, especially in Austria. Expressionism actually grew from the influence of the Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890), but it was in Germany after 1919 that expressionism reached its peak. It is often seen as a reaction against industrialisation and the alienating nature of cities that characterised Europe before 1914.

Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) was a Russian-born painter who lived in Munich between 1896 and 1914, and returned to Germany in 1921. Between 1922 and 1933, he taught at the Bauhaus school in Weimar. Kandinsky is generally credited with creating the first truly abstract painting. What mattered in his art was not the imitation of nature but the expression of feelings through the choice of colours and lines. The ‘inner sound’ should replace the material world.

Expressionist art has often been compared to music, which does not need words to express feelings and moods. Kandinsky often included musical instruments in his paintings; he wrote that bright red affected the viewer like the call of a trumpet.³⁷

➔ **Source 5.32** *Several Circles* by Wassily Kandinsky, 1926.



CINEMA

The term ‘expressionist’ is applied to other artistic fields, especially German cinema of the Weimar period. Robert Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (1920), Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* (1927) and F.W. Murnau’s *Nosferatu* (1922) are expressionist films that broke new ground in both their content and their style.

The Cabinet of Dr Caligari is considered an early example of the horror film genre, as well as presenting a premonition of the rise of Nazism. It has often been interpreted as a warning about how unlimited state authority idolises power. The sets were designed by three expressionist painters—crooked windows, tilting chimneys and eerie light and shadows create insane distortion. The film was a great success, and continues to be considered central to film history. French critics considered it an exceptional film, and coined the term *Caligarisme* to describe a postwar world they considered ‘upside down’.

BAUHAUS

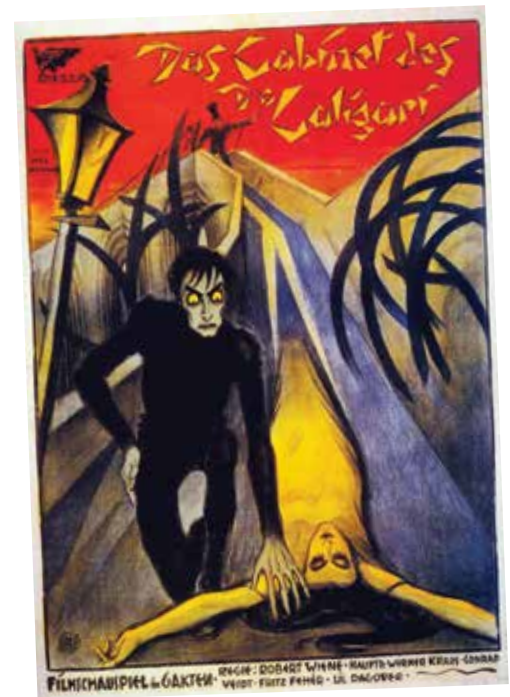
The Bauhaus movement aimed to unite art and technology, and move away from ‘traditional’ art styles. It was revolutionary in the sense that it did not accept art’s emphasis on ‘pretty things’ but used function as the basis for art forms.

The Bauhaus school began in 1919 in the city of Weimar, where the new German republic was also based. The school moved to Dessau in 1925, and to Berlin in 1932. It was closed when the Nazis came to power in 1933.

Headed by the German architect Walter Gropius, the Bauhaus aimed to integrate arts and crafts with modern technology. Students were taught a hands-on approach to their studies, designing buildings and fittings. They were encouraged to experiment boldly and use their imagination, but also to be utilitarian and think about how each object they were designing would be used.

Many of the furnishing and architecture styles that we take for granted today were first developed at the Bauhaus. Tubular steel chairs, geometric furniture, flat-roofed and square- or oblong-shaped buildings are typical of Bauhaus design. Materials such as concrete were often exposed. When the school moved to Dessau, the purpose-built studios were modelled on factory buildings, with unbroken interior spaces and walls made entirely from glass.

Bauhaus students were taught by German artists such as Kandinsky and Paul Klee. The new Dessau buildings were designed by Gropius, who was head of the school. The Bauhaus movement reflected the Weimar Republic: like the new government, it was experimental and questioned traditional values.



Source 5.33 A poster for the film *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 5.34 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 5.64** What features of the Dessau building are typical of expressionism?
- 5.65** German expressionism was often demonstrated in paintings by the use of bright colours, especially in blocks. How does this contrast with the Dessau building?

Source 5.34 Bauhaus, Dessau, designed by Walter Gropius. The artists Kandinsky and Klee lived at the Bauhaus at Dessau. They painted their accommodation so that Klee had a red door, blue walls and yellow ceilings. Kandinsky, influenced by his native Russia, gilded the doorframes and windows.



CABARETS AND NIGHTCLUBS

cabaret

A performance or form of musical entertainment usually held at night in a restaurant, nightclub or bar.

hedonism

Living according to the belief that pleasure or happiness is the best or most important thing in life.

Did you know? Australian comedian and satirist Barry Humphries has had a lifelong fascination with Weimar art and music. In 2013, Humphries curated and performed with cabaret artist Meow Meow and the Australian Chamber Orchestra in a 'Weimar Concert' celebrating degenerate (immoral) music. Humphries described the music as 'edgy and mean', representing the music of freedom before the rise of Nazism.

Cabaret was a popular form of entertainment in many European cities in the 1920s. *Kabarett* became immensely popular in Germany from the mid-1920s, especially in Berlin and Munich. There was no censorship, and the **hedonism** of a society that had 'lost everything' was lived out in German cabarets. There were outrageous strip clubs, and clubs that specialised in one or more particular sexual preferences. Across Berlin, a patron could buy or observe almost any kind of sexual behaviour. Dancers were sometimes naked, and homosexuality was overt.

During the period of hyperinflation, German currency became almost valueless, so US\$10 had enormous purchasing power. This led to an influx of international tourists who could afford to buy almost anything. Middle-class Berliners who had lost their life savings sometimes turned their houses into brothels. There is no way of knowing exactly how many prostitutes were in Berlin, but contemporary sources often comment on the visibility of male and female prostitutes in the streets.

To gain some idea of what Berlin cabaret offered, we can use photographs as the record. Photographs show the American dancer Josephine Baker naked on stage. A revue at the Apollo Theatre shows the chorus girls bare-breasted and only partly covered by flowers. At the White Mouse cabaret, Anita Berber danced naked and provocatively.



➔ **Source 5.35** Revue at the Apollo Theatre in Berlin, 1925.

The significance of cabaret and the morality of Weimar Germany are also explored in the 1930 German expressionist film *The Blue Angel*, which was directed by Josef von Sternberg and featured Marlene Dietrich in her first starring role. The film was based on Heinrich Mann's novel *Professor Unrat* (1905), and deals with the protagonist's moral decline. Dietrich plays a femme fatale, and demonstrates the period's readiness to include sex and permissiveness in popular culture. At one point in the film, Dietrich throws her underpants down onto the protagonist's head.

In 1928, the English writer Christopher Isherwood travelled to Berlin and turned his observations into two novels, *Mr Norris Changes Trains* (1935) and *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939). These novels formed the basis of a play, *I Am a Camera*, written by John van Druten and then a Broadway musical by Fred Ebb and John Kander. In 1972 these were adapted for the movie *Cabaret*, which was directed by Bob Fosse and won eight Oscars.



In addition to the descriptions of *kabarett* in Isherwood's books, there is also a reflection of the creeping Nazism and anti-Semitism that were to characterise 1930s Germany. Isherwood's characters display the mixed reactions to Nazism that were common in Germany at the time—from those who were horrified at what was happening to those who preferred to turn a blind eye and hope that Nazism would go away.

Otto Friedrich reflecting on Berlin in the 1920s

The twenties were not golden for everyone, of course, for these were the years of the great inflation, of strikes and riots, unemployment and bankruptcy, and Nazis and Communists battling in the streets. Still, the magic names keep recurring—Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, Josephine Baker, the grandiose productions of Max Reinhardt's 'Theatre of the 5000', three opera companies running simultaneously under Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, and Erich Kleiber, the opening night of *Wozzeck*, and *The Threepenny Opera* ... Almost overnight, the somewhat staid capital of Kaiser Wilhelm had become the center of Europe, attracting scientists like Einstein and von Neumann, writers like Auden and Isherwood, the builders and designers of the Bauhaus school, and a turbulent colony of more than fifty thousand Russian refugees. Vladimir Nabokov gave tennis lessons here, and young daredevils forced their cars to more than a hundred miles an hour on the new Avus speedway, and ladies in evening dress would proceed directly from the theatre to the pandemonium of the six-day bicycle races. Berlin's nightclubs were the most uninhibited in Europe; its booted and umbrella-waving streetwalkers the most bizarre. Above all, Berlin in the 1920s represented a state of mind, a sense of freedom and exhilaration.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE


By 1925, the German economy was recovering from its crisis, and prosperity was returning for some sectors of the population. By the end of the 1920s, people were buying as many luxury goods as they had in 1913. Private ownership of cars increased from 82,700 in 1922 to more than 500,000 in 1930.³⁸

The good times were not evenly spread, but the mood of the late 1920s was certainly more buoyant than it had been since the end of the war. Most Germans expected that the good times would continue.

The Great Depression affected Germany more than many other countries, although it was certainly not the most severely affected. Historians have often argued that what made the Great Depression worse for Germany was that it recalled the period of hyperinflation seven years earlier. Under hyperinflation, money became worthless for many people and they were unable to buy food; during the Great Depression, unemployment reached six million people, and those people were unable to buy food.

Even before the Nazis gained power in 1933, the government was forced to accept more right-wing policies. One of these was to increase censorship. As a result, by 1931 films with a perceived left-wing perspective were sometimes banned. In December 1930, the US film based on Erich Remarque's novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* was shown in Germany, but gangs of Nazis disrupted the viewings. The film (and the novel on which it was based) were considered to be denigrating the German war effort. Some Germans considered that Remarque was exaggerating the horrors of war to further his own **pacifist** views. The censors, not yet under Hitler's strict control, banned further screenings of the film on the basis that it would endanger German prestige abroad.

As in the rest of the Western world, films of the Depression era often had a simple 'message of hope' or were escapist, taking the audience away from their troubles.

 **Source 5.36** Otto Friedrich, *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 7–8.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 5.36 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

5.66 What are the four main social and economic hardships Friedrich identifies for Berlin in the 1920s?

5.67 What contrasts does Friedrich observe between cultural life under the kaiser and life during the Weimar period?

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

5.68 How did the German economy fluctuate over the 1920s and 1930s?

5.69 Why did the Great Depression of the early 1930s have such a strong effect on the German people?

5.70 In what ways did the German government begin to demonstrate a drift to right-wing policies in the early 1930s?

pacifist

Opposing violence to resolve conflict.



NAZIS ON THE MARGIN, 1924–1930

WILLIAM L. SHIRER: 'One scarcely heard of Hitler or the Nazis except as butts of jokes.'

Did you know? Hitler originally wanted the title of his book to be *Four and a Half Years of Struggle against Lies, Stupidity and Cowardice*. His publisher, Max Amman, shrewdly suggested that he reduce it to the more marketable *My Struggle* (*Mein Kampf*).

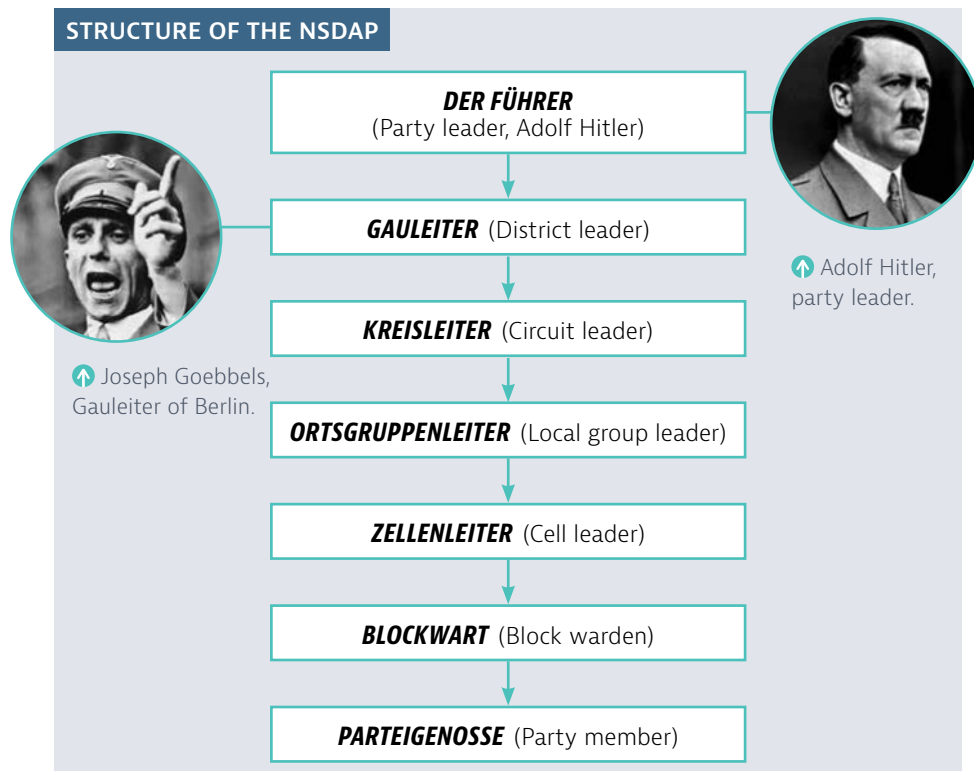
Gauleiter

German for 'district leader'. In the Nazi Party, a Gauleiter was in charge of party administration in a large city or region.

When Hitler was released from prison in December 1924, his political future looked grim indeed. Other party leaders were in jail or exile, and membership was falling. The brief success the party experienced in the May 1924 Reichstag elections had evaporated by December (see Source 5.29). The party leadership group was also bitterly divided in terms of philosophy. Some members believed strongly in the socialist aspects of the party, while others promoted nationalism and anti-Marxism. On 25 February 1925, Hitler officially relaunched the Nazi Party. However, he was unable to control its rival factions. Some party members utterly rejected Hitler's new policy of a legitimate path to power rather than a violent revolution.³⁹

Despite this, Hitler was determined to stamp his complete authority over the party. At a party conference in the northern Bavarian town of Bamberg on 14 February 1926, Hitler introduced the concept of *Führerprinzip* (the leadership principle), which held that the leader was infallible and could not be questioned.⁴⁰ Absolute loyalty was the highest virtue in the reborn party. Crucially, Hitler also won over Joseph Goebbels, one of the key Nazi Party members in Berlin. As a reward for his support, Goebbels was appointed **Gauleiter** of Germany's capital in October 1926. Hitler also set about restructuring the party. Germany was divided into regions (*Gaue*) that matched the electoral districts of the Weimar Republic. Each *Gau* was controlled by a Gauleiter who then created district (*Kreis*) and branch (*Ort*) groups in his region. This continued down to the ordinary party members (*Parteigenosse*). The leader of each subdivision was directly responsible to the person above them, and the leaders of the *Gaue* were personally responsible to Hitler. This vertical and hierarchical structure gave Hitler almost total control over the NSDAP.

STRUCTURE OF THE NSDAP



Important symbolic changes were also made to raise the party's profile and transmit a sense of unity and purpose. In 1924, the brown shirts of the SA troops became the official party uniform. Two years later the right-arm salute and the cry 'Heil Hitler!', which had been used only intermittently since 1923, became an official, even ritualistic, element of party meetings and rallies.⁴¹



← **Source 5.37** Hitler salutes SA troops during a Nazi Party rally.

Did you know? The brown shirts used by the Nazis as their uniform from 1924 were actually army surplus made for German soldiers fighting in East Africa during World War I.

THE FORMATION OF THE SS

In 1925 a new group was created within the Nazi Party—the Schutzstaffel ('Protection Squad'; SS). Better known as the SS, this was an elite body whose hand-picked members swore a personal oath to protect Hitler with their lives.⁴² SS members were distinguished from the SA by their black uniforms. Initially, the SS comprised 200 members. From 1929 the SS was put under the command of Heinrich Himmler, and the organisation started to grow rapidly in terms of manpower and influence within the party.

PARTY MEMBERSHIP

The Nazi Party slowly recovered from the failed putsch of 1923, and its membership began to rise (see Source 5.39). Despite the significant changes to the party's structure, image and overall strategy, Hitler was deeply disappointed with the results of the 1928 election. The Nazis had failed to capitalise on the December 1924 election result and lost two of its seats in the Reichstag (see Source 5.29). The relative prosperity and stability of the Weimar Republic from the mid-1920s starved the party of the crises on which it thrived. A German government report in 1927 noted that the NSDAP 'was not advancing' and was 'a numerically insignificant ... radical revolutionary splinter group'.⁴³ If the party were to survive and become a real force in German politics, Hitler needed another crisis.

Did you know? All members of the Nazi Party were given a badge, but only the first 100,000 had a badge where the rim was embossed with a golden laurel wreath. The wearers of this badge called themselves *Alte Kämpfer* ('Old Fighters'), as they had joined up during the party's early days.



→ NSDAP golden party badge.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

5.71 What role did the SS play in the early years of the Nazi Party?

5.72 What impact would the uniform and formation of the SS have on an observer at a Nazi Party rally? Consider the perspective of people who were pro-Nazi and anti-Nazi.

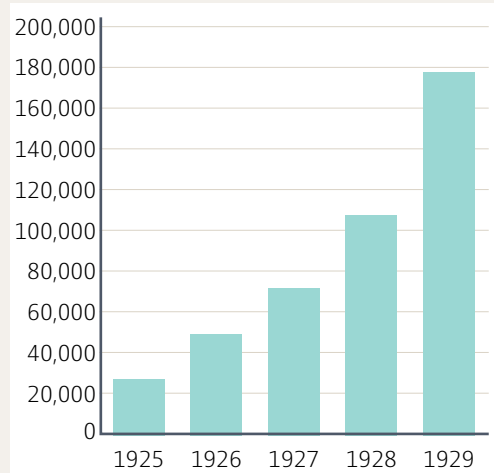
➔ **Source 5.38** Hitler's bodyguard, the SS.



➔ **Source 5.39** Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (London: Penguin Books, 1952), 141.

Nazi Party membership

YEAR	MEMBERSHIP
1925	27,000
1926	49,000
1927	72,000
1928	108,000
1929	178,000



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

5.73 Over what matters was the Nazi leadership divided in the mid-1920s?

5.74 How did Hitler succeed in gaining total control of the party?

5.75 Explain the new administrative structure of the party and how this helped Hitler expand his power over the Nazi Party.

5.76 What symbolic changes did Hitler make to the Nazi Party?

5.77 Why was the SS formed, and who was its leader?

5.78 Using Source 5.39, explain why Nazi Party membership rose from the period 1925 to 1929.

5.79 Using the information presented in Sources 5.29 and 5.39, explain why rising Nazi Party membership did not translate into success in elections to the Reichstag.

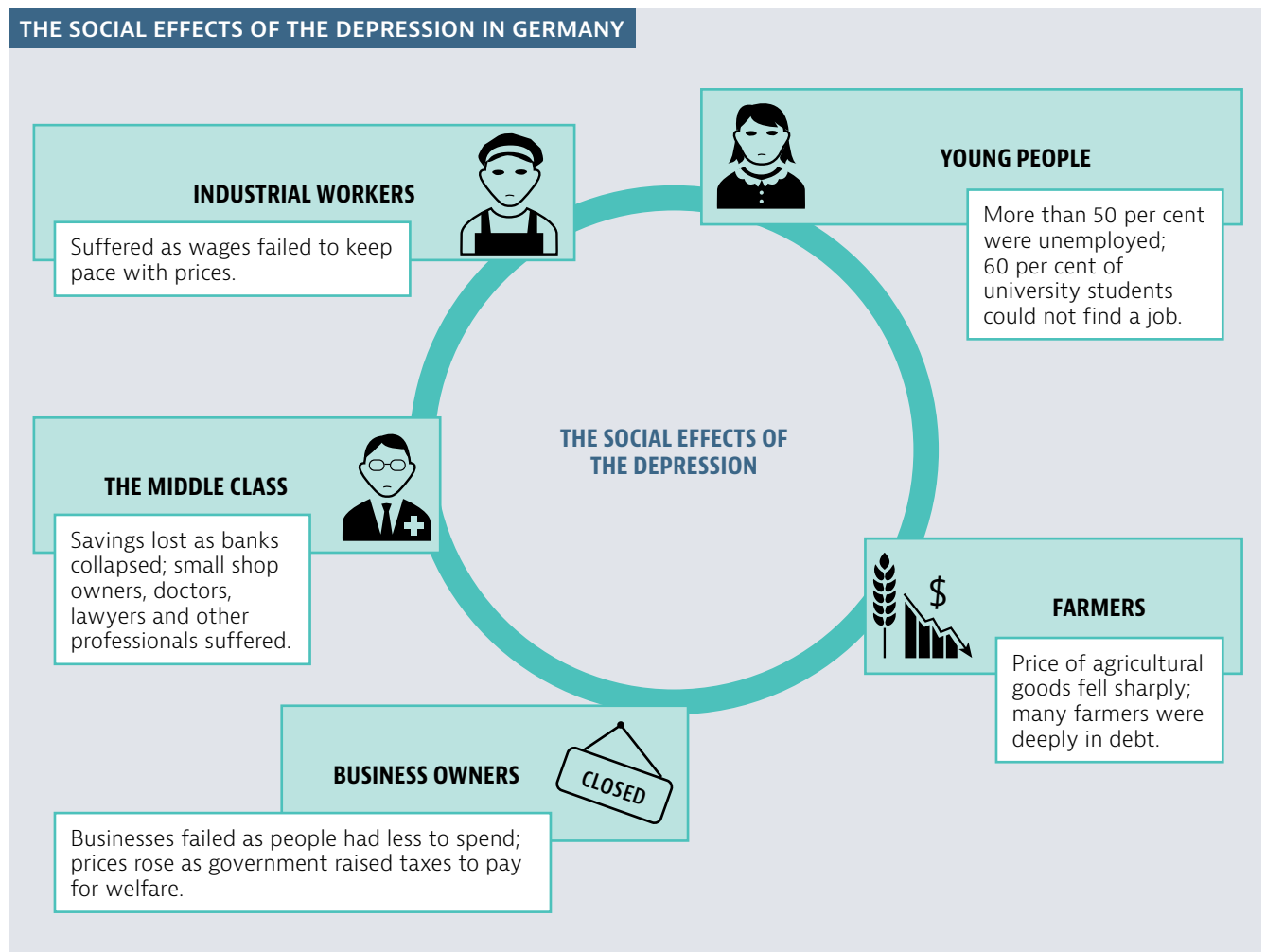


HITLER BECOMES CHANCELLOR

PRESIDENT HINDENBURG, JANUARY 1933: ‘You cannot for one moment, gentlemen, imagine that I intend to appoint that Austrian corporal Reich Chancellor.’

ECONOMIC COLLAPSE

On Tuesday, 29 October 1929, the Wall Street stock market in New York crashed. The effects were felt in most developed countries in the world, but Germany was particularly vulnerable. American banks had invested heavily in the stock market and lost billions. To make good their losses, they recalled a large proportion of their loans—including those made to Germany. The German government and businesses had borrowed heavily from American banks and relied on a constant stream of credit from them to keep operating. Now this crucial source of funds had dried up. German exports also dropped because the purchasing power of most nations had declined. As a result, German businesses began laying off their workers. By 1931, 50,000 businesses had been forced to close and 5.5 million Germans were out of work.⁴⁴ The resulting social and economic chaos gave Hitler the opportunity he desperately needed to turn around the fortunes of the NSDAP. As unemployment started to rise, the party made enormous gains in the Reichstag and presidential elections of the early 1930s.



WHO VOTED FOR THE NAZIS?

When the Great Depression hit Germany and millions were thrown out of work, people started to look for answers. Hitler and the Nazis appealed to them by pointing at scapegoats such as the Weimar politicians, Jewish people and the communists (who had also done well in the Reichstag elections of 1930 and 1932). Hitler's persistent attacks on the Treaty of Versailles were also very popular with patriotic Germans of all classes. While the Nazis won the vote of a broad cross-section of German society, they were particularly

popular with the middle class. Interestingly, about one-third of German workers also voted for Hitler rather than the KPD or SPD.⁴⁵ Geographically, the Nazis were more popular in the north and east of the country. They competed with the KPD and SPD in industrial areas, like the Ruhr, for the working class vote. The Nazis gained many votes in rural areas but did poorly in regions that were strongly Catholic, such as Bavaria (where, ironically, the Nazi Party was founded).



➔ **Source 5.40** 'Election Results in Germany 1924–1933,' *Marxists Internet Archive*, www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/germany/elect.htm

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 5.41 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 5.80** Identify the two parties that gained the most seats in the Reichstag from 1930 to 1932.
- 5.81** Identify the two parties that lost the most seats in the Reichstag from 1930 to 1932.
- 5.82** Explain the economic, social and political effects of the Great Depression on Germany. Refer to the source in your response.
- 5.83** Evaluate the significance of the Great Depression as the cause for the increasing popularity of the Nazi Party by 1932. Use evidence to support your response.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

- 5.84** Explain the similarities and differences between the hyperinflation of 1923 and the Great Depression of 1929. Explore themes such as the origins of the economic crises, the effect on people's lives and the overall outcomes.

Results of the 1932 presidential election

FIRST ROUND (MARCH)		
CANDIDATE AND PARTY	NO. OF VOTES	% OF VOTES
Paul von Hindenburg (independent)	18,651,497	49.6
Adolf Hitler (NSDAP)	11,339,446	30.1
Ernst Thälmann (KPD)	4,938,341	13.2
Theodor Duesterberg (DNVP)	2,557,729	6.8
SECOND ROUND (APRIL)		
CANDIDATE AND PARTY	NO. OF VOTES	% OF VOTES
Paul von Hindenburg (independent)	19,359,983	53.0
Adolf Hitler (NSDAP)	13,418,547	36.8
Ernst Thälmann (KPD)	3,706,759	10.2

Reichstag election results, 1930 and 1932

PARTY	SEPTEMBER 1930 (577 SEATS)		JULY 1932 (608 SEATS)	
	% OF VOTES	NO. OF SEATS	% OF VOTES	NO. OF SEATS
KPD	13.1	77	14.3	89
SPD	24.5	143	21.6	133
DDP	3.8	20	1.0	4
Zentrum	11.8	68	12.5	75
BVP	3.0	19	3.2	22
DVP	4.5	30	1.2	7
DNVP	7.0	41	5.9	37
NSDAP	18.3	107	37.3	230

➔ **Source 5.41** Martin Collier and Philip Pedley, *Germany 1919–45* (Oxford: Heinemann, 2000), 77.



➔ **Source 5.42** A Nazi campaign poster from 1932. It reads, 'Work, freedom and bread. Vote for the national socialists.'



NAZI ELECTION STRATEGIES

The Great Depression was not the only reason for the NSDAP's success at the ballot box from 1930. The party employed a range of modern techniques designed to secure as many votes as possible. Hitler's public speaking was also a strong drawcard for the party.

NAZI CAMPAIGN TACTICS

The oratory skills of Adolf Hitler were crucial in raising the party's popularity and securing new members. Many recalled feeling hypnotised as they listened to him.

HITLER HIMSELF



SCAPEGOATS



Hitler blamed the Jewish people, the 'November criminals' and the Treaty of Versailles for all of Germany's woes.

APPEALS TO FEAR



The Nazis exploited many Germans' fear of communism and economic collapse.

NAZI CAMPAIGN TACTICS

PROPAGANDA

Posters, newspapers, radios, newsreels (shown before films) and rallies all spread the Nazi ideology.



VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION

The SA was used to harass and beat up political opponents. Some opponents were killed in wild street brawls.



TECHNOLOGY

Radios broadcast Nazi ideology, and Hitler used an aircraft to travel across as much of Germany as quickly as possible during election campaigns.

backroom deals

When politicians make decisions without public knowledge or scrutiny.

➔ Heinrich Brüning, chancellor, March 1930–May 1932.

unemployment

Being without paid work.

conservative

A political ideology favouring the status quo.

ARTICLE 48 AND BACKROOM DEALS

The chancellor at the time of the Nazi Party's breakthrough in the polls was Heinrich Brüning. A member of the Zentrum Party, Brüning was unwilling to



work with either the radical left or right. Consequently, to pass laws, Brüning's only option was to ask President Hindenburg to resort to using Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution (see pp. 120–121). While technically legal, its overuse by Brüning (five times in 1930 and sixty-six times in 1932) weakened the democratic process in Germany and paved the way for authoritarian rule.⁴⁶

Brüning was blamed by many Germans for the bank closures, business failures and massive unemployment of the early 1930s. In May 1932, Hindenburg was urged by conservative politicians to dismiss Brüning.

His replacement was Franz von Papen, a deeply conservative aristocrat. In July, new Reichstag elections were held (see Source 5.41) and, in a campaign marked by considerable violence, the Nazis achieved their best result so far. While the Nazis were now the largest party in the Reichstag, they did not hold an outright majority. Hitler demanded the chancellorship but Hindenburg kept Papen in this office. Hindenburg personally despised the leader of the NSDAP, and contemptuously referred to him as *der böhmischer Gefreiter*, or 'the bohemian corporal' in reference to Hitler's Austrian background and the low rank he held in World War I.⁴⁷

Papen struggled to muster any support in the bitterly divided Reichstag, and was humiliated on 12 September 1932 when a vote of no confidence in his leadership was passed against him by 512 votes to forty-two. As a result, Papen was forced to dissolve the Reichstag and call for new elections in November.

➔ Source 5.43 Martin Collier and Philip Pedley, *Germany 1919–45* (Oxford: Heinemann, 2000), 77.

Did you know? Hitler was not eligible to sit in the Reichstag in the 1920s because he was not a German citizen. He renounced his Austrian citizenship in 1925 but was unable to secure German citizenship. Technically he was *staatenlos*, or 'stateless'. He only became a naturalised German in April 1932 when he announced his candidacy for the presidency.

Reichstag election results 1932 and 1933

PARTY	NOVEMBER 1932 (584 SEATS)		MARCH 1933 (647 SEATS)	
	% OF VOTES	NUMBER OF SEATS	% OF VOTES	NUMBER OF SEATS
KPD	16.9	100	12.3	81
SPD	20.4	121	18.3	120
DDP	1.0	2	0.9	5
Zentrum	11.9	70	11.2	74
BVP	3.1	20	2.7	18
DVP	1.9	11	1.1	2
DNVP	8.3	52	8.0	52
NSDAP	33.1	196	43.9	288



The outcome of the November elections suggested that the Nazis had already peaked in terms of their popularity. Hitler was desperate to be appointed chancellor before support for the NSDAP fell any further and ‘election fatigue’ set in. As Joseph Goebbels noted in his diary, ‘We must come to power in the foreseeable future. Otherwise we’ll win ourselves to death in elections.’⁴⁸ Still opposed to Hitler, Hindenburg replaced Papen with Kurt von Schleicher on 2 December 1932. Schleicher was a former army officer who had served under Hindenburg during the war. However, Papen wanted his revenge on Schleicher—whom he blamed for his losing the office of chancellor—and conspired to have him removed. Papen knew he had no chance of reclaiming the chancellorship himself in the short-term; he needed to promote someone he thought he could control.



← (far left) Kurt von Schleicher, chancellor, December 1932–January 1933.

← Franz von Papen, chancellor, May–November 1932.

On 4 January 1933, Papen met with Hitler and they struck a deal. Hitler would replace Schleicher as chancellor, and Papen would serve as vice-chancellor. Papen managed to convince Hindenburg that Schleicher lacked the support of the army and conservative landowners. The elderly Hindenburg (he was now eighty-four) sacked Schleicher on 28 January. Two days later, Hitler was appointed chancellor with the support of a coalition of right-wing parties. Papen was duly appointed vice-chancellor and believed that he could control Hitler from behind the scenes. Goebbels was typically **cynical** and ruthless when he wrote in his diary: ‘The stupidity of democracy. It will always remain one of democracy’s best jokes that it provided its deadly enemies with the means by which it was destroyed.’⁴⁹

cynical

Sceptical or distrustful of people's motives, believing that people only act in self-interest.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 5.85** What effect did the Great Depression have on the German economy and people?
- 5.86** Among which classes and geographical areas were the Nazi Party most popular?
- 5.87** List and explain three of the Nazis’ campaign tactics.
- 5.88** Why was Chancellor Brüning forced to rule through Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution? What might be the possible consequences of this?
- 5.89** What did Goebbels mean when he wrote, ‘We will win ourselves to death in these elections?’
- 5.90** What role did Fritz von Papen play in having Hitler appointed chancellor on 30 January 1933? What motivated him to do this?

Significant individual ↗

PAUL VON HINDENBURG, 1847–1934

Was a World War I general and president of Weimar Germany from 1925–1934.

Believed in authoritarian government and a strong German state; he was bitterly opposed to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

He said: 'As a soldier I would rather perish in honour than sign a humiliating peace [the Treaty of Versailles].'

Said about: 'Throughout his career, [Hindenburg] depended heavily upon advice of those around him, a trait that became more pronounced with advancing age.' (*Henry Turner, historian*)

Contributed to change by establishing a precedent of authoritarian rule in Germany and inviting Hitler to become chancellor in January 1933.



Significant individual ↗

ADOLF HITLER, 1889–1945

Was chancellor and Führer of Nazi Germany.

Believed in his destiny to lead the pure Aryan race to supremacy in the world.

He said: 'All of nature is one great struggle between strength and weakness, an eternal victory of the strong over the weak.'

Said about: 'The twelve years of Hitler's rule permanently changed Germany, Europe and the world.'⁵⁰ (*Ian Kershaw, historian*)

Contributed to change by becoming dictator of Germany by 1934 and unleashing the forces that led to World War II and the Holocaust.



↗ **Source 5.44** Hindenburg officially appoints Hitler as chancellor.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 5.44 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

5.91 Describe how Hitler is dressed. Compare his attire with what he is wearing in Source 5.37. Explain why Hitler wore different types of clothes on different occasions.

5.92 How useful is this source in explaining why Hitler was appointed chancellor? Explain your answer.



CHAPTER 5 REVIEW

From obscure beginnings in a small, provincial town in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Hitler rose to become chancellor of one of the most powerful nations in Europe. The NSDAP, which had dwelt on the fringe of German politics for more than a decade, thrived on economic and social disruption. However, it was not until the Great Depression that the Nazis started to gain sufficient electoral support. By 1932 they were the largest party in the Reichstag and Hitler was demanding to be appointed chancellor.

Backroom deals by cynical conservative politicians, who thought they could control Hitler, saw him elevated to the office he so greatly desired. However, Hitler proved to be less manageable than the conservatives expected. Hitler was determined not to be the puppet of other politicians, and he refused to be another short-term chancellor. He saw this as the perfect opportunity to impose the *Führerprinzip*, which previously applied only to the Nazi Party, to the entire German nation and its people. By turning crises to his advantage and stoking popular fears, Hitler would soon eliminate all political opponents and rivals to establish himself as the supreme authority in Germany.

KEY SUMMARY POINTS

- Germany experienced political, economic and social chaos in the years after World War I.
- The Weimar Republic provided a measure of stability by the mid-1920s.
- German culture flourished under the Weimar period, as artists could experiment in a more tolerant environment.
- Significant cultural movements of Weimar Germany include Bauhaus, expressionism and cubism.
- The Nazi Party was initially a fringe-dwelling extremist group with a small following.
- The Nazi ideology was based on racial superiority, discipline and obedience.
- The Great Depression gave Hitler and the Nazis the opportunity they needed to gain support.
- Hitler was appointed chancellor by politicians who thought they could control him.

REVIEW

5.93 Using the information presented in this chapter, create a mind map or flowchart that visually demonstrates the sequence of events that led to Hitler becoming chancellor in January 1933. Include primary source quotations and images or diagrams for each event.

EXTENDED RESPONSE

5.94 Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence, and a clear conclusion.

- Explain the consequences of the Beer Hall Putsch for the NSDAP.
- Explain the key features of the Nazi ideology.

ESSAY

5.95 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- Historian Ian Kershaw argues, 'The First World War made Hitler possible'. To what extent did that conflict, and its aftermath, create the preconditions necessary for Hitler's rise to power?
- The Weimar Republic fell victim to an extremist, authoritarian party due to the flaws contained within its own constitution. To what extent do you agree with this statement?
- Historian Richard J. Evans argues, 'Hitler came into office as the result of backstairs political intrigue'. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

EXTENSION

5.96 Research the life of one of the following individuals and present a report to the class on their role in the early years of the Nazi Party (1919–1933). Your presentation should be three to five minutes in duration and make effective use of visual sources.

- Hermann Göring
- Rudolf Hess
- Ernst Röhm
- Erich Ludendorff
- Anton Drexler



LIFE IN THE THIRD REICH, 1933–1939

'We do not need a people ruled by majority votes, but a people with the will to leadership.'

THE EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPALS OF THE NEW GERMANY

Under the Weimar Republic, the German people experienced a few years of social tolerance and artistic experimentation. However, all that changed suddenly with the appointment of Hitler as chancellor in January 1933. Hitler quickly transformed his political position into *der Führer* (the Leader), the absolute dictator of Germany. Now in complete control, Hitler and the Nazi Party set about bringing the lives of the German people into line with the ideals of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Everything would be subordinated to the will of *der Führer*.

The lives of ordinary men, women and children changed drastically under the *Third Reich* (1933–1945). Conservative social values glorified traditional roles for women and children. Economically, the Nazi Party sought to reverse the chaos of the Great Depression by providing jobs in manufacturing and the armaments industries. All artistic expression was brought into line with Nazi thought, with modern forms of culture being deemed 'degenerate'. Outsiders and enemies of the regime, either political or racial, were demonised in propaganda and dealt with brutally by the Nazi state.

Volksgemeinschaft

The idea of a national community that transcended class, religious and regional differences.

Third Reich

The name given to Germany when Hitler came to power and wanted to establish an empire under his Nazi regime (1933–1945).

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1933

27 FEBRUARY — Reichstag fire
23 MARCH — The Enabling Act
14 JULY — Law against the Formation of Parties

1934

2 AUGUST — Hitler declares himself *der Führer*

1935

15 SEPTEMBER — Nuremberg Laws enacted

1938

9–10 NOVEMBER — *Kristallnacht*
(the Night of Broken Glass)

KEY QUESTIONS

- How did Hitler become *der Führer*, the absolute ruler of Germany?
- How did German society and culture change under the Nazis?
- What was it like to live in Nazi Germany as a child, a woman or a Jew?
- How was the Nazi ideology propagated in Germany from 1933–1939?
- What role did Himmler and Goebbels play in changes to daily life and culture in Nazi Germany?

Source 6.01

Members of the Hitler Youth at a Nazi Party rally.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS**JOSEPH GOEBBELS**

*Head of the Propaganda Ministry
Gauleiter of Berlin*

**LENI RIEFENSTAHL**

*German film director
Made the documentary Triumph of the Will
(1935)*

**HEINRICH HIMMLER**

*Head of the SS
Reichsführer of Nazi Germany*

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

When Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in Germany in 1933, they did not only seek to establish a political dictatorship. They also sought to completely transform all aspect of people's lives so that they reflected Nazi values and ideology. As you work through this chapter, consider the following questions.

6.01 To what extent did the Nazis change aspects of social and cultural life in Germany from 1933–1939?

6.02 How effectively did the Nazis deal with those deemed to be threats to the new regime?

THE PATH TO DICTATORSHIP

ADOLF HITLER: 'I have given myself this one goal—to sweep these thirty political parties out of Germany!'

Despite being appointed chancellor, Hitler did not yet have total control of the German political system. The NSDAP did not have an outright majority in the Reichstag, and only two of the twelve cabinet ministers were Nazis. Moreover, Hindenburg had already dismissed several chancellors since 1925, and could easily do the same to Hitler. Looking for an absolute majority in the Reichstag, Hitler called for new national elections to be held on 5 March 1933. However before that occurred, Hitler was given a golden opportunity to strengthen his grip on power.

THE REICHSTAG FIRE

On the night of 27 February 1933, the Reichstag building was gutted by fire. A young Dutch communist named Marinus van der Lubbe was arrested at the scene and charged with arson. At the time, some accused the Nazis of deliberately lighting the fire or letting van der Lubbe into the building as an excuse to attack their political opponents. The real cause of the fire will probably never be known. However, of greater significance is how the Nazis exploited the opportunity. Hitler and Göring, the minister in charge of the police in Prussia, quickly pointed to a larger communist plot. Through Hindenburg's use of Article 48, Hitler suspended personal freedoms and liberties and gave police the power to hold suspects without trial. Anti-Nazi newspapers and radio stations were shut down and hundreds of Hitler's opponents were locked up. Despite these heavy-handed tactics, the Nazis failed to secure the outright majority they needed in the March Reichstag elections (see Source 5.43, Reichstag elections). Hitler was forced to rule in a coalition with the DNVP.

➔ **Source 6.02** The Reichstag in flames, 27 February 1933.



THE ENABLING ACT

Undeterred by this setback, Hitler pressed on with his goal of gathering all power to himself by passing the Enabling Act. However, to make the necessary changes to the constitution, Hitler needed two-thirds of the vote in the Reichstag. With the KPD and SPD deputies holding two hundred seats, this would be impossible. Hitler won over the moderate right and centre parties with promises to respect religious and moral values. When the Reichstag deputies met on 23 March in the Kroll Opera House to vote on the Enabling Act, the left-wing deputies—those who were not in prison—were prevented by the SA from entering. The Enabling Act was passed by 444 votes to ninety-four and came into force the next day.

The Enabling Act, 24 March 1933

The Reichstag has passed the following law ... after it has been established that it meets the requirements for legislation altering the Constitution.

ARTICLE 1. National laws can be enacted by the Reich Cabinet as well as in accordance with the procedure established in the Constitution. ...

ARTICLE 2. The national laws enacted by the Reich Cabinet may deviate from the Constitution ... The powers of the President remain undisturbed.

ARTICLE 3. The national laws enacted by the Reich Cabinet shall be prepared by the Chancellor and published in the *Reichsgesetzblatt* [official gazette].

⬆ **Source 6.03** 'Law to Remove the Distress of the People and the Reich (The Enabling Act),' reprinted in U.S. Department of State, Division of European Affairs, *National Socialism. Basic Principles, their Application by the Nazi Party's Foreign Organizations, and the Use of Germans Abroad for Nazi Aims* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), Appendix, Document 11, 217–218. *German History in Documents and Images*, germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=1496

This act essentially gave Hitler and his cabinet of ministers the power to make laws by sidestepping the Reichstag and the constitution. In effect, it gave Hitler the dictatorial powers he had always demanded. He could now run Germany the way he ran the Nazi Party—as the undisputed leader.



GLEICHSCHALTUNG

As an important part of his efforts to control political and social life in Germany, Hitler initiated a policy of *Gleichschaltung* ('coordination'). This meant bringing all aspects of life into line with the ideologies of national socialism. The Nazis passed a series of laws to realise this goal. Some of the key laws were as follows:

7 April 1933

Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service

Jews and political opponents of the regime were thrown out of the civil service.

2 May 1933

The abolition of the German trade union movement

Trade unions were banned and replaced by the German Labour Front (DAF), which was completely controlled by the Nazis.

14 July 1933

The abolition of all political parties except the Nazi Party, and the Law Against the New Establishment of Political Parties

These two laws saw all political parties in Germany, except the NSDAP, declared illegal, and no new parties could be established to replace them.

January 1934

Law for the Reconstruction of the German States

All state governments were abolished. The national government in Berlin was now the only legitimate source of political authority in Germany.

April 1934

Control of the legal system

The Nazi government established the People's Court to deal with crimes against the state, such as treason. There was no right to appeal in these courts.

trade unions

Organisations set up in workplaces to represent the interests of workers, such as fair wages and safe working conditions.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.03** Explain how the Enabling Act gave Hitler and the Nazis dictatorial powers.
- 6.04** Explain how the laws passed under the *Gleichschaltung* initiative would have helped the Nazis increase their power.
- 6.05** Which elements of the Nazi ideology were represented under the *Gleichschaltung* laws?

Did you know? The actual title of the Enabling Act was 'The Law for Terminating the Suffering of the People and Nation'.

THE NIGHT OF THE LONG KNIVES



↑ Heinrich Himmler, leader of the SS.

Strangely enough, the last obstacle in Hitler's path to securing total power came from *within* the NSDAP. The SA had grown to about two million men by 1934. Ernst Röhm, who had wanted a social and economic revolution along with Hitler's political revolution, was frustrated by the deals Hitler had made with politicians like Franz von Papen and Paul von Hindenburg. Conservatives and business leaders who supported the Nazi regime were concerned by the SA's thuggery, while the army felt that the SA wanted to replace them—which was actually one of Röhm's goals. These groups, along with powerful individuals in the Nazi Party, such as Hermann Göring and Heinrich Himmler, convinced Hitler to get rid of Röhm and curtail the influence of the SA. On the night of 30 June, Hitler ordered the SS to strike.

On what became known as the 'Night of the Long Knives', Röhm was arrested and shot dead two days later. Other SA leaders and potential opponents of the regime, such as former chancellor Kurt von Schleicher, were also arrested and executed by SS troops. In all, about 180 members of the Nazi Party and 200 other 'enemies' of the regime were killed in the purge.

⇒ **Source 6.04** 'They Salute with Both Hands Now.' A political cartoon by David Low that appeared in the *British Evening Standard* on 3 July 1934.



Did you know? Goebbels was always conscious of the impact of propaganda. In the lead up to the March 1933 election he wrote, 'The struggle is now a light one since we are able to employ all the means of the State. Radio and [the] press are at our disposal.'

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 6.04 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 6.06** Identify two individuals depicted in this cartoon.
- 6.07** Explain the meaning of the phrase, 'They salute with both hands now'.
- 6.08** Explain why Hitler ordered the execution of Röhm and other political opponents.
- 6.09** Evaluate the usefulness of this source in helping you understand how Hitler achieved total power in Germany. Use evidence to support your response.



DER FÜHRER

On 2 August 1934, President Hindenburg died. Hitler moved quickly to abolish the office of president and assumed all the powers of state as der Führer. On the same day, all German soldiers were required to swear a personal oath of allegiance to Hitler rather than to the people or the constitution. The army leadership permitted this, as they were grateful that Hitler had eliminated the threat posed by the SA. On 19 August, a *plebiscite* was held, which asked the German people to approve of Hitler becoming Führer. Almost 90 per cent voted 'Yes'.¹ Hitler was able to exploit this result to legitimise his dictatorship. He was now the sole and undisputed master of Germany.

plebiscite

A vote held to determine the people's opinion. The result is not necessarily legally binding on the government.

The soldier's oath to the Führer

I swear by God this sacred oath: that I will render unconditional obedience to the *Führer* of the German Reich and people, Adolf Hitler, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and will be ready as a brave soldier to risk my life at any time for this oath.

Source 6.05 Cited in Greg Lacey and Keith Shephard, *Germany 1918–1945: A Study in Depth* (London: John Murray, 1997), 74.



Source 6.06 New inductees taking the oath at the beginning of their national service in a barracks in Berlin.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.10** How many members did the SA have prior to the Night of the Long Knives?
- 6.11** Why did Hitler order the SS to eliminate the leadership of the SA? Why did the SS comply with this order?
- 6.12** How did Hitler make use of Hindenburg's death to increase his power?
- 6.13** Explain the significance of the German army swearing a personal oath of allegiance to Hitler.

EXTENSION

- 6.14** Explain the possible range of reasons for the high 'Yes' vote in the plebiscite of 19 August.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

- 6.15** Explain how the Nazi regime differed from the Weimar government. To what extent did the lives of the German people change? You could write a comparative report or present your ideas and evidence in a table.

Source 6.07 A Nazi rally at Nuremberg, September 1934.

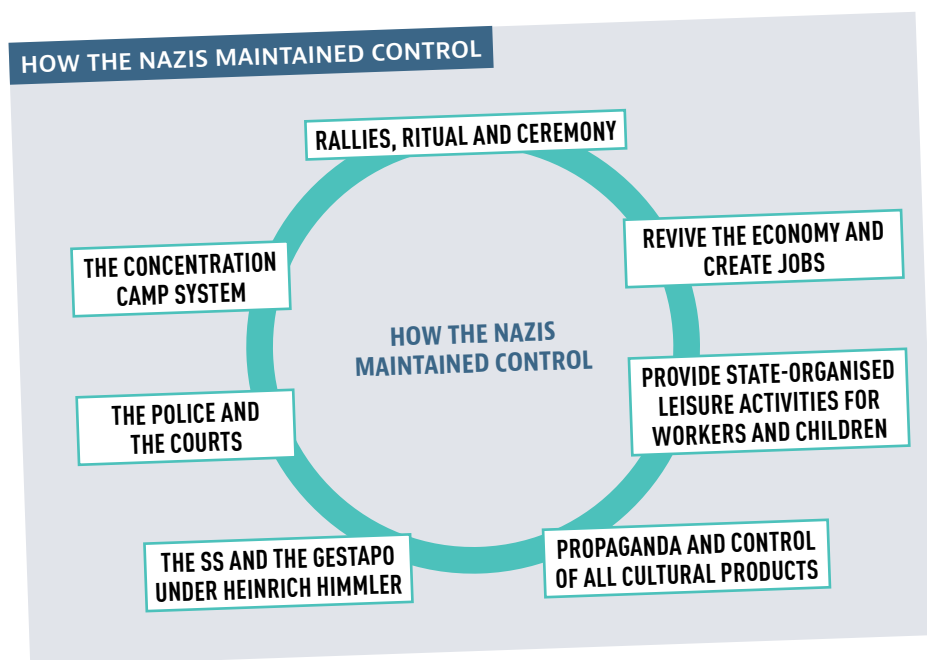


HOW DID THE NAZIS MAINTAIN CONTROL?

Once he had achieved total power by appointing himself Führer, and seeing off Röhm as head of a rival wing of the party, Hitler could now set about transforming Germany according to his vision. His aims were to:

- create a strong, unified Germany capable of overturning the terms of the Treaty of Versailles
- secure living space (or Lebensraum) in the east for the German people
- establish a one-party state under his personal control
- create a racially pure völkisch community (*Volksgemeinschaft*)
- dominate every aspect of the lives of the German people.

Until the plebiscite on Hitler becoming Führer on 19 August 1934, the Nazis had never achieved more than 43 per cent of the vote in federal elections.² The Nazis would, therefore, have to rule with 'the carrot and the stick'—that is, a mixture of incentives and rewards for loyal Germans as well as punishments and terror for those who challenged the regime or refused to conform to the ideals of national socialism.



HIMMLER AND THE SS

The influence of the SS grew enormously after the Night of the Long Knives in June 1934. Under the direction of *Reichsführer* SS Heinrich Himmler, the SS was tasked with finding and eliminating all threats to the Nazi regime, wherever they might be. The SS gradually took over the German police system and the courts, and initiated the *concentration camp* network. Naturally, the members of the SS had to be racially pure and were expected to marry Aryan women. Under the *Nacht und Nebel* (Night and Fog) decree passed by Hitler in December 1941, the various police arms under the SS had the power to arrest and detain anyone they suspected of 'endangering German security'.³ The SS even developed their own armed forces. The *Waffen* ('armed') SS were military units that fought alongside the regular army during World War II. The SS *Totenkopfverbände* ('Death's Head Units') were charged with running the concentration camps.

concentration camps

Generally used to denote a facility for holding political opponents of a regime. The term is most generally applied to those established in Germany during the Third Reich.



THE POLICE AND THE COURTS

A special court for political crimes was set up on 21 March 1933. There were three judges—all Nazis—and no jury. This ensured that anyone the party disapproved of would be jailed. In 1933, a People's Court was established to hear cases of **high treason**; its jury comprised only Nazi Party members. From 1934–1945, seven thousand of the sixteen thousand cases heard by the People's Court resulted in the death penalty.⁴ All of the various police forces in Germany were brought under the control of the SS by 1936. This included:

- the *Ordnungspolizei* (regular police)
- the *Sicherheitspolizei* (security police)
- the *Kriminalpolizei* (criminal police)
- the *Geheime Staatspolizei* (secret state police, better known as the Gestapo)
- the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SS security service).

In 1939, all of the police agencies listed above (with the exception of the *Ordnungspolizei*) were brought together into the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA, or Reich Main Security Office) under the command of Reinhard Heydrich, a high-ranking SS officer who answered only to Himmler.

THE CONCENTRATION CAMP SYSTEM

Enemies of the Nazi state were rounded up and imprisoned in so-called 'wild camps' not long after Hitler became chancellor in January 1933. Initially the Nazis kept prisoners in abandoned factories and warehouses. However, soon more specialised camps were built, and by 1939 there were eight concentration camps in Germany, including Dachau and Buchenwald. Run by the SS, the camps housed political prisoners such as communists and socialists, Jewish people and 'asocials' such as homosexuals, gypsies, trade unionists and Jehovah's Witnesses. A police report on 10 April 1939 noted that on that day, 162,734 people were in 'protective custody', 27,369 were awaiting trial and 112,432 were convicted for their opposition to the regime.⁵

high treason

Betraying one's country, usually by attempting to overthrow the government or kill the leaders. This is usually punishable by death.



← Reinhard Heydrich, leader of the RSHA.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.16** What vision did Hitler have for Germany once he had seized dictatorial powers?
- 6.17** How did the size and role of the SS grow in Nazi Germany up to and including 1941?
- 6.18** How did the Nazis reorganise the police in Germany to suit their political needs?
- 6.19** Who was sent to the first camps established by the Nazi Party?

Significant individual

HEINRICH HIMMLER, 1900–1945

Was *Reichsführer* SS of the Third Reich.

Believed in the purity of the German race and the genius of Adolf Hitler.

He said: 'Our basic principle must be the absolute rule for the SS men. We must be honest, decent, loyal, comradely to members of our own blood and nobody else.'

Said about: 'Himmler was driven by extreme racism and, among the highest-ranking Nazis, he was the most directly associated with the mass murder of the Jews.' (*David Martin, historian*)

Contributed to change by eliminating the SA and brutally enforcing the will of the Nazi Party by eliminating political and racial enemies of the regime.



THE NAZI ECONOMY

economic depression

A prolonged and sustained period of low economic activity, with high and rising unemployment and low demand for goods.

autobahnen

German freeways.

Germany was hit particularly hard by the worldwide *economic depression* of the 1930s. By 1932 unemployment reached 5.6 million. During their election campaigns in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Nazis were deliberately vague in their policy statements on economic reform. Nevertheless, Hitler knew that his long-term political survival depended at least in part on how successfully he responded to Germany's economic crisis.

Central to Germany's economic recovery was Hjalmar Schacht, who was president of the Reichsbank and Minister of Economics during the 1930s. Under his 'New Plan', Schacht sought to repair and develop Germany's economy by:

- increasing government control of banking and foreign trade
- assisting farmers and small businesses
- investing heavily in public works (e.g. the *autobahnen*) to create jobs
- increasing trade treaties with foreign countries
- introducing the Mefo bill, a government bond that could be purchased as an investment at 4 per cent interest.



Hjalmar Schacht, Reich Minister of Economics, 1934–1937.

➔ **Source 6.08** Geoff Layton, *From Kaiser to Führer: Germany 1900–1945* (London: Hodder Education, 2009), 278.

THE GERMAN ECONOMY 1928–1936						
	1928	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936
Public investment*	6.6	2.2	2.5	4.6	6.4	8.1
Government expenditure*	11.7	8.6	9.4	12.8	13.9	15.8
Construction*	2.7	0.9	1.7	3.5	4.9	5.4
Rearmament*	0.7	0.7	1.8	3.0	5.4	10.2
Transportation*	2.6	0.8	1.3	1.8	2.1	2.4
Unemployment (millions)	1.4	5.6	4.8	2.7	2.2	1.6
Industrial production†	100	58	66	83	96	107

* Billions of Reichsmarks

† As a percentage of 1928 production levels

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 6.08 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

6.20 Explain the effect that the Great Depression had on the German economy.

6.21 Explain the extent to which the German state intervened in the economy during the 1930s.

6.22 Compare spending on rearmament with other areas of the Germany economy. Explain why this might have been the case.

6.23 Analyse the overall impact of Nazi economic policy on Germany from 1933 to 1936. Use evidence to support your response.



THE FOUR-YEAR PLAN, 1936

Schacht realised that, despite impressive economic gains, the German government could not continue spending money. A decision would have to be made over whether the government would spend money on a rearmaments program or consumer goods. In August 1936 Hitler indicated in a government memorandum that the German army and economy had to be ready for war within four years.⁶ This dilemma was addressed by the Four-Year Plan. Headed by Hermann Göring, the Four-Year Plan aimed to increase spending on armaments and reduce Germany's dependency on foreign nations for imported goods such as certain precious metals and agricultural products. This was known as **autarky**.⁷ The results of the Four-Year Plan were mixed. While production in some commodities, such as aluminium and explosives, reached or exceeded the desired output, others such as oil and coal fell far short.

Did you know? The decision over whether to focus on armaments or consumer goods in Nazi Germany was often referred to as an argument over 'guns or butter'.

THE NAZIS AND WORKERS

The Nazi Party needed the support of industrial workers because they made the armaments in factories. Creating jobs, targeting propaganda at workers and programs such as *Kraft durch Freude* (or 'Strength through Joy') and *Schönheit der Arbeit* ('Beauty of Labour') all helped raise the appeal of the Nazis among workers to some degree. Nevertheless, the workers lost heavily. They lost their main political party (the SPD) and trade unions were banned. They were replaced by the *Deutsche Arbeiter Front* (or DAF) under Dr Robert Ley. Rather than represent worker interests, the DAF became a vehicle for disseminating Nazi propaganda among workers.⁸

THE NAZIS AND FARMERS

Hitler did not forget that farmers generally supported the Nazi Party in elections throughout the 1920s and 1930s.⁹ To that end, the Reich Food Estate was set up in September 1933 to buy food from farmers and distribute it among the cities. This meant that farmers had a guaranteed market for their produce. The Reich Entailed Farm Law (also in 1933) ensured that banks could not seize the land of farmers if they could not repay their mortgage. This law was deeply tied to the Nazi ideology of *Blut und Boden* ('Blood and Soil'). This held that farmers were the backbone of the Nazi master race, and that land under Germany's control should only be owned by racially pure types.¹⁰

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.24** What economic problems did the Nazis face when they came to power in 1933?
- 6.25** What were the key elements of Hjalmar Schacht's 'New Plan'?
- 6.26** What were the elements of the Four-Year Plan? Who ran this program?
- 6.27** What were the advantages and disadvantages of the Nazis' economic and labour policies for industrial workers?
- 6.28** Why did the Nazis consider German farmers so important?

Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring, head of the Four-Year Plan and Hitler's deputy.



autarky

Economic independence for a nation.

Source 6.09 Anne McCallum, *Germany 1918–1945: Democracy to Dictatorship* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1992), 99.

COST OF LIVING COMPARED WITH REAL WAGES*, 1928–1939		
YEAR	COST OF LIVING	REAL WAGES
1928	100	100
1932	80	86
1933	78	91
1934	80	94
1935	81	95
1936	82	97
1937	82	101
1938	83	105
1939	86	108

*real wages

The amount of money a worker takes home relative to the price of everyday goods. This is often referred to as 'purchasing power'.

EVERYDAY LIFE UNDER THE NAZIS

JOSEPH GOEBBELS: 'It is not enough for people to be more or less reconciled to our regime ... we want to work on people until they have capitulated to us.'

The rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party had a profound effect on German social life and culture. Nazi control began to reach into every corner of German life following the passing of the Enabling Act in March 1933. The Enabling Act gave Hitler almost complete control. Laws to marginalise Jewish people and eventually take German citizenship from them began in 1933 with the order to boycott Jewish shops and businesses. The trade union movement was seen as a vehicle for the spreading of communist ideas, so all trade unions were declared illegal in May 1933.

Control of culture was an important tool used by the Nazis, and this was shown with the introduction of censorship in the early weeks of the Third Reich. To ensure the supervision of all cultural control, Hitler appointed Joseph Goebbels as Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda in March 1933. One of the first actions under Goebbels's leadership was the burning of books at universities across Germany. In September, the Reich Chamber of Culture was established to make sure that all aspects of German cultural life reflected the tenets of Nazism. Under Goebbels, newspapers, newsreels, literature and film were all strictly controlled so that they presented only views that were consistent with Nazism.

Did you know? There have been three Reichs, or Empires, in German history. The first was the Holy Roman Empire from 800–1806 CE. The second was under the kaisers from 1871–1918. The Third Reich was from Hitler's rise to power in 1933 to the end of World War II in 1945. Hitler believed that the Third Reich would last for one thousand years.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

6.29 Describe the attitudes shown by the men in Source 6.10, including references to their facial expressions and body language.

6.30 Why would the Nazis want to destroy books that were written by German writers who were highly acclaimed internationally?

6.31 What point is made by burning a book?



📌 **Source 6.10** Public book burning at the University of Berlin, 10 May 1933. Students had collected twenty thousand 'un-German books' from private and public libraries. Works included German writers Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Erich Maria Remarque, Ernst Toller and Arnold Zweig, plus non-German writers such as H.G. Wells, Jack London, Émile Zola and Marcel Proust.

📌 **Source 6.11** Book burning, 10 May 1933.





HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 6.12 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 6.32** Identify all the symbols of Nazism shown in the illustration.
- 6.33** What message does the image give about 'leaders' and 'followers'?
- 6.34** Why would the Nazis think it important to present this type of image to very young children?

Source 6.12 A page from a Nazi children's songbook. The verse is from the Nazi Party anthem.

WOMEN IN THE THIRD REICH

The rise of Nazism in Germany had a profound effect on the position and role of women in German society. Since 1900, Germany's population growth rate had fallen significantly. In 1900 there had been two million births per annum; by 1933 that had fallen to less than one million births. Over the same period, women's participation in the workforce increased by more than one-third.¹¹ These trends were dramatically reversed once the Nazis seized power in 1933. The nationalist socialist ideology in regards to women was fundamentally opposed to their new-found freedom to work and choose when, and whether, to have children. The Nazis believed that a woman's place was in the home, raising and looking after the children while her husband worked. This was summed up in the Nazi Party's slogan *Kinder, Kirche, Küche* ('Children, Church, Kitchen'). These were deemed the only appropriate activities for women in the Third Reich.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 6.13 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 6.35** What is the mother doing in this poster? How does this support the Nazi view of the role of women?
- 6.36** Describe the background depicted in the poster. Why do you think the artist used this setting?
- 6.37** Explain the impact this poster might have had on German people in the 1930s.

Source 6.13 Nazi propaganda poster on the virtues of motherhood from the 1930s. The caption reads: 'Support the Relief Organisation. Mother and Child.'



The impact of Nazi ideology on women was almost immediate. In 1933, most of the nineteen thousand female civil servants lost their jobs, as did approximately 15 per cent of female teachers. From 1936, no women could serve as judges or serve in juries.¹² Women were barred from senior positions within the party. By the mid-1930s only 10 per cent of university students could be women.

Women were offered considerable incentives by the regime to stay at home and have children. The ideal family, according to the Nazi Party, had four children. By the Law for the Promotion of Marriage (June 1934), racially pure married couples were eligible for a state loan of 1000 Reichsmarks (equivalent to about half the average annual income) if the woman gave up her job as soon as she got married. One-quarter of the loan would be cancelled for the birth of each child.¹³ Families with four children were also given discounted train tickets and reduced gas and electricity bills. This scheme had some success, as the percentage of women in the workforce fell from 37 per cent in 1932 to 31 per cent in 1937. The birthrate per thousand people rose from 14.7 in 1933 to 20.3 in 1939.¹⁴

Nevertheless, the Nazi policy of keeping women in the home was only a partial success. The demands of increased military production throughout the 1930s meant that from 1937 to 1939 the number of women in the workforce climbed from 5.7 million to 7.1 million.¹⁵ The demands of the economy, which was gearing up for war, took precedence over Nazi ideology.

➔ **Source 6.14** Cited in N. Baynes (ed.), *Hitler's Speeches 1922–1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 528–529.

Hitler on the role of women at a rally in Nuremberg in 1934

If one says that man's world is the State, his struggle, his readiness to devote his powers to the service of the community, one might be tempted to say that the world of woman is a smaller world. For her world is her husband, her family, her children and her house. But where would the greater world be if there were no one to care for the small world? ... Providence [the will of God] has entrusted to women the cares of that world which is peculiarly her own ... Every child that a woman brings into the world is a battle, a battle waged for the existence of her people.

Did you know? In 1939 the Nazi Party awarded special medals to mothers of large families. Mothers with four children



received the Bronze Cross. Those with six received the Silver Cross while those with eight were awarded the Gold Cross. Mothers who received the Gold Cross earned the right to be saluted by members of the Hitler Youth.

⬆️ Gold Cross of Honour for the German Mother.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 6.14 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 6.38** Explain Hitler's views on the role of women in German society.
- 6.39** How do Hitler's remarks in this speech reflect the values presented in the poster in Source 6.13?
- 6.40** Explain how Hitler attempted to convince his audience to accept his opinion on the role of women in society.
- 6.41** Evaluate the extent to which Hitler's vision of the role of women was actually implemented. Use evidence to support your response.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.42** Who was appointed propaganda minister in the Nazi regime?
- 6.43** How did he bring all forms of communication in Germany under direct Nazi control?
- 6.44** How did the lives of German women change under the Nazi Party?
- 6.45** How and why did the regime encourage the German people to have more children?



CHILDREN IN THE THIRD REICH

ADOLF HITLER: 'Your child belongs to us already.'

Hitler declared that the Third Reich would last for one thousand years. To achieve this, the Nazis placed special emphasis on the inclusion and indoctrination of young people. This was chiefly done through two institutions: the *Hitlerjugend* (HJ, or Hitler Youth) for boys and the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* (League of German Girls). Prior to Hitler's rise to power in 1933, youth movements and organisations in Germany (and Europe generally) had been very popular. By the time Hitler became chancellor, there were approximately five million German children in many different youth organisations.¹⁶ They emphasised 'getting back to nature' through camping, nature hikes and survival skills.

BOYS

In 1922 the Nazi Party established its Youth League, which was renamed the Hitler Youth in 1926. By 1932, 108,000 children were members. The following year, Baldur von Schirach was appointed leader of the Hitler Youth. He was responsible for its rapid growth throughout the 1930s. Many other youth organisations, including sporting clubs, were absorbed into the Hitler Youth or shut down when the Nazis came to power in 1933. A law in December 1936 made membership in the Hitler Youth compulsory for all boys aged 15–18 years.¹⁷ By the time World War II broke out, there were more than seven million young people in the Hitler Youth, or 77 per cent of the male child population of Germany.¹⁸ It became compulsory for children to register for membership on their tenth birthday. Jewish children were the only exception.



Source 6.15 A poster encouraging boys to sign up to the Hitler Youth. The caption reads, 'The youth serve the *Führer*. All ten-year-olds for the Hitler Youth.'

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 6.15 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 6.46** Why do you think the boy in the poster has been depicted this way?
- 6.47** What message do you think the artist was trying to convey?
- 6.48** Why did the Nazis put such an emphasis on youth participation in the Hitler Youth?
- 6.49** In your opinion, do you think this poster would have been an effective propaganda tool for the Nazis? Explain your answer.



Eventually the Hitler Youth was structured so that boys would progress through different stages as they grew older. At all levels the boys were prepared for a life of military service. From the age of six, German boys could join the *Pimpfs* ('Little Fellows'). They would wear uniforms, go camping and learn skills such as map reading and pitching a tent. From ten to fourteen, boys were part of the *Deutsche Jungvolk* ('German Young Folk'). They had to swear an oath of allegiance to 'the saviour of our country', Adolf Hitler, for whom the boys were expected to be 'willing and ready to give up my life'. At fourteen the boys moved into the Hitler Youth and started to receive more explicit military training from army personnel. Physical fitness was also emphasised. Boys were expected to be able to run sixty metres in twelve seconds and long jump 2.75 metres. Boys in the Hitler Youth received political indoctrination in the form of lectures and propaganda films on the importance of loyalty, obedience and racial purity. During political campaigns, members of the Hitler Youth provided assistance by handing out pamphlets and marching in parades to attract the attention of the Nazi Party.¹⁹

➔ **Source 6.16** 'The Education Principles of the New Germany,' *Frauen Warte*, no.22 (1936–37): 692–693.

An excerpt from a Nazi publication for German women

German people, German parents! The new Germany created by our people's chancellor Adolf Hitler places special demands on the German youth. The German youth are a foundation of the rebuilding of the German people and the German fatherland ... It is clear that the German youth must be resolved to defend their fatherland with their lives. Despite all the nonsense about promises and disarmament, Germany is surrounded by weapons. The German youth must learn military virtues. Their bodies must be steeled, made hard and strong, so that the youth may become capable soldiers who are healthy, strong, trained, energetic, and able to bear hardships. Gymnastics, games, sports, hiking, swimming, and military exercises must all be learned by the youth. Our youth should not sit in stuffy rooms and develop crooked backs and weak eyes. Alongside the basic and truly important education of the mind, they should develop healthy bodies by being outdoors ... A youth being trained for such important national duties must accept the idea of following the *Führer* absolutely and without question, without unhealthy carping criticism, without selfishness or opposition. They must learn to obey so that they, having themselves learned to obey, can believe in and trust their own leadership and can grow to be leaders themselves. Only he who has learned to obey can lead. Germany no longer believes that the masses can lead themselves by majority rule! The masses themselves are nothing! We do need not a people ruled by majority votes, but a people with the will to leadership. The German youth must learn that and act accordingly! Thus the German youth belong in organisations where they will learn the nature of leadership in its most noble form, where they can learn to obey and—if they are called to it—also learn to lead.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 6.16 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 6.50** What demands are being made on the German youth according to the article?
- 6.51** What was the ultimate purpose of the training and development of young people in Germany?
- 6.52** Describe the values that the Nazi Party attempted to instil in the German people.



GIRLS

Girls in the Third Reich had separate but equivalent organisations. As with the boys, the purpose of the girls' groups was to prepare them for their assigned role in the Nazi state. Girls aged 10–14 years joined the *Jungmädel Bund* (JM, 'League of Young Girls'). From ages fourteen to eighteen, girls joined the League of German Girls. These organisations were formed in 1928, and by 1936 the League of German Girls had a membership of more than two million.²⁰ As with the boys, membership was not compulsory until 1939 but it was strongly encouraged. There was an emphasis on physical activity and outdoor exercise for the girls. Rather than preparing them for army service, this was designed to make German girls healthy for motherhood. The girls were also informed about the importance of the race laws passed by the Nazi Party in 1936, particularly in relation to marrying someone who was biologically superior and racially pure.²¹ At the age of eighteen the girls could join *Glaube und Schönheit* ('Faith and Beauty'). In this organisation girls received instruction in raising children. They also learnt domestic chores such as cooking and sewing.



← **Source 6.17** A poster encouraging young girls to join the League of Young Girls. The caption reads, 'All ten-year-olds to us'.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 6.17 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 6.53** Describe the main visual elements of this poster.
- 6.54** Explain why the artist has depicted these elements this way.
- 6.55** What message do you think the artist was trying to convey to their audience?
- 6.56** Compare this poster for the League of Young Girls with the poster for the Hitler Youth in Source 6.15. What differences and similarities do you notice? Why might the posters be different?

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

- 6.57** How was life similar and different for girls and boys under the Nazi regime? Present your thoughts in a 300-word response or a table.



denigrate

To belittle, criticise or attack.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Sources 6.18 and 6.19 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

6.58 Why did the teacher in Source 6.20 feel he had to teach history from the Nazi point of view?

6.59 What risks was the teacher prepared to take?

6.60 Using both sources, explain how the education system helped to instil Nazi values in students.

6.61 Why do you think the three Jewish students might have been allowed to take the school leaving exam?

6.62 Evaluate the impact of Nazi Party goals and policies on the lives of German children. Use evidence to support your response.

MILITARY SERVICE

When World War II began in 1939, the young people of Germany were expected to play a role. Initially this was limited to non-combat duties, such as collecting clothes, blankets and money for charity. When Allied bombing raids on German cities commenced in 1942, Hitler Youth members served in air raid defence duties, operating search lights and anti-aircraft guns. Girls were sent to territory in the east that had been conquered by the German army, where they prepared houses—after the SS removed the original inhabitants—for their new German occupants. By the end of the war, when Germany was clearly losing, Hitler Youth boys were drafted into combat units. By 1945, boys as young as twelve were fighting in the defence of Berlin.

EDUCATION UNDER THE NAZIS

From 1934, the German education system became thoroughly 'Nazified'. Jewish teachers were sacked, and all remaining teachers were required to take an oath of loyalty to Hitler. The teaching profession was one of the most politically reliable groups in society: 97 per cent of teachers belonged to the Nazi Teachers' Association and 32 per cent were members of the Nazi Party. The educational emphasis changed from academic achievement to physical education, with an emphasis on creating the 'superior race'. As Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*, a child's 'whole education and training must be so ordered as to give him the conviction that he is absolutely superior to others'.²²

The school curriculum was changed to emphasise German history from a Nazi perspective, and to **denigrate** the Jewish people.

Model for a senior history syllabus

WEEKS	SUBJECT	RELATION TO JEWS
1–4	Prewar Germany, the class war, profits, strikes.	The Jews at large!
5–8	From agrarian to industrial state. colonies.	The peasant in the claws of the Jews!
9–12	Conspiracy against Germany, encirclement barrage around Germany.	The Jew reigns! War plots.
13–16	German struggle, German want. Blockage! Starvation!	The Jew becomes prosperous! Profit from German want.

Source 6.18 R.A. Brady, *The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism* (London: Gollancz, 1937), 112.

Some teachers were faced with difficult choices.

A student about her teacher

He had a bad conscience. He tried to do two things. On the one hand he went out of his way to teach history from the Nazi point of view—there were three girls who belonged to the League of German Girls in the class who could have grassed on him [told the authorities] ... On the other hand he worked for the three Jews to be allowed to take the school leaving exam, he gave them good marks. That is the only thing he dared do.

Source 6.19 Quoted in Robert Gibson and Jon Nichol, *Germany* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1985), 37.



YOUTH RESISTANCE TO THE THIRD REICH

Prior to the outbreak of World War II, there was little organised or effective resistance to the Nazi regime. This was only partly due to the levels of support enjoyed by the regime. The effectiveness of the various means of state control, fear of the consequences and the gradually improving living standards all contributed to a population that tacitly accepted Nazi control. While there was grumbling and discontent about some of the Nazis' methods and policies, it almost never transformed into overt criticism or action against the regime.²³ Nevertheless, there were small groups of young people in Nazi Germany who resisted the demands to conform to the expectations of the party.

The White Rose

The White Rose group was founded and organised by Sophie and Hans Scholl. They began printing anti-Nazi pamphlets at the University of Munich and secretly distributed them under the name 'The White Rose'. In 1942 one of their leaflets condemned the killing of Jewish people in eastern Europe, and the following year they openly distributed pamphlets at Munich University. They were promptly arrested by the Gestapo and executed by guillotine.



↑ Sophie Scholl.



↑ A street named after the Scholl siblings in Munich.

The Edelweiss Pirates

The Edelweiss Pirates, based in Cologne, formed out of gangs of male working-class teenagers. More aggressive than the White Rose, they ambushed and beat up members of the Hitler Youth and refused to participate in the activities organised by the Nazis. In 1944, twelve members of the group were arrested and hanged as an example to others.

The Swing Movement

This comprised the children of middle- and upper-class German families, and developed around an appreciation of swing and jazz music. These musical styles were considered inappropriate by the Nazis, as they were foreign and associated with African Americans. The so-called 'Swing Jugend' wore English or American clothes and grew their hair long. Like the Edelweiss Pirates, they refused to join Nazi organisations and were open in their indifference to the regime and its values. By 1944, 1231 nonconformist German students were sent to the Moringen concentration camp for 're-education'.²⁴

Overall, the youth resistance groups had little effect on the Third Reich and did not contribute in any way to the regime's downfall. As soon as they made their activities known to the authorities, they were quickly and easily crushed. However, since the 1970s, historians have studied the lives of the young people who stood up to the Nazis.²⁵ They are commemorated by plaques, statues and other memorials all over Germany.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.63 What happened to the members of the White Rose group?
- 6.64 How was the resistance of the Edelweiss Pirates different to that of the Swing Movement?
- 6.65 What is the legacy of youth groups that resisted the Nazi regime?





Source 6.20 Joseph Goebbels at a Nazi celebration, 1935.

CEREMONY

Nazism raised public ceremony to the highest level. Every opportunity was taken to show unity and celebrate Hitler's leadership. Book burnings were not done secretly; they were public events with ceremonial and militaristic gestures. From August 1934, the armed forces took a new oath of allegiance to Hitler in public and well-publicised ceremonies. When the people of the Saar—a region in south-west Germany on the French border that had been a League of Nations mandate since 1920—voted in a plebiscite in January 1935 to return to the Reich, Hitler attended the street parade.

The effect of having Hitler personally attend public events can be explained by a theory proposed by German sociologist Max Weber, which he called 'charismatic authority'. A person with charisma was one 'set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman ... powers or qualities'.²⁶ It was the face-to-face interaction at these public events—the shared experiences between Hitler and his followers—that allowed his charisma to emerge.²⁷ It was not abstract rules that made people loyal, but a sense of personal loyalty to Hitler himself.

Joseph Goebbels, the Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, made sure that rallies and ceremonies were on a grand scale. The torchlight processions were moving, dramatic and organised. Germany before 1933 had appeared chaotic; now, everything was in order. An American news correspondent, William Shirer, described the stage-managed displays that characterised the Nazi movement.

pageantry
An elaborate ceremony.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 6.21 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

6.66 What is Shirer referring to by the phrase 'the drab lives of twentieth-century Germans'?

6.67 What were the main elements of display in the hall?

6.68 Why would this form an effective setting for Hitler's arrival?

6.69 Does Shirer believe the display was effective in its aim? Support your response with evidence from the source.

DIALOGUE

6.70 Script a dialogue between two people who attended the meeting described in Source 6.21. One is totally swept up in the emotion and pageantry, while the other sees through the display and has fears about brainwashing and loss of individual thought. Each person should make five points to support their view. This task could be done in pairs.

American news correspondent William Shirer on Nazi pageantry

I'm beginning to comprehend, I think, some of the reasons for Hitler's outstanding success. Borrowing a chapter from the Roman church, he is restoring **pageantry** and colour and mysticism to the drab lives of twentieth-century Germans. This morning's opening meeting in the Luitpold Hall on the outskirts of Nuremberg was more than a gorgeous show; it also had some of the mysticism and religious fervour of an Easter or Christmas Mass in a great Gothic cathedral. The hall was a sea of brightly coloured flags. Even Hitler's arrival was made dramatic. The band stopped playing. There was a hush over the thirty thousand people packed in the hall. Then the band struck up the *Badenweiler March*, a very catchy tune, and used only, I'm told, when Hitler makes his big entries. Hitler appeared in the back of the auditorium and was followed by his aides, Göring, Goebbels, Hess, Himmler, and the others. He strode slowly down the central aisle while thirty thousand hands were raised in salute. It is a ritual, the old timers say, which is always followed. Then an immense symphony orchestra played Beethoven's *Egmont* overture. Great Klieg lights played on the stage, where Hitler sat surrounded by a hundred party officials and officers of the army and navy. Behind them the 'blood flag', the one carried down the streets of Munich in the ill-fated putsch. Behind this, four or five hundred SA standards. When the music was over, Rudolf Hess, Hitler's closest confidant, rose and slowly read the names of Nazi 'martyrs'—brownshirts who had been killed in the struggle for power—a roll call of the dead, and the thirty thousand seemed very moved.

In such an atmosphere no wonder, then, that every word dropped by Hitler seemed like an inspired Word from on high. Man's—or at least the German's—critical faculty is swept away at such moments, and every lie pronounced is accepted as high truth itself.

Source 6.21 William Shirer, *Berlin Diary* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1941), 24–25.



NUREMBERG RALLIES

Of all the ceremonies created under Nazism, the best known and most spectacular were the Nuremberg rallies. The Nazi Party began holding large public rallies in 1923. The first was held in Munich and the second in Weimar in 1926. By 1927, the rallies were held in Nuremberg, where there was a suitable stadium, and they were held annually until 1938. By then it was not unusual for half a million people to participate in a rally.

The 1934 Nuremberg Rally was filmed by Leni Riefenstahl and formed the basis of the film *Triumph of the Will*. Hitler commissioned Riefenstahl to make the film, which is considered by many critics to be an ‘awesome spectacle’ and a powerful propaganda film. The film opens with Hitler arriving by plane—he had adopted the then-new technology to support his authority and popularity—descending from the clouds in almost a godlike form. The Führer is driven past cheering, saluting crowds, and one of the techniques is to have the camera ‘follow’ from behind, as if seeing everything from Hitler’s viewpoint. The camera techniques are innovative, creating a compelling view of hundreds of thousands of supporters. All troops, young people and workers are in perfect formation.

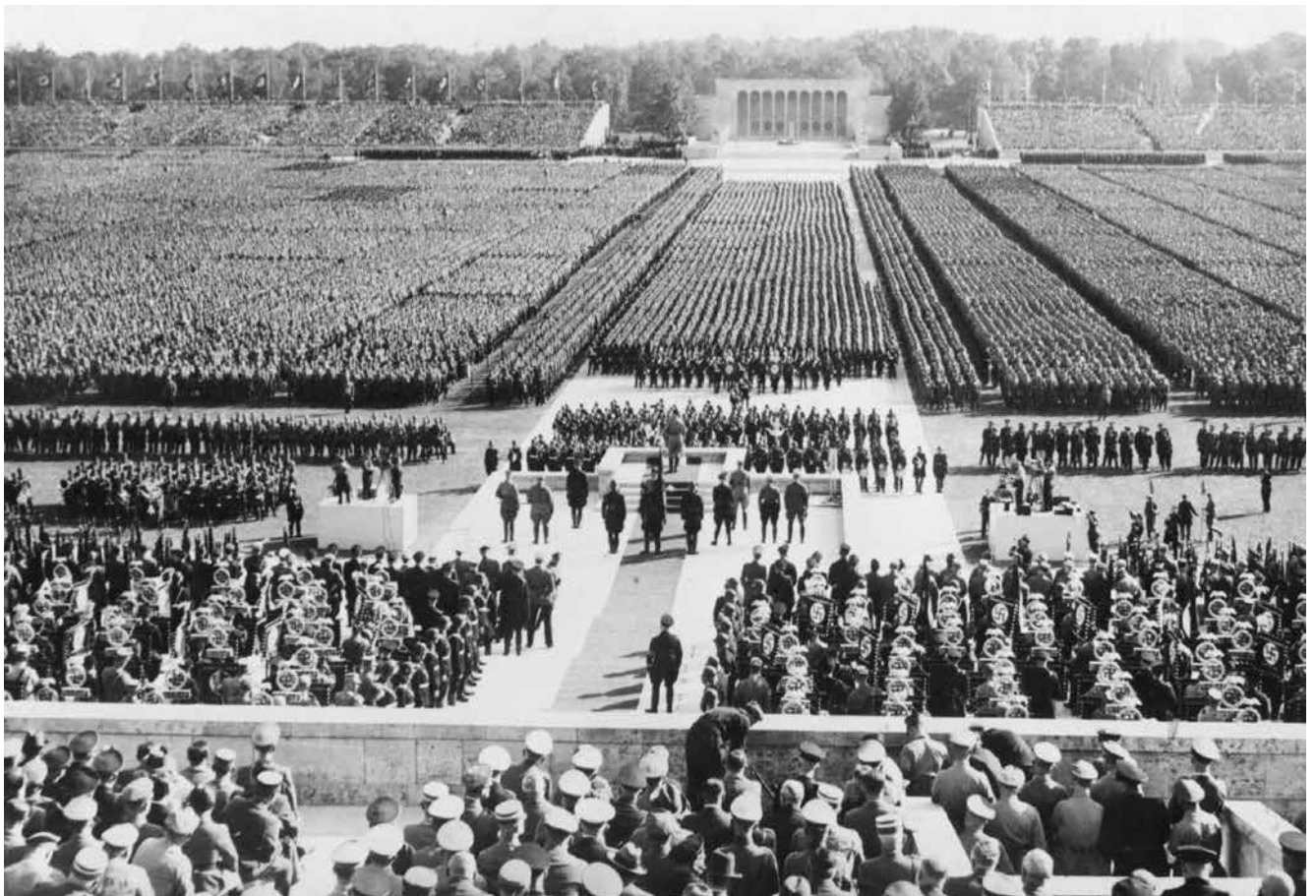
A high point is when the **troika**—Hitler, Heinrich Himmler (SS Commander) and Viktor Lutze (SA Commander)—walk through the huge parade ground, flanked by ordered formations of troops, to lay a wreath at a World War I memorial. The emphasis is on threes, with three giant Nazi banners at the end of the parade ground and three men in uniform marching between the ranks.

Did you know? Hitler commissioned Leni Riefenstahl to make a film of the 1934 Nuremberg Rally without prior discussion or agreement from Propaganda Minister Goebbels, who was angry and became determined to sabotage the film. Goebbels tried to make the physical conditions of filming difficult for Riefenstahl. The film went on to win the Gold Medal at the Venice Film Festival in 1935 and a Grand Prix awarded by the French government at the Paris Film Festival.

troika

Government rule by a group of three powerful individuals.

📌 **Source 6.22** Nazi soldiers at the 1936 Nuremberg Rally.



Riefenstahl later denied she had been a willing supporter of Nazism's extremes, and always presented her role in making the film as that of the dispassionate filmmaker creating a historical document. Riefenstahl went on to make *Olympia* (1938), a film about the Berlin Olympic Games.

After World War II, Riefenstahl was tried and imprisoned for her role in Nazi propaganda. In the final decades of her long life—she lived to be 101, dying in 2003—Riefenstahl made several underwater documentaries that continued to show her talented filmmaking.



Opening titles in *Triumph of the Will*

On September 5 1934
20 years
after the outbreak
of the World War
16 years
after the start
of German suffering
19 months
after the beginning
of Germany's rebirth
Adolf Hitler flew
again to Nuremberg
to review the columns
of his faithful followers.

📌 **Source 6.23** Leni Riefenstahl at the 1934 Nuremberg Rally filming *Triumph of the Will*.

📌 **Source 6.24** *Triumph of the Will*, 1935.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 6.24 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

6.71 In the opening titles of the film, which event is being referred to by the lines:

- 20 years after the outbreak of the World War
- 16 years after the start of German suffering
- 19 months after the beginning of Germany's rebirth?

6.72 What was the purpose of reminding viewers about German history?

6.73 Compare Sources 6.21–6.24. What similarities are there in the methods used to promote worship of Hitler?

6.74 Many ordinary Germans who were later appalled at the excesses of Nazism became caught up in the euphoria of the early years of the Third Reich. Using Sources 6.21–6.24, identify at least three tactics or techniques used by Hitler's propagandists to draw people into the thrall of Nazism.

Significant individual ➔

LENI RIEFENSTAHL, 1902–2003

Was an actress and filmmaker.

Believed in the power of film to convey messages to the people.

She said: 'I was never anti-Semitic and I never joined the Nazi Party. So what am I guilty of?'

Said about: 'Those seeing [*Triumph of the Will*] were clearly witnessing not a documentary on the Reich Party Rally but a celluloid exposition of the *Führer* cult.' (Ian Kershaw, historian)

Contributed to change by directing the films *Triumph of the Will* and *Olympia*, which celebrated Hitler and the Nazi regime.



THE 1936 BERLIN OLYMPIC GAMES

Perhaps the best-known example of the Nazi Party's use of ceremony and pageantry as a propaganda tool was the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin. Germany had won the bid to hold the Olympics before the Nazis had come to power, and initially some party members wanted to cancel them. However, Goebbels realised that the Olympic Games presented a unique opportunity to display the superiority of the German race as well as the modern, civilised elements of German society.



Source 6.25 The Olympic stadium seen from the air.

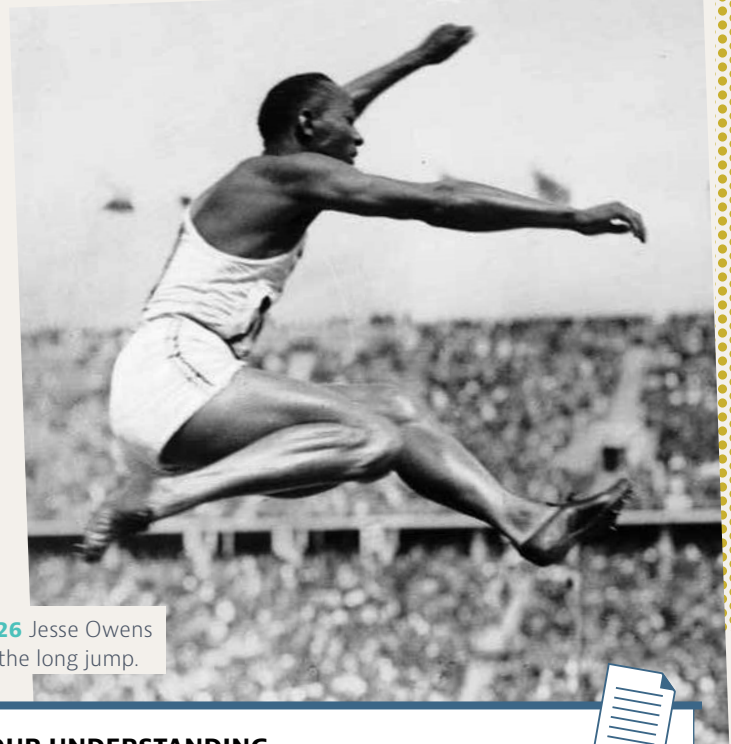
In all, fifty-two nations sent athletes to the games. Some nations and athletic organisations debated whether or not to attend the games in protest against the emerging stories coming out of Germany about their treatment of Jewish people. Those who did attend were amazed, and often unsettled, by the spectacle put on by the Nazis. A 100,000-seat stadium had been built that was lit by modern electric lighting. Television cameras were used for the first time to broadcast the games. While these innovations were impressive to some, others were alarmed at the German people's response to Hitler. Historian R. Hart-Davis notes, 'Another feature which shook strangers [foreigners] was the hysterical adulation accorded to the Führer. Wherever he went men who saw him yelled themselves hoarse, women gave piercing screams, wept with excitement, fainted.'²⁸

MEDAL TALLY FOR THE 1936 GAMES			
NATION	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
Germany	33	26	30
United States	24	20	12
Great Britain	4	7	3

Most countries sent amateur athletes (as was usual in the Olympics in those days), but Germany sent highly trained professionals who mostly dominated their events. Hitler and Goebbels were delighted with this outcome, but Germany's overall success was overshadowed by the achievements of Jesse Owens, an African American athlete who won four gold medals—in the 100 metres and 200 metres, long jump and 4 x 100 metre relay.

Leni Riefenstahl directed the film *Olympia* using footage taken during the Games. The final film, cut from more than 400 kilometres of footage, glorifies the disciplined bodies of the athletes and their determination to excel. She used a range of techniques, such as filming divers with underwater cameras, to give an unprecedented perspective into all aspects of the competitions. Riefenstahl claimed that Goebbels ordered her not to focus on black athletes, but Jesse Owens featured prominently.

Did you know? Balder von Schirach, leader of the Hitler Youth, claimed that Hitler told him that he would refuse to shake hands with any black athlete.



Source 6.26 Jesse Owens competing in the long jump.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.75** Why did Goebbels not want to cancel the 1936 Olympics in Berlin?
- 6.76** What elements of the Games impressed and concerned foreigner visitors?
- 6.77** How was Germany's overall success overshadowed in the Games?



JOSEPH GOEBBELS, 1897–1945

Was propaganda minister of the Third Reich.

Believed in national socialism and the superiority of the Aryan race.

He said: 'What we are aiming for is more than a revolt. Our historic mission is to transform the very spirit itself.'

Said about: 'Goebbels was a master propagandist who excelled in stirring up hatred and orchestrating gigantic extravaganzas, such as the annual Nazi rallies.'²⁹ (Doris L. Bergen, biographer)

Contributed to change by managing Nazi election campaigns and using propaganda to generate adoration of Adolf Hitler.



NEWSREELS

In the 1930s, before television, Western audiences commonly received 'the news' through newsreels shown in cinemas, usually prior to the feature film. Every country—including democracies—censored newsreels. For example, British cinemas did not show newsreels of the Duke of Windsor's 1937 wedding because his abdication from the British throne was a politically sensitive issue. Strikes and demonstrations were rarely shown in any country, but stories that boosted public morale were often featured. Few viewers inside or outside Germany knew that German newsreels were made only by accredited members of the Reich Chamber of Film—and they were vetted and approved by Goebbels.

The Nazis saw great value in the film medium, as long as it was controlled. They banned films that were not 'politically correct', such as G.W. Pabst's *Westfront 1918*, which was made in 1930 and banned in 1933. *Westfront 1918* was a pacifist film, and Goebbels called it 'cowardly defeatist'. Pabst's *Kameradschaft* (1931) ('Comradeship') was banned because it appealed to international solidarity among workers.

The German film industry was systematically purged of any non-Nazi influence. Jews were banned from working in any branch of filmmaking, film criticism was abolished, and there was ruthless censorship. Most German film talent migrated to other countries, especially to the US. Hollywood benefited greatly, as Fritz Lang, William Dieterle, Robert Siodmak, Edgar G. Ulmer, Douglas Sirk, Marlene Dietrich, Billy Wilder, Peter Lorre and Fred Zimmermann, among many others, left Germany over the next few years. They all became significant members of the Hollywood film industry.

Film history often focuses on films such as *Triumph of the Will* or *The Eternal Jew* (1940) because they represent suitable examples of Nazi propaganda designed to inform and influence cinema audiences. However, like most people in Western societies, Germans went to the movies to be entertained. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Germans viewed a series of films about Frederick the Great that mythologised the historical leader.



Did you know? Frederick the Great was king of Prussia (the most prominent state when Germany became a nation-state in 1871) from 1740 to 1786. He achieved many victories in the Seven Years War (1756–1763), and became a national hero to the German people.

← Frederick the Great.

In Germany, the highest proportion of films shown in this period were comedies, while films with direct political content formed the lowest proportion of those shown. As Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel write in their history of German film, *The German Cinema* (1971), the bulk of the 1100 feature films produced during the twelve-year period of the Nazi regime were of a purely escapist nature, containing little or no political overtone. This was Goebbels's deliberate policy to fill the cinemas, where the supporting section of the program (the newsreels and documentaries) carried the current Nazi message.³⁰



RADIO

Propaganda Minister Goebbels also recognised that radio provided a medium for reinforcing the Nazi message. He aided the development of the *Volksempfänger* (or ‘people’s receiver’), which was an affordable radio for all Germans. By 1939, 70 per cent of German households owned radios—the highest percentage anywhere in the world. Loudspeakers were also introduced in factories and streets. A poster from this period shows a picture of a radio above a crowd of thousands, with the caption, ‘all of Germany hears the leader with the people’s receiver’.

Radio programs included speeches by Hitler and other Nazi leaders, German folk music and classical music. Programs supported patriotism and Nazism. Events such as the Nuremberg rallies were broadcast on radio and often played publicly through loudspeakers. The inexpensive radios had limited range and could generally only receive local stations, which suited the government’s desire that German people would not be able to hear foreign broadcasts.

NEWSPAPERS

In 1933, Germany had 4700 newspapers and ten thousand *periodicals*. By the end of 1934, the Nazis ran 436 newspapers directly; indirectly, they controlled the entire German press. Communist and socialist newspapers were closed in February 1933, and in October 1933 a law took away editorial independence. The press could now no longer criticise the German government. By 1944, 82 per cent of all German newspapers were run by the Nazis; the remainder were run directly by the Nazi Party publisher.

NAZI ART

In October 1933, Hitler announced that he would give the German people four years to adjust to the cultural policies of the new government. Four years later, in July 1937, Hitler presided over the opening of Munich’s House of German Art, which exhibited ‘the immortal achievements of the German artistic heritage’. Hitler announced, ‘From now on we are going to wage a merciless war of destruction against the last remaining elements of cultural disintegration’. If there was still anyone sustaining ‘cliques of chatterers, dilettantes, and art forgers’ they would be ‘picked up and liquidated’. He called them ‘prehistoric Stone-Age culture barbarians and art stutterers’.³¹

Each year thereafter, until 1944, there were annual exhibitions to present what was interpreted as the best of German art. At the time of each opening there was an elaborate pageant on ‘German Art Day’. Participants in historical costumes, riding on floats featuring models of well-known works of art, were driven through the streets of Munich.

Under the Nazis, German art was to be realistic, heroic and understood by the average German. The term applied to it was *völkisch*, meaning art of and for the people. Classical Greek and Roman statues fitted Hitler’s view of ‘racial purity’, and much German sculpture of the period shows young German men and women as heroic classical figures. German art was to be aesthetically conservative, which was another element of Nazi propaganda.



Source 6.27 Poster stating that ‘all of Germany hears the leader with the people’s receiver’.

periodical

A publication that is released on a regular basis, such as a magazine or journal.



➔ **Source 6.28** The parade on German Arts Day in Munich, 1938.



HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 6.28 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 6.78** What type of artworks are being displayed in the parade?
- 6.79** Does the parade appear popular? Give evidence to support your response.
- 6.80** What evidence is given in the photograph that this was part of the Nazi propaganda campaign?

As with all other cultural expressions, the Nazis immediately moved against the visual arts that they believed undermined or challenged the Nazi ideal. The Nazi Party became influential on the Dessau City Council by 1931, leading the Bauhaus school to move to Berlin in 1932. When the Nazis came to power in 1933, the Bauhaus school was closed. It was considered un-German, and its innovative style was attacked by the Nazis, who wanted a return to realism.

DEGENERATE ART

The day after the opening of the first exhibition of the House of German Art, another display was opened just across the park. The *Ausstellung Entartete Kunst* ('*Degenerate Art Exhibition*') displayed more than 650 works of art that the Nazis had designated 'un-German' and unacceptable to the Reich. During the four months it was on view in Munich, more than two million people visited. The exhibition travelled throughout Germany and Austria for three years.

The purpose of the Degenerate Art Exhibition was to show German people which type of art was unacceptable—to mock and deride avant-garde and experimental art. The exhibition included examples of modern art by Otto Dix, George Grosz, Ernst Kirchner, Max Beckmann and Paul Klee, along with sculptures and wood carvings. Examples of art from the great twentieth-century art movements—abstractionism,

degenerate
An immoral or corrupt person.



cubism, primitivism, expressionism—that was not realistic or immediately understood by the average German was gathered from galleries throughout Germany and labelled ‘degenerate’. Art produced by Jews was included, but the exhibition was not specifically anti-Semitic.

If you visit an art gallery today you will see an explanation alongside the exhibits, perhaps placing the work in context, drawing the viewer’s eye to particular aspects and offering some explanation. However, in the Degenerate Art Exhibition, paintings were accompanied by brief quotations from Hitler, or comments such as, ‘This section can only be entitled “Sheer Insanity”’ or ‘Even this was taken seriously and bought for good money!’³²



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.81** How did the Nazis ensure that only their approved messages were screened in newsreels and movies?
- 6.82** How did the Nazi Party use radio and newspapers to increase support for the regime?
- 6.83** What influence did the Nazis have on artistic creation in Germany?
- 6.84** What kind of art did the Nazis reject and denigrate? What made them do this?

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

- 6.85** Why do you think the quotation from the socialist manifesto in Source 6.30 was included in the Degenerate Art exhibition?
- 6.86** Apart from some of the artworks displayed being the work of socialists, what criteria might have been used in selecting these works to represent ‘degenerate’ art?
- 6.87** How important do you believe the Nazi art policy and the Degenerate Art Exhibition were in spreading Nazi power and control? You could compare the art policies with other Nazi policies, including education, anti-Semitic laws and Nazi control of the courts. Use evidence to support your response.



Source 6.29 Cover of the Degenerate Art Exhibition program (*Kunst* means ‘art’).

Source 6.30 An official Nazi Party poster about the Degenerate Art Exhibition. One of the headlines reads, ‘The products were of spiritual decay.’

On the wall of the exhibition was an inscription that read, ‘They say it themselves: We act as if we were painters, poets, or whatever, but what we are is simply and ecstatically impudent [disrespectful; misbehaving]. In our impudence we take the world for a ride and train snobs to lick our boots!’ The statement is from a 1915 socialist manifesto.



THE RISE OF ANTI-SEMITISM

The **persecution** of Jews and the execution of up to six million Jewish people under the Nazi regime is one of the greatest horrors in human history.

There was nothing new about anti-Semitism. For almost two thousand years, the Jewish people had faced suspicion, **discrimination** and persecution. Most European countries had some history of mistreatment of Jewish people.

Ironically, Germany in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was seen as one of the more tolerant nations, and many Jews fleeing persecution in Russia and eastern Europe had settled in Germany.

The reasons for anti-Semitism are complex, but some historians suggest that it may date back to the early years of Christianity, when Christians blamed Jews for the death of Christ. Other possible factors include the common human suspicion and fear of people who seem different and who have a strong and ritualised religious or cultural identity.

Jealousy and resentment were key elements in anti-Semitism. In many countries, including Germany, Jewish people were perceived to be wealthy and successful. They were thought of as lawyers, doctors, bankers, businesspeople, jewellers and clothing traders. This was partly true; although only 1 per cent of Germany's population was Jewish, 17 per cent of bankers and 16 per cent of lawyers were Jewish.

There is another irony here. For most of the preceding two thousand years, Jews were forbidden to own land. In most European countries, land was the measure of wealth and status. Since Jews could not buy land, they developed other ways of making a living through crafts—such as clothing, jewellery and leatherwork—and they reinvested profits back into their businesses. As Jews became wealthier, they began lending money, and this is how many of the great banking families of Europe developed. Many **gentiles** borrowed from Jewish banks but resented the interest they had to pay. It is likely that many wealthy Jews would have been happier spending their money on land than lending it through banks, but they were unable to do this.

There was also jealousy of the rich cultural, artistic, musical and operatic traditions of the Jews. In most

European cities, Jewish people were prominent in intellectual and cultural life. In Weimar Germany, many of the new artistic traditions were led by Jewish artists, writers and filmmakers. Hitler's resentment of Jews is said to have stemmed from his time in Austria as a struggling artist. He certainly blamed Jews for his rejection from the Vienna Art School.

Against this background, it is essential to ask, what was different about the Holocaust?

What was different about the Holocaust?

The Holocaust was a systematic process of discrimination *supported by law* to persecute and eliminate all Jews from Europe. Although Hitler made his feelings about Jews clear in *Mein Kampf*, few people in Germany took him seriously until he started to pass laws against Jewish people. Even then, many Germans—both Jewish and non-Jewish—did not take the threat seriously.

There were several stages to Hitler's anti-Semitic policies.

1933–1935: Discrimination

A massive wave of anti-Jewish propaganda urged people not to employ Jews and to boycott Jewish businesses. Jews were sacked from positions in schools, universities, galleries and libraries. Jewish children were mocked and made to feel uncomfortable and excluded at school. If Jews were attacked or their property was damaged, the police would take no action. Many Germans did not take this seriously and believed that it would pass. Some Germans—and even some Jewish people—took the view that they would put up with anti-Semitism in the short term because Hitler was also fighting the communists. 'We'll let Hitler get rid of the communists, then we'll get rid of Hitler' was a common statement in this era.

persecution

Hostility or ill-treatment on the basis of gender, sex, race, class, ethnicity or religion.

discrimination

Unfair or unjust treatment on the basis of gender, sex, race, class, ethnicity or religion.

gentile

People who are not part of the Jewish faith or culture.



1935–1938: The Nuremberg Laws

Many anti-Jewish practices were enshrined in law for the first time under the Nuremberg Laws. Jews lost their citizenship and the right to vote or to inherit property. Marriage between Jews and gentiles was banned. Jews were forced to wear the yellow Star of David on their clothing, and they were banned from public places such as restaurants, theatres, swimming pools and parks. Some Jews—including prominent people such as Albert Einstein—began leaving Germany.

1938–1939: Violence

The anti-Jewish campaign moved into a higher gear following *Kristallnacht* ('Night of Broken Glass'). On the night of 9–10 November 1938, a wave of violence across Germany was directed at Jewish shops, homes and *synagogues*. The name was taken from the shards of glass from broken shop windows that littered the streets in the aftermath. There was little doubt that the violence originated with the Nazis, but Hitler portrayed the events as a spontaneous attack on the Jews by ordinary German people. Hitler and the Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, used the violence to support their claims that they were only reflecting the will of the German people in their anti-Semitic campaigns. A small number of Jewish people managed to leave Germany after *Kristallnacht*, but it was becoming increasingly difficult for Jewish people to leave because they were denied official papers or passports.

Kristallnacht

On 9–10 November 1938, a night of violence by the SA and civilians was directed against Jewish businesses and synagogues in Germany.

synagogue

The Jewish place of worship; equivalent to a mosque or church.



Source 6.31 The Star of David.

Source 6.32 A poster for *The Eternal Jew*, a propaganda documentary produced by Goebbels, which stirred up anti-Semitic violence.



Source 6.33 The windows of a Jewish-owned printing business smashed during *Kristallnacht*.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.88 Define the term 'anti-Semitism'.
- 6.89 What are some of the historical causes of anti-Semitism?
- 6.90 In what ways did the economic opportunities and achievements of Jewish people stand out?
- 6.91 How might this perception of economic difference have contributed to the Holocaust?

CONTINUED ...



1939–1941: Outright persecution

Once World War II began, Hitler made no attempt to hide his plans to wipe out the Jews. As the Nazis moved into other countries—France, Poland, the Netherlands, Norway, Yugoslavia and Greece—they quickly rounded up the Jews and put them in *ghettos* or concentration camps. In Germany, no more excuses were required for Jews to be arrested. Hundreds of thousands of people were rounded up and put in concentration camps just because they were Jewish. Concentration camps were built in occupied Poland, and many German Jews were sent there by train.



1941–1945: The Final Solution

During 1941, as the Germans moved into Russia, 500,000 Russian Jews were shot and buried in mass graves. This gave Hitler and SS Chief Heinrich Himmler a blueprint for what should be done with the Jews. Late in 1941 the decision was taken to eliminate all Jews from Europe. The key to the plan was the setting up of six extermination camps in Poland.

Various methods of killing were tried before the development of gas chambers to kill large numbers of people at once, along with large furnaces to dispose of their bodies. Auschwitz was the most infamous of these extermination camps.

Over the next three years some six million people—mainly Jews, but also communists, gypsies, homosexuals, political opponents of Nazism and disabled people—were killed in this manner.

ghetto

A walled-off section of a city where Jews were forced to live.

Final Solution

A term used by the Nazis to describe their plan for the physical extermination of European Jews during World War II.

🔍 **Source 6.34** Bodies of dead inmates at Nordhausen, a concentration camp in Germany. The photo was taken shortly after the camp's liberation by the US Army in April 1945.

📍 **Source 6.35** Nazi concentration camp in Auschwitz, Poland.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 6.92** How was the Holocaust different to other attacks on Jewish people throughout history?
- 6.93** How were Jewish people discriminated against from 1933–1935?
- 6.94** What were some of the key elements of the Nuremberg Laws?
- 6.95** What were the consequences of the night of violence known as *Kristallnacht*?
- 6.96** What atrocities were perpetrated against the Jewish people once World War II began?



CHAPTER 6 REVIEW

Upon being appointed chancellor in January 1933, Hitler moved immediately to consolidate the power of the Nazi Party and eliminate all opposition. He obtained ultimate authority in August 1934 when he merged the offices of chancellor and president to become *der Führer*. Now there was nothing to stop the Nazi Party imposing its ideology of racism and obedience on all of Germany. The party took over previously existing institutions such as the courts and the police, and added new ones such as the SS and the concentration camp system. This ensured that terror would subdue any opponents of the regime and exclude undesirable elements from public life.

The Nazis realised that they could not rule through fear alone; they would have to maintain the support of the German people. Economically, the Nazis attempted to provide both 'guns and butter' to instil a sense of national pride and improve the standard of living. Vast spectacles such as party rallies and the 1936 Olympics in Berlin were designed to overwhelm Germans and foreigners alike. The Nazis also sought to indoctrinate their ideology throughout society by creating youth and worker organisations. Propaganda was also a powerful means of ensuring support, or at least subservience. With the Nazis in charge, and resistance all but futile, the German people were being led into the horrors of World War II.

KEY SUMMARY POINTS

- Hitler established a dictatorship by eliminating rival political parties and individuals.
- The Nazis used a mixture of economic growth, terror and propaganda to consolidate their grip on power.
- The Nazis established a police state to suppress all opposition.
- The Nazi Party made itself the centre of the German people's lives by abolishing all non-Nazi Party institutions and replacing them with their own.
- There was some resistance to the Third Reich but it was mostly ineffectual.
- The Nazis sought to control all facets of the lives of the German people, including young children.
- The experimental expression of Weimar was over. All art and culture now had to serve the will of the Nazi state and its racist ideology.
- The Jewish people of Germany were systematically excluded from public life and subjected to increasing levels of violence.

REVIEW

6.97 The Nazi Party had an enormous impact on the lives of the German people from 1933–1939. To demonstrate change over time, draw up a table like the one below. List the key elements of German society and describe the changes from the Weimar years to life under the Nazis. Present this as a poster or slideshow so you can share your ideas with the class.

GERMANY BEFORE AND AFTER THE RISE OF THE NAZIS

ELEMENT OF SOCIETY	THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC	NAZI GERMANY
The police and courts [for example]		
Women [for example]		

EXTENDED RESPONSE

6.98 Write a 250–350-word extended response to the topic below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence, and a clear conclusion.

- 'German cultural expression in the 1920s and 1930s often reflected German political, social and economic circumstances.' To what extent do you agree?

ESSAY

6.99 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- A former member of the Hitler Youth recalled, 'It was a great feeling. You felt you belonged to a great nation again.' To what extent were the Nazis enthusiastically supported by the German people?
- After World War II, Hitler's chief architect, Albert Speer, reflected on the power Hitler had over him. He wrote, 'How is it possible that he captivated me, and for more than a decade?' To what extent does the Nazis' education system, enlightenment and propaganda help to explain why Germany was so captivated by Hitler?
- 'If the Weimar artists had not pushed the boundaries so strongly in the 1920s, they would not have been such a target for criticism during the Nazi years.' To what extent do you agree? Support your answer with reference to the culture of both periods.



UNITED STATES

1920–1941

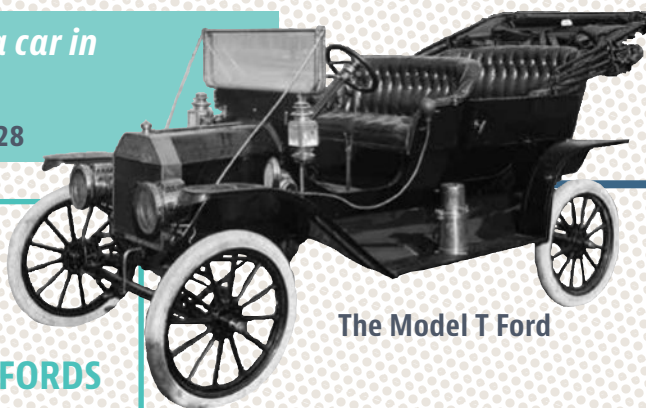
- What was life like for different groups of people during the Roaring Twenties in America?
- What effect did the Wall Street Crash have on the US economy?
- What was life like during the Great Depression?
- How successful were Roosevelt’s New Deal policies?
- How was social and political change reflected in art and culture?

Actress Alice Joyce models the flapper style, 1927



'A chicken for every pot ... a car in every backyard.'

Republican campaign leaflet, 1928



The Model T Ford

1900

**4000 CARS
MADE IN THE US**

1927

**15 MILLION MODEL T FORDS
HAD BEEN MADE**

\$290

COST OF A MODEL T FORD, THE EQUIVALENT OF THREE MONTHS' SALARY FOR A FORD WORKER

'I am firm in my belief that anyone not only can be rich but ought to be rich.'

John T. Raskob, business analyst, August 1929

'Sooner or later a crash is coming, and it may be terrific.'

ROGER BABSON, BUSINESS ANALYST, SEPTEMBER 1929

THE 'RUN ON THE BANKS' IN NEW YORK



VALUE OF SHARES ON THE NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE (USD)

OCTOBER 1929
\$87 BILLION

NOVEMBER 1929
\$57 BILLION



HERBERT HOOVER, US PRESIDENT, 1929-1933

'While the crash only took place six months ago, I am convinced we have now passed the worst.'

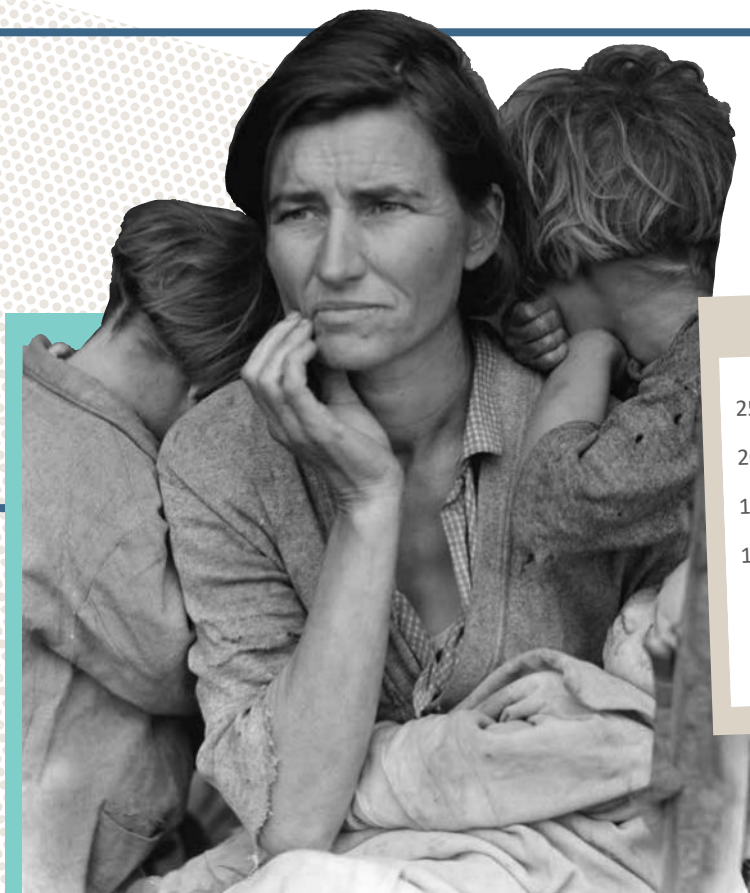
HOOVER, 1930

'I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people. Let us all here assembled constitute [make] ourselves prophets of a new order of competence and of courage.'

Franklin D. Roosevelt, July 1932



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, US PRESIDENT, 1933-1945

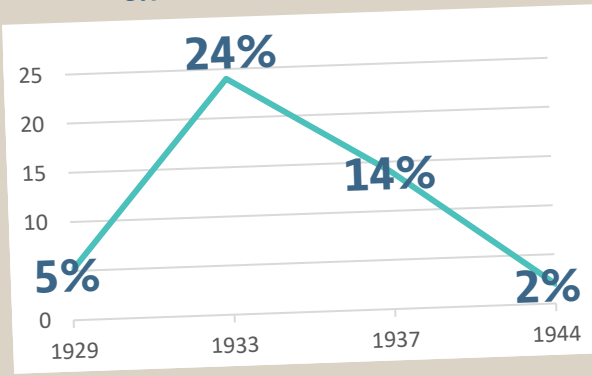


Migrant Mother by photographer Dorothy Lange, 1936

'The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.'

ROOSEVELT, MARCH 1933

UNEMPLOYMENT IN AMERICA



'December 7, 1941—a day that will live in infamy.'

ROOSEVELT ON THE BOMBING OF PEARL HARBOR

THE ROARING TWENTIES IN AMERICA, 1920–1929

'The business of America is business.'

CALVIN COOLIDGE, US PRESIDENT, 1925

The period between the world wars was one of great complexity and deep contrasts for the US. In the immediate aftermath of World War I, there was relief that the conflict was over and most Americans wanted to withdraw once again from European political entanglements. The 1920s was a generally prosperous decade, but the good life did not extend to African Americans, most women or to the uneducated and unskilled. A 'live for today' attitude characterised popular culture, but there was also a sense of disillusionment reflected in some of the art and literature of the decade. With new manufacturing and selling techniques, America experienced an economic boom during this decade. However, the good times masked deeper problems with the economy, and the *Roaring Twenties* came to an abrupt end with the *Wall Street* stock market crash in October 1929. The *boom* of the 1920s turned to bust in the 1930s, with dire implications for the US and the rest of the world.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Why did America reduce immigration after World War I?
- How did the lives of women change in the 1920s?
- What were the causes and consequences of *Prohibition*?
- What was life like for African Americans during the 1920s?
- Why did the US economy boom after World War I?
- What were the long-term and short-term causes of the Great Depression?

Roaring Twenties

A phrase used to describe the 1920s, particularly in America, where people and the economy prospered.

Wall Street

The location of the New York Stock Exchange.

boom

An economic period of high employment, wages, confidence and consumer spending.

Prohibition

Making particular items or behaviour forbidden or illegal. In America, it was prohibited to make, sell or transport alcoholic drinks between 1920 and 1933.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS



SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Prominent leader of the American suffragette movement

Arrested in 1872 for voting



W.E.B. DU BOIS

Prominent African American leader
Started the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909



F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

A key writer of the 'Lost Generation'
Wrote the classic novel
The Great Gatsby (1925)



Source 7.01

New York police officers look on as alcohol is poured down the drain during the Great Depression.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1919

19 NOVEMBER — The US refuses to join the League of Nations

1920

16 JANUARY — Prohibition comes into force

26 AUGUST — Women in the US earn the right to vote

1924

26 MAY — The Johnson-Reed Immigration Act

1929

24–29 OCTOBER — The Wall Street stock market crash

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

Due to the vast amount of information available from the past, historians must make generalisations. The main problem with this is that, while broadly accurate, generalisations do not always account for the rich and complex variations of people's lives in the past. As you work through these chapters, consider the following questions.

7.01 Did all marginalised Americans in the 1920s face discrimination?

7.02 Do all people at a particular time agree with, and abide by, the law?

7.03 Did all Americans experience the economic boom of the 1920s?

7.04 Can one factor be the cause of complex events such as the Great Depression?

A LAND OF OPPORTUNITY?



↑ F. Scott Fitzgerald, author of classic novels such as *The Great Gatsby*.

progressive

Liberal and forward-thinking.

American Dream

The idea that anyone in America, regardless of their status or class, can be successful.

segregation

When two groups in a society are kept separate by law, typically on the basis of race and to the considerable disadvantage of one of those races.

urbanisation

When a large amount of people move from the countryside to the cities over a period of time.

consumerism

The idea that people should purchase goods in an ever-increasing amount.

shares

Shares are bought and sold on the stock exchange or share market. Shares give the buyer part-ownership of a company.

metropolis

A large city; from the ancient Greek word for 'mother city'.

W.E.B. DUBOIS: 'We have today in the United States, cheek by jowl [jaw], Prosperity and Depression.'

The US in the 1920s was, on the surface, a prosperous, **progressive** and confident society. It was in the US that the phrase 'Roaring Twenties' was coined. This upbeat attitude was reflected in the growth of a consumer culture and an increase in the importance of possessions, such as cars and labour-saving household appliances. Medical breakthroughs, such as the development of the iron lung, helped to increase life expectancy. Simpler clothing and hairstyles were outward reflections of an increase in women's rights, and many Americans had access to radio, 'moving pictures' and jazz music. This heady mix of prosperity and progress was reflected in the culture of the time, including the work of novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald and the new 'talkies' (movies with sound) coming out of Hollywood.

However, there was another, darker side to the America of the 1920s. This was also the era of Prohibition and its related gangland activity, limited rights for women, and extreme poverty for those who did not have access to the **American Dream**. The period was particularly harsh for non-whites, especially African Americans, who suffered severe discrimination and **segregation**.

URBANISATION

One of the strongest features of the 1920s was increased **urbanisation**. This was partly driven by 'the great migration' of African Americans from the southern states, but also by improvements in technology and by the need for industrial workers. Immigration also swelled the numbers in the main cities because most new arrivals found that work was more easily available in the factories, shops and houses of cities, especially along the eastern seaboard.

The move to the city was made easier by improved transportation, particularly trains and cars. By 1928 almost 20 per cent of Americans owned a car. Industrial production more than doubled during the decade, leading to cheaper goods and allowing more people to buy into consumer culture. Increased advertising encouraged **consumerism**, and hire-purchase agreements allowed expensive items to be paid off over time. For the first time, ordinary Americans purchased **shares** on the stock market. Many investors thought this was an easy way to make a 'quick buck'. Cities were depicted in advertising and in movies as glamorous **metropolises**, a far cry from traditional,



'backward' lives in rural areas. However, the reality of cities was often very different. Many workers faced oppressive working environments, cramped and unhygienic living conditions, and racism.

➔ **Source 7.02** By 1928, almost 20 per cent of Americans owned their own cars.



IMMIGRATION AND ISOLATION

EMMA LAZARUS: ‘Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.’

America has long been seen as a land of opportunity. During the nineteenth century, immigrants were drawn to America by the promise of freedoms and benefits that they could not hope to achieve in their own countries. By the early twentieth century, patterns of immigration were changing. *Migrants* were still drawn from Britain and western Europe, but there was an increasing influx of people from southern and eastern Europe. Migrants were attracted by the promise of prosperity—and by the opportunities for religious and political freedom. Many Jews fled persecution in Russia and Poland to settle in the US around the turn of the twentieth century.

Stefano Miele, ‘America as a place to make money’, 1921

If I am to be frank then I shall say I left Italy and came to America for the sole purpose of making money ... I was not seeking political ideals: as a matter of fact, I was quite satisfied with those of my native land. If I could have worked my way up in my chosen profession in Italy, I would have stayed in Italy. But repeated efforts showed that I could not. America was the land of opportunity, and so I came, intending to make money and then return to Italy. This is true of most Italian emigrants to America.

Bertalan Barna, ‘From Hungarian banker to American pastry merchant’, 1921

It was economic and social conditions that wrought the change ... I didn’t know much about America ... because it was a new country, I thought it would be crude and underdeveloped ... I also heard that it was rich and big ... But there was something else—the spirit of America. I had heard that in America a man could start as a boot-black, as a street sweeper, could start in the lowest position, and if he had the ability, could work his way up to the highest, that it’s not where a man starts but his ability that counts.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Sources 7.03 and 7.04 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

7.05 Outline the reasons why immigrants came to America.

7.06 Explain what immigrants did with the opportunities offered by life in America.

7.07 Analyse the significance of opportunity as a factor that drew people to America. Use evidence to support your response.

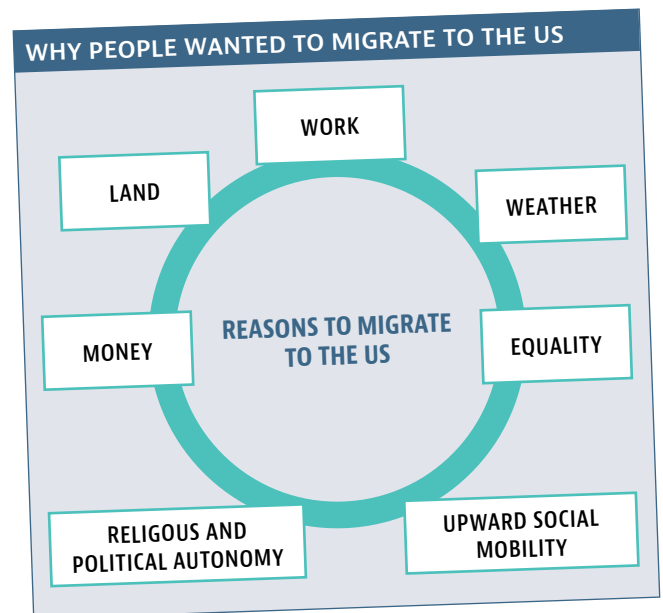
Did you know? On 19 November 1919, the US Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles by a vote of 39 to 55, far short of the two-thirds majority required.

migrant

Someone who moves from one place or country to another.

← **Source 7.03** *The World’s Work*, 41 (1921): 204.

← **Source 7.04** *The World’s Work*, 41 (1921): 206.



RESTRICTIONS ON IMMIGRATION

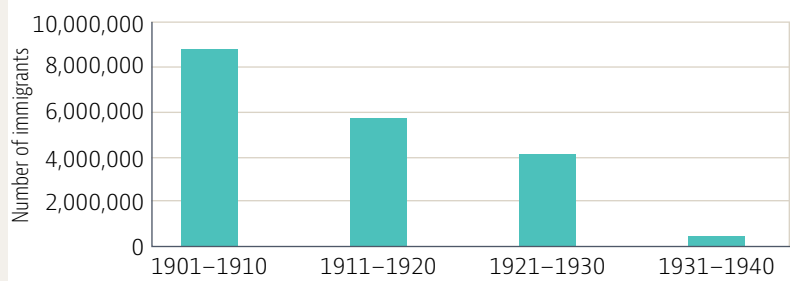
Although America supported the Allies at the start of World War I, it was not until April 1917 that the US actually became involved in the war. This decision followed Germany's resumption of submarine attacks on civilian ships, and the revelation of a German plan to invade the US from Mexico. However, at the end of the war, the US public showed little interest in the outside world, turning away from membership of the League of Nations in 1919 despite President Wilson's best efforts. Part of this attitude was due to war-weariness, but US isolationism was also linked to increased negativity about immigration.

During the 1920s there was an increasing tendency to question the merits of large-scale immigration. There was a perception that the 'land of opportunity' was becoming overcrowded and that only 'suitable' immigrants should be accepted.

Many of those who had come in search of the American Dream now believed that others should not be given the same opportunity. When immigrants arrived in New York, they were sent to Ellis Island and subjected to a difficult and searching census to determine whether they fitted the ambiguously defined criteria of a 'true' American. If migrants did not fit these expectations, they were sent back to their countries of origin at the expense of the shipping lines.

This isolationist attitude became entrenched with the Emergency Quota Act of 1921. To maintain 'desirable' immigration, the US government allowed only 3 per cent of people of any one nationality to migrate, based on their proportion of the population in the 1910 US census. This was followed by the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, which further reduced the quota to only 2 per cent based on their proportion of the population in the 1890 US census. This greatly reduced immigration from southern and eastern Europe, and excluded Asian immigration altogether.

Immigration to America, 1901–1940



Source 7.05 US Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999*, 872, www.census.gov/prod/99pubs/99statab/sec31.pdf

Did you know? Immigrants at Ellis Island were given a census that asked if they were deformed, if they had at least US\$30, and if they were polygamists (married to more than one person). If immigrants gave answers the inspectors did not approve, they could be sent back to their home country.

Source 7.06 Russian family travelling to the US on the SS *Orbita*, 1921.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 7.08 In what way was America a land of contrast in the 1920s?
- 7.09 What were the causes and consequences of urbanisation over that time?
- 7.10 What factors contributed to America's growing isolationism?
- 7.11 Why did the US start to restrict immigration in the 1920s?

CREATIVE TASK

7.12 Research an individual or family that migrated to the US during this time period. Examine why they moved to America, what they hoped to accomplish and whether they were successful.

This material could be presented in the form of a eulogy or an obituary to mark the death and celebrate the life of someone who brought their family to America.



THE PROHIBITION ERA

EIGHTEENTH AMENDMENT TO THE US CONSTITUTION:

'The manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors within ... the United States ... is hereby prohibited.'

During the nineteenth century there were many groups opposed to the manufacture, sale and consumption of alcohol. This movement, known as the **Temperance Movement**, began by campaigning about the dangers of alcohol before moving to support a total prohibition of the sale of alcoholic drinks. Many of these temperance societies were church groups concerned about social issues such as health problems, destitution and crime. There were also women's temperance groups, such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Their main concerns were domestic abuse—physical, sexual and economic—that resulted from the over-consumption of alcohol. Women's temperance societies had also opposed slavery in the decades before the Civil War (1861–1865), and supported women's suffrage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Temperance groups helped create Prohibition through slogans and with support from groups as varied as churches and the **Ku Klux Klan (KKK)**. They emphasised the waste of resources used to produce alcohol, and even tapped into anti-German sentiment by highlighting the fact that many brewers in the US had a German background. Some also argued that the grains used to brew beer were needed to feed US soldiers in Europe and workers in munitions factories.¹ On 16 January 1919, the Eighteenth Amendment to the US Constitution was ratified and came into effect one year later. The National Prohibition, or Volstead, Act of October 1919 defined the term 'alcoholic beverage' and empowered state and federal governments to enforce the amendment. It also banned the sale and purchase of alcohol except for sacramental (religious) wine and medicinal alcohol. However, it did not ban people from actually drinking alcohol.

Amendment XVIII

Section 1.

After one year from the ratification of this article, the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Did you know? Some people stockpiled huge supplies of alcohol before the Eighteenth Amendment and Volstead Act came into effect, while others drank medicines that could still have alcohol in them.


temperance

Refusing to drink alcoholic beverages.

Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

An American terrorist hate group that believes white people are the master race, and that African Americans, Jews, Catholics, Muslims, immigrants and other groups should be eliminated to keep society 'pure'.

Did you know? To become part of the constitution, an amendment must receive two-thirds of the vote of both Houses of Congress, and then ratified by three-quarters of the state governments. It is very difficult to achieve this, and, hence, amendments are rare. Since the first ten amendments to the US Constitution (the Bill of Rights) in 1791 there have only been seventeen amendments (the last one was in 1992).

 **Source 7.07** US Constitution, Amendment XVIII, section 1. Legal Information Institute, www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/amendmentxviii





➤ **Source 7.08** 'The genii of intolerance: A dangerous ally for the cause of women's suffrage.' Political cartoon from the satirical magazine *Puck*, 1915.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 7.08 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 7.13 Identify the figures represented in this image.
- 7.14 Explain the purpose of using a genie in this image.
- 7.15 Explain what message the cartoonist is trying to convey by linking Prohibition with women's suffrage (the right to vote).
- 7.16 Evaluate the significance of women's temperance groups in the success of the Prohibition movement. Use evidence to support your response.

BOOTLEGGING AND SPEAK-EASIES

The initial enthusiasm over Prohibition quickly faded. Although some people stopped drinking, many others turned to illegal methods such as overbuying sacramental wines, getting fake prescriptions for medicinal whiskey or brandy, or drinking in *speakeasies*. Criminal groups manufactured *bootlegged* whiskey and sold it in their speakeasies, and the profits helped to make crime bosses and gangsters hugely powerful. It has been argued that the amount of alcohol consumed during Prohibition exceeded the amount consumed in the decades before or after the period of restriction. However, this claim is difficult to verify. Prohibition lasted from 1920 to 1933, and is generally considered to have been ineffective, as it did not reduce alcohol consumption—but it did increase the crime rate. In *Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the 1920s*, published in 1931, Frederick Lewis Allen argued that there was a strong link between Prohibition and the activities of gangsters such as Al Capone.²



speakeasies

Places where alcohol was sold illegally.

bootlegged

Goods produced illegally.

➤ **Source 7.09** Confiscated materials used to make bootleg whiskey.



The Prohibition period coincided with the jazz age, and inspired many popular songs such as *Kentucky Bootlegger*, *Moonshine*, *Prohibition Is a Failure* and *Intoxicated Rat*, which ridiculed Prohibition or celebrated the ways in which it was contravened.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

7.17 Who wanted Prohibition in America? What reasons did they have for holding this view?

7.18 Which pieces of federal legislation brought in and enforced Prohibition?

7.19 Discuss three problems that arose once Prohibition was in place.

EXTENSION

7.20 Debate the following topic: 'Prohibition was a failed attempt to make life better for ordinary Americans.'

WOMEN: FLAPPERS AND THE FRANCHISE

COLLEEN MOORE: 'They were smart and sophisticated, with an air of independence about them ... I shared their restlessness.'

After World War I there were numerous changes in American society. One new development was the concept of the 'new woman' or *flapper*. She challenged the role of women who stayed at home and focused on the *domestic sphere*. There had always been a small number of women who challenged the status quo, but in the 1920s larger numbers of women—especially young women—attempted to create a stronger place in society for themselves. The development of new office technology, such as the telephone switchboard and the typewriter, opened up new opportunities for women to work in offices, as using these machines was seen as 'women's work'.

The idea of the flapper as a confident, intriguing woman with short hair and short skirts, exploring the world on her terms, was marketed in films, songs, advertisements

and magazines. Actresses such as Clara Bow, Louise Brooks, Evelyn Brent and Gloria Swanson epitomised the image of the flapper.

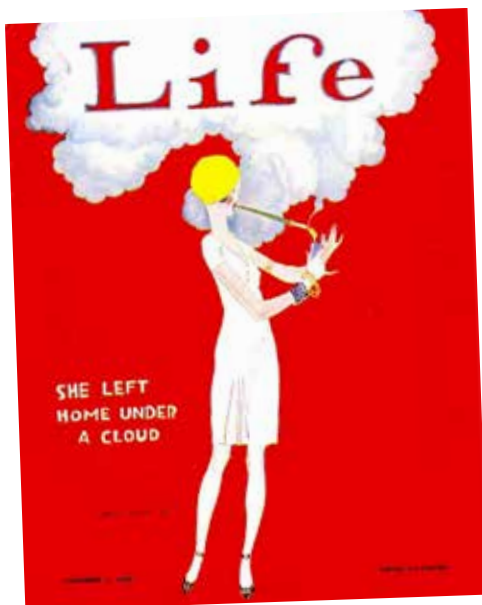
However, the position of women in the 1920s was rather more complicated than the popular image suggests. Women's experiences during World War I encouraged some of them to take more active roles in the family and in the workforce. Many women had moved into male-dominated roles during the war. At the end of the war they faced a dilemma: should they return to traditional roles to release jobs for male breadwinners, or should they continue in the roles that had given them freedom and independence?

flapper

A term for a young American woman in the 1920s who defied traditional gender roles due to her appearance, actions and habits.

domestic sphere

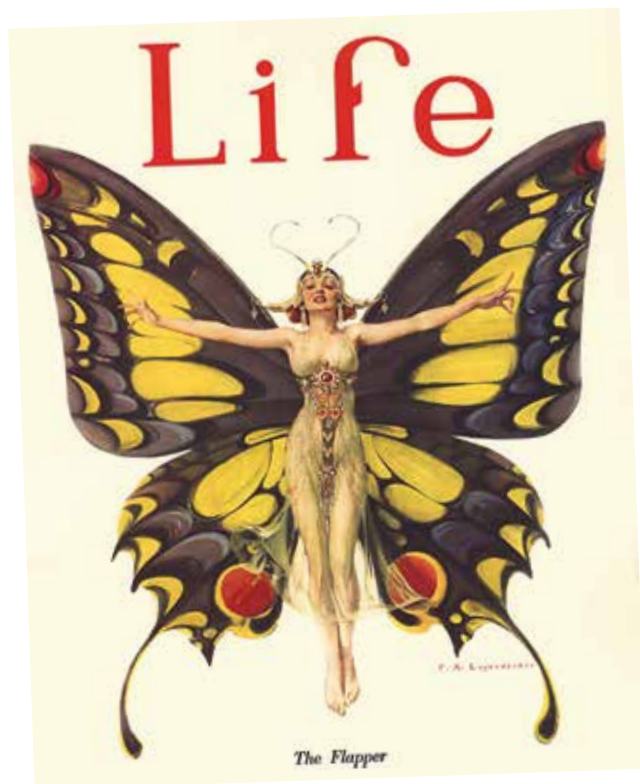
Work done in the house, such as cooking, cleaning and raising children.



← **Source 7.10** 'She left home under a cloud.' Flapper image on the cover of *Life* magazine, 1925.



Source 7.11 'The Flapper.' Cover of *Life* magazine, 1922.



Women were aided in their endeavours by increased opportunities for birth control. Advocates such as Margaret Sanger campaigned for education about birth control and the legalisation of birth control clinics. Information on how to control the size of their families—or prevent childbirth altogether—gradually became available to middle- and upper-class women, while poorer women, especially in rural areas, had little access to this information.

Despite considerable progress during the 1920s, women still faced discrimination, **patriarchal** expectations about female behaviour and a constitution that, despite giving them the right to vote, did not necessarily give them equal rights.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Sources 7.10 and 7.11 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

7.21 Describe the features of a flapper.

7.22 Explain how closely the image of the flapper reflected the reality of life for most women in America.

7.23 Analyse the importance of the changing roles for women in American society in the 1920s. Use evidence to support your response.

patriarchal

Relating to a system in society, government or the family where male members dominate and make the decisions.

suffragette

A woman who campaigned for the right to vote.

Lucy Branham, suffragette, 1919.

lobby

Representatives who seek to promote the interests of a particular company or industry, usually to gain favourable government attention.

feminine

Appearance, behaviours and activities that are usually associated with women.

WOMEN AND THE VOTE

Women had been campaigning for the right to vote in the US since 1848. The key **suffragette** group was the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), which was led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union was also active in the campaign. The pressure for women's votes was often associated with the Temperance Movement, as both ideals were related to the welfare of women and children.



Despite the work of these organisations there was considerable opposition to women getting the vote. Patriarchal males feared that giving the vote to women would bring unwelcome change and undermine the social order. The liquor **lobby** feared the influence of suffragettes on Prohibition, and some wealthy women were concerned that the vote would take women outside the boundary of 'proper' **feminine** behaviour. The National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS), created in 1911, campaigned against giving the vote to women on the grounds that they would be less likely to engage in charity and community work if they had the vote. NAOWS published a newsletter called *Woman Patriot*, which challenged progressive ideas about women's roles.



During World War I, many suffragettes stopped protesting to help the war effort, and some historians believe that this demonstration of nationalistic spirit led to women being given the vote. On 26 August 1920 the Nineteenth Amendment to the US Constitution was ratified, allowing women to vote. NAWSA disbanded as a suffragette movement but reformed as the League of Women Voters. Although women now had the vote, they were still restricted in many ways, such as wage inequality, marital rights, sexual discrimination and legal protection.

Several of the most active suffragettes were also writers or journalists who used their pens to spread the cause for the female vote. Among them were Alice Stone Blackwell, author of *Lucy Stone: Pioneer of Woman's Rights* (published 1930), and Harriot Stanton Blatch, a major contributor to *History of Women's Suffrage* (published between 1881 and 1922).

Significant individual ↗

SUSAN B. ANTHONY, 1820–1906

Susan B. Anthony was a prominent leader of the American suffragette movement. Interested in liberty and rights from a young age, Anthony collected anti-slavery petitions when she was seventeen. With fellow activist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Anthony founded multiple associations and organisations that called for the abolition of slavery and the vote for women. Anthony was arrested in 1872 for voting but she refused to pay the fine. She pressured Congress to pass an amendment to legally permit women to vote in elections. When the Nineteenth Amendment was passed in 1919, it was informally named after Anthony in her honour.



She said: 'Women must not depend upon the protection of man, but must be taught to protect herself.'

Said about: 'Susan Anthony was [the women's suffrage movement's] incomparable organizer, who gave it force and direction for over half a century.' (*Eleanor Flexner, scholar*)

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 7.24** Which individuals and groups demanded for the right for women to vote?
- 7.25** Explain the arguments put forward against women receiving the vote.
- 7.26** When were American women granted the right to vote?

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

7.27 The NAOWS was created by women. After researching this group, in 200 words compare and contrast their views and values with those of the suffragettes.

Why do you think many suffragettes put protesting aside during World War I? How did this help their cause?

CREATIVE TASK

7.28 Create a poster about the suffragettes. Include a timeline of the women's suffrage movement, biographies of two key figures, and a flowchart showing key ideas and actions.

EXTENSION

7.29 Create a dialogue between a woman committed to the idea of votes for women and a member of the NAOWS. Each woman should speak five times and present the arguments used by 'her side'.



STEREOTYPES AND SEGREGATION

IDA B. WELLS-BARNETT: 'The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.'

JIM CROW LAWS

While many people were living the American Dream during the 1920s, the African American population saw little of the progress and prosperity of the postwar era. Since the 1870s most African Americans, particularly in the southern states, were subject to laws of segregation known as 'Jim Crow' laws. These laws were created between 1877 and the 1960s to segregate African Americans from the white population. Until the 1920s, approximately 90 per cent of all African Americans lived under Jim Crow laws because they resided in the south.

In 1896, a part-African American man named Homer Plessy brought a Supreme Court case against the state of Louisiana over segregation on trains. Plessy argued that segregation violated the Constitution, which guaranteed all Americans equality under the law. The Supreme Court found that segregation was legal as long as facilities were 'separate, but equal'.³ This decision enshrined segregation practices, with separate facilities for non-whites, including water taps, toilets, hospitals, schools, railway cars and restaurants. Although facilities were separate, they were rarely equal.

➔ **Source 7.12** A restaurant for 'coloured' cotton workers, 1937.

➔ **Source 7.13** (far right) A theatre for 'colored people' in Mississippi, 1937.



➔ **Source 7.14** Ulrich B. Phillips, 'The Central Theme of Southern History,' *The American Historical Review*, 34:1 (October 1928): 31.

White people in the south

Yet it is a land with a unity despite its diversity, with a people having common joys and common sorrows, and, above all, as to the white folk a people with a common resolve indomitably maintained that it shall be and remain a white man's country. The consciousness of a function in these premises, whether expressed with the frenzy of a demagogue or maintained with a patrician's quietude, is the cardinal test of a Southerner and the central theme of Southern history.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 7.14 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

7.30 Find definitions for these words: resolve, indomitably, frenzy, demagogue, patrician, quietude, cardinal.

7.31 Research the life and opinions of Ulrich B. Phillips. What argument is he making in the source?

7.32 Do you think this statement is an accurate reflection of views of the south in the 1920s and 1930s? Discuss with reference to Sources 7.12–7.15.





↑ **Source 7.15** A man drinking at a 'colored' water cooler in Oklahoma City, 1939.

Did you know? There is some confusion about the origins of the term 'Jim Crow'. The most common explanation is that Jim Crow was a character in a popular song performed by a white minstrel entertainer named Daddy Rice, who performed in *blackface*. Jim Crow was depicted as a silly, clumsy African American and was an object of ridicule. 'Jim Crow' became a derogatory term for African Americans. As segregation laws were introduced throughout the south, they became known as 'Jim Crow' laws.

blackface

When a performer, usually white, blackens their face to mimic and parody darker-skinned people, often African Americans. This is considered deeply offensive.

THE KU KLUX KLAN

Life for African Americans in the southern states was made more difficult by the renewed popularity of the KKK, a *white supremacist* organisation. The KKK was founded in 1865 when the American Civil War ended, but declined once southern whites regained control of state governments during the Reconstruction period. The KKK movement revived and became more open in the early twentieth century, helped by Thomas Dixon Jr's 1905 book *The Clansman: An Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*, and the 1915 silent film version by D.W. Griffith called *Birth of a Nation*.

Did you know? D.W. Griffith's film about the KKK, *Birth of a Nation*, was the first twelve-reel film made in the US. It goes for 133 minutes, with each reel lasting eleven minutes. It was also the first film to be shown at the White House under US President Woodrow Wilson.

The KKK's revival started in Georgia in 1915, and used recruitment drives in the 1920s to increase its numbers and power. This version of the KKK was not just anti-black—it was also anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish and anti-foreigner. The KKK used threats and violence to ensure the status quo, forming *lynch* mobs and burning crosses planted near the homes of people they wanted to intimidate. Their numbers began to dwindle during the Great Depression, and their decline continued after World War II. However, there are still groups today who call themselves the KKK and promote a racist agenda.

white supremacist

An organisation or group that believes in the racial and cultural superiority of white people.

Did you know? The name 'Ku Klux Klan' comes from the Greek word *kyklos*, meaning 'circle' or 'brotherhood', combined with 'clan'. It suggests that at least some of the founding members had a university education in the classics.

lynch

Execution, usually by hanging, without legal authority.



Did you know? The song 'Strange Fruit' was originally written as a poem by Abel Meeropol in response to the lynch murders of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith. It was published in 1937. Meeropol then put it to music and Billie Holiday sang it in 1939.

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

7.33 Listen to 'Strange Fruit' sung by Billie Holiday. Discuss how the song connects to the social context, especially the historical time period, discrimination in the southern states, and racism.

CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

7.34 Imagine that you are the member of the lynch mob who said James Cameron was not involved. Write a short monologue explaining your actions and how you felt at this event. Make reference to specific laws, attitudes and conditions that related to African Americans in the south in the 1930s.

➔ **Source 7.17** James Cameron, 'Man who was almost lynched', *Ebony* 35:6 (April 1980): 154.

great migration

The movement of significant numbers of African Americans to northern US states in the early twentieth century.



📌 **Source 7.16** In 1930, Abram Smith and Thomas Shipp were accused of murdering a white man and raping a white woman. They were dragged out of jail, beaten and lynched. A sixteen-year-old boy named James Cameron was also accused of the crimes but escaped lynching.

James Cameron recalling how he was almost lynched

One end of the rope snaked out and sailed up out of the mob and fell across the limb of the tree. But before the crowd could hang me, it happened! A voice rang out above the deafening roar of the mob. It was an echo-like voice that seemed to come from some place far, far away. It was a feminine voice, sweet, clear, but unlike any voice ever heard ... 'Take this boy back. He had nothing to do with any raping or killing!' That was all the voice said. Abruptly, impossibly, a deadening, deafening, shattering quiet settled down over the mob as if they had been struck dumb ... I could feel the hands that had beaten me unmercifully removing the rope from around my neck.

FROM SOUTH TO NORTH

The segregation, poverty and violence faced by many African Americans in the south led to the **great migration**, where large numbers of people moved from their rural lives in the south to the cities of the north. It started during World War I, when African Americans began to work in factories in the northern states, and continued well into the 1970s. By the 1920s, the New York suburb of Harlem was home to more than 200 thousand African Americans.⁴ In the northern cities there were more opportunities for African Americans to become involved in the political, financial, social and cultural life of the country.



Racism was still a facet of life, but it wasn't as **institutionalised** as it was in the southern states. Segregation in southern states still applied to black entertainers, who were becoming increasingly popular in bars and casinos. They could perform on stage, but they were banned from drinking with the guests or sitting in the audience to watch other performers. They were not even allowed to walk through the front doors of the venues where they performed. As Sammy Davis Jr said of performing in Las Vegas, even in the 1950s 'we had to leave through the kitchen with the garbage'.



Source 7.18 African American men in the lobby of the 'Chicago coloured YMCA', 1915.

institutionalised

Set in law or formalised as a norm by custom.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

7.35 How did Jim Crow laws oppress southern African Americans after the Civil War?

7.36 Explain why membership in the KKK fluctuated from its founding in 1865 to the 1920s.

7.37 Why did thousands of African Americans migrate to the northern states in the early twentieth century?

7.38 To what extent did they find the equality they sought when they got there?

THE EARLY CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Even before the Civil War there had been African American voices—and some white voices—raised against the unequal treatment of black and white Americans. Support for a change to the segregation laws increased early in the twentieth century. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded in 1909 by W.E.B. Du Bois and Ida B. Wells-Barnett to fight for civil rights. Their first focus was a race riot in Springfield in 1908, which was sparked by the unsuccessful attempt of a mob of white men to lynch two African Americans accused of a violent attack. NAACP membership grew quickly from nine thousand in 1917 to ninety thousand by 1919.⁵ Unlike their opponents, who used violence to enforce segregation and discrimination, the NAACP was nonviolent in its attempts to create a more equal society. The NAACP used lobbying, legal cases, peaceful protests and publicity to make small incremental changes during the 1920s and 1930s, which paved the way for bigger civil rights after World War II.

Black leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, Claude McKay and Zora Neale Hurston also used the

Significant individual

W.E.B. DU BOIS, 1868–1963

Was founder of the NAACP.

Believed in the dignity of African Americans and racial equality.

He said: 'The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.'

Said about: 'Du Bois is remembered as one of the greatest intellectuals of the twentieth century, the father of the American civil rights movement.' (*Justin Briggs, historian*)

Contributed to change by being an early and important proponent of equal rights for African Americans.



Did you know? Many southern states had laws that prohibited black and white people from marrying each other. This did not change until 1967, when the Supreme Court case *Loving v Virginia* overturned these laws.



HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 7.19 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

7.39 Who are the ‘nine and one-half millions’?

7.40 Outline what conditions they faced in their working life.

7.41 Research the author of this piece, W.E.B Du Bois. How might his background have influenced his writing?

7.42 Analyse the significance of leaders in bringing about change for African Americans in the 1920s. Use evidence to support your response

written word to challenge the inequalities of American life, and specifically to target segregation. Du Bois’s 1924 book *The Gift of Black Folk: The Negroes in the Making of America* highlighted the achievements and contributions of African Americans to the economy and culture of the nation since the seventeenth century.

The reality of racism

What did they see? They saw nine and one-half millions of human beings. They saw the spawn of slavery, ignorant by law and by devilry [wickedness], crushed by insult and debauched [perverted] by systematic and criminal injustice. They saw a people whose helpless women have been raped by thousands and whose men lynched by hundreds in the face of a sneering world. They saw a people with heads bloody, but unbowed, working faithfully at wages fifty per cent lower than the wages of the nation and under conditions which shame civilization, saving homes, training children, hoping against hope. They saw the greatest industrial miracle of modern days—slaves transforming themselves to freemen and climbing out of perdition [hell] by their own efforts, despite the most contemptible opposition God ever saw—they saw all this and what they saw the distraught employers of America saw, too.

Source 7.19 W.E.B Du Bois, ‘Of Work and Wealth,’ in *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (New York: Harcourt, 1920), americanclass.org/sources/becomingmodern/divisions/text2/duboisstlouis.pdf



The Sheik was a 1921 silent romance starring Rudolph Valentino and directed by George Melford.

The Kid was a 1921 silent comedy directed by and starring Charlie Chaplin.

POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT

JACK ROBIN IN THE JAZZ SINGER (1927): ‘We in the show business have our religion too—on every day, the show must go on!’



RADIO AND CINEMA

Radio broadcasting began in the US in 1920 with one station, KDKA, but quickly spread throughout the country, encouraging the mass adoption of radios in homes. Radios allowed people to listen to a range of music, plays, news reports and sporting events within the comfort of their own homes. Cinema was almost as popular, with audiences for screen idols such as Rudolph Valentino, Mary Pickford and Charlie Chaplin growing rapidly. Cinema began with silent films, where the action was accompanied by live piano music played in movie halls. It was only in 1927 with *The Jazz Singer* that there were ‘talkies’ for the first time—movies with sound.

This was also the era of the charleston dance and the increasing popularity of jazz. Jazz was primarily an African American style of music that incorporated pianos with the traditional brass orchestra.



LITERATURE

Americans were becoming increasingly well-educated and literate, and the key element of a good education was reading classical literature. However, magazines were also very popular with their serialised stories and advertisements. This period, with its emphasis on luxury, glamour and living the American Dream, was epitomised in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. While appearing to praise and validate the American Dream, *The Great Gatsby* also offers a sharp critique of the inequality of the times and the callousness of its characters. The Newbery Medal to celebrate children's literature was first awarded in 1922; the ageless title *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle*, by Hugh Lofting, won the award in 1923.

Other writers provided a bleaker vision of the era, depicting the world's loss of values after World War I. *The Waste Land* (1922) by poet T.S. Eliot characterised the disillusionment of the postwar period, as did Ernest Hemingway's 1929 anti-war novel *A Farewell to Arms*.

FAVOURITES AND FAME

New technology also allowed adventurous people to test the boundaries of human endeavour. The Indianapolis 500 was already an important event on the car-racing calendar, and ocean liners were crossing the Atlantic at record speeds. Charles Lindbergh was immortalised for his solo flight from New York to Paris in 1927. His widespread fame was made possible through the new technology of radio, with millions of listeners following his every move.

↑ Charles Lindbergh.



THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

There was a flowering of black culture among the many African Americans who gathered in Harlem in the 1920s. This was called the 'Harlem *Renaissance*' or sometimes 'the New Negro movement' after the book by Alain LeRoy Locke.

Harlem was a popular destination for African Americans migrating north, and they often ended up exploring avenues of cultural expression that had previously been closed to them. Plays were written and performed without blackface stereotypes; jazz musicians such as Duke Ellington became popular and celebrated for their musical ability; dancers such as Josephine Baker became well known; and there was an increase in the range of books and magazines being published.

However, some African Americans were concerned that much of this cultural development was for white people—for example, books published through white publishers, and music performed for white audiences—who saw the African Americans as 'other' and 'primitive' rather than treating them as cultural equals.

renaissance

A cultural or social rebirth, named after the Italian Renaissance of the fifteenth century.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

7.43 Use the material here and your own research to explain the significance of the Harlem Renaissance. Why was it so important? Consider the time period when writing your answer.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 7.44** What key technologies radically changed mass entertainment in the 1920s?
- 7.45** How did increasing education standards affect reading tastes in the US in the 1920s?
- 7.46** To what extent was the Harlem Renaissance a significant change from the roles traditionally played by African Americans in entertainment? Use evidence to support your response.



Did you know? The Spanish flu emerged in 1918, and by 1920 had killed between twenty and fifty million people. There were more than 500 million cases worldwide. It probably emerged in army camps or hospitals on the Western Front or in the US. It was called the Spanish flu because, even though the pandemic did not start in Spain, the first reports came from that country. For the sake of secrecy and morale, wartime censorship prevented journalists from reporting on the widespread illness suffered by Allied troops.

share market

Also known as the stock exchange, this is a place where shares in companies are bought and sold. Shares give the buyer part-ownership of a company and a portion of its profits.

➔ **Source 7.20** Ben Walsh, *Modern World History* (London: Hodder Education, 2013), 277.

➔ **Source 7.21** Ben Walsh, *Modern World History* (London: Hodder Education, 2013), 275.

BOOM AND BUST

JOHN T. RASKOB, BUSINESS ANALYST, AUGUST 1929: 'I am firm in my belief that anyone not only can be rich, but ought to be rich.'

THE ECONOMIC BOOM

The US came out of World War I stronger than any other economy in the world. After a brief recession, caused in part by soldiers returning from the Western Front and the Spanish flu pandemic, the American economy experienced a remarkable boom in the 1920s. Unemployment was low and wages were high. Factories were mass-producing consumer goods at a price that most Americans could afford. This was fuelled to some degree by easy borrowing and cheap credit. Americans believed that they could 'buy now and pay later', confident in the knowledge that, with a secure job, they could eventually pay off their debts. The banking system believed this too, and was more than happy to lend money; the banks made a profit on the interest they charged. The **share markets**, particularly Wall Street in New York City, lured investors with the promise of a quick and easy profit. It seemed like the good times would never end.

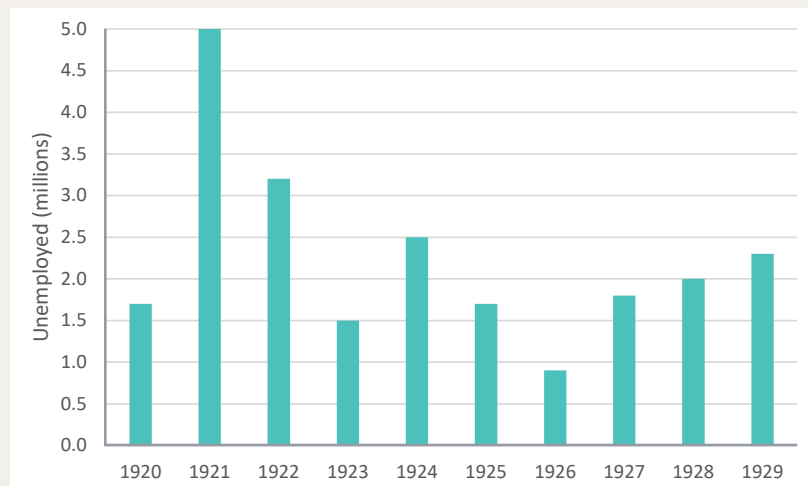
Economic statistics from the era tell the story of a nation and people experiencing a boom time.

The US economy during the 1920s

	1920	1929
Gross National Product (GNP)	\$73.3 billion	\$104.4 billion
Steel production	40 million tons	55 million tons
Average annual wage	\$1308	\$1716
Radios produced	100,000	350,000
Consumer borrowing	\$25 billion	\$80 billion
Number of shareholders*	4 million	20 million

* US population 122 million

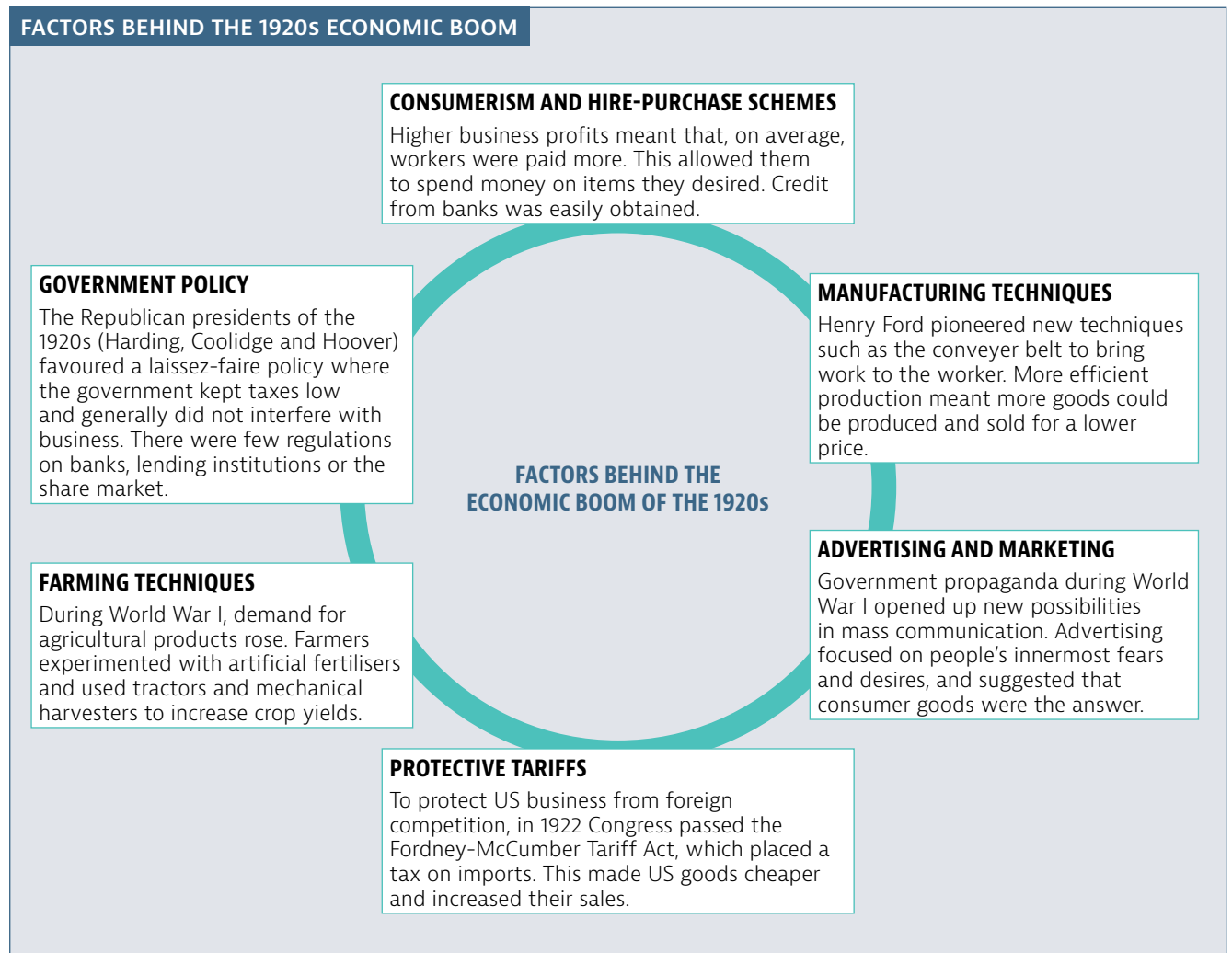
Unemployment in the US during the 1920s



New York City seemed to epitomise the boom. The population reached six million in 1925, making it the largest city in the world at the time. By the end of the decade, 2749 buildings in New York were more than ten stories high. Many, such as the Chrysler and Empire State buildings, were constructed in the latest architectural style known as Art Deco.

REASONS FOR THE BOOM

There were a number of reasons for the postwar upsurge in the US economy. They all contributed to one of the most rapid and spectacular periods of economic growth in modern history.



CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

7.48 Answer the following question in a 300-word response.

- Explain why the 1920s in America is considered to be a period of economic boom. Use evidence to support your response.

WHO MISSED OUT ON THE BOOM?

While it may appear that every American in the 1920s lived the good life, not everyone enjoyed the benefits of the economic boom. Despite the overall increase in wages and the standard of living, there was a great deal of inequality in the US. The richest 5 per cent of Americans possessed one-third of the wealth, whilst the poorest 42 per cent owned only 10 per cent.⁶ While ordinary workers did not do as well as the wealthy minority, other social groups missed out on the good times.

Source 7.22 An African American boy picking cotton in the south.



sharecroppers

Farmers who worked on rented land.

- **Farmers.** The demand for food during World War I, as well as new techniques and machinery, meant that farmers were growing too much produce during the 1920s—more than Americans wanted to buy. This pushed down the price of food and cut deeply into the farmers' profits. Overall income for farms fell from US\$22 billion in 1919 to just US\$13 billion by 1928.⁷ Many farmers, particularly those on small farms, could not pay their debts and had to sell their land. They drifted to the big cities to look for work.
- **African Americans.** Whether they lived in the south or had migrated to the north, African Americans still lived in poverty and faced discrimination and violent racism. Those in the south were *sharecroppers*—farmers who worked on rented land. They paid their rent by sharing a portion of the crop they harvested. What was left was often only just enough to get by on, and often they fell into debt. African Americans in the northern cities found that they lost their jobs when servicemen returned from World War I. Others could only get the most menial, lowest-paid jobs on offer.⁸
- **Trade Unions.** Workers who joined trade unions, and the union representatives themselves, found America in the 1920s to be hostile to the notion of workplace reforms. Wealthy business owners such as Henry Ford felt that unions encouraged workers to demand better conditions and higher wages, both of which lowered company profits. Strikes were broken up by the police or hired thugs, often with a great deal of violence. Union members found it difficult to keep a job or find a new one if they were fired.⁹

THE ORIGINS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The Great Depression was the most significant economic crisis of the twentieth century, at least for the Western world. In countries such as the US, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Australia and New Zealand, the 1930s was a time of high unemployment, bank closures and low consumer demand. This had a devastating impact on the lives of ordinary men and women, who struggled to keep their jobs and could not find a new one if they were fired. Many struggled to feed and properly house their families. Millions around the world fell into poverty and relied on government handouts and charity to survive.

Such a dramatic event demands close attention from historians, and challenges us to ask why it happened. A common assumption is that the Wall Street Crash of October 1929 caused the Great Depression. The Wall Street Crash did play a key



role, but it was not the only cause. Like all significant events of the past, the Great Depression was a complex phenomenon with many contributing factors. It was the result of several interlinked factors, both long term and short term; taken together they suggest that underneath the boom of the 1920s there were deep-seated structural economic problems that were not recognised until it was too late.

THE FARMING SECTOR

Overproduction in the US farming sector outstripped public demand, leading to a collapse in the price of agricultural produce—on average by 50 per cent. By 1925, farmers collectively owed US\$2.7 billion to rural banks, which they could pay back but many farmers could not afford to stay on the land. As a result, approximately six million farmers—roughly 10 per cent of Americans living in rural areas—moved to the cities looking for work. This included 750,000 African Americans.¹⁰

OVERPRODUCTION

The manufacturing techniques that were developed at the turn of the century made it possible to mass-produce goods cheaply and sell them for a low price. However, over the course of the 1920s, however, companies started to make more goods than customers needed or wanted. In 1919, nine million cars were made. This increased to twenty-six million in 1929. Over the same time period, radio manufacturing grew from sixty thousand to ten million per year. For every fridge made in 1921 there were 167 in 1929. Overall, productivity increased by 43 per cent over the 1920s.¹¹ Such a production boom can only be sustained, and profitable, if consumers are willing to buy the goods.



Did you know? In 1908 it took a work crew twelve hours to assemble a car, and only ten thousand were built in the US that year. In 1927 a Model T Ford was built every ten seconds. By the end of the decade, 20 per cent of Americans owned a car.

← (far left) A 1925 Model T Ford still in working order today.

← Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Car Company.

UNDERCONSUMPTION

The flip side of overproduction is underconsumption. There are many reasons why demand for goods no longer matched production over the course of the 1920s.

- Restrictions on immigration in 1921 (the Emergency Quota Act) and 1924 (the Johnson-Reed Act) meant that there was not the population growth necessary to keep up with production.
- In 1922, Congress passed the Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act. This placed a tax on all imported goods. This was meant to protect American companies from foreign competition by making imports more expensive than locally made products. However, this Act had the opposite effect. European countries responded by creating their own tariffs. US companies that exported products found that there was no longer a foreign market. US exports fell from US\$680 billion in 1920 to US\$580 billion in 1930, which decreased business profits.¹²



- While Americans generally became richer over the course of the 1920s, the wealth was concentrated in relatively few hands. The richest 5 per cent of Americans earned one-third of the total national income. Roughly 60 per cent of families earned less than \$2000 per year—the minimum thought necessary for survival.¹³ The unequal distribution of wealth was facilitated by the US government's economic policy, whereby taxation of the wealthy fell from 50 per cent of their income in 1921 to 20 per cent in 1926. The wealthy minority could not absorb the excess production.
- Borrowing from the banks rose from US\$25 billion in 1920 to US\$80 billion by 1929.¹⁴ This rising level of debt over the course of the 1920s made many Americans reluctant to borrow more money to spend on consumer goods, such as cars and radios, or to buy shares on the stock market.

These factors combined to drastically reduce consumer demand for manufactured products by the end of the 1920s. As historian Hugh Brogan notes, 'Warehouses were choked with unsold goods, and factories were beginning to diminish their output'.¹⁵ As a result, companies started to lay off workers.

These longer-term factors meant that the US was not on as sound an economic basis as it seemed. By the late 1920s it was becoming evident to many Americans that the economy was in trouble. But for America to tip over into an economic depression, a short-term catalyst was required. That catalyst was the Wall Street Crash of October 1929.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 7.49** Explain the factors that contributed to the boom in the US economy in the 1920s.
- 7.50** Which social groups in the US missed out on the boom of the 1920s?
- 7.51** Why did these groups miss out?
- 7.52** List and explain the main causes of the downturn in the US economy in the late 1920s.

CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

- 7.53** Read over the information on the causes of the Great Depression. Present this in a new format, such as a slideshow or mind map.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- 7.54** In a 200-word response, explain which factor you think was most responsible for the Great Depression in America. Justify your response.

THE WALL STREET CRASH

Prior to World War I, buying and selling shares at a stock exchange was reserved for the wealthy. The high cost of the war led the US government to ask its citizens to buy Liberty Bonds. The government could use the money raised to fund the war effort, while the purchasers were guaranteed their money back plus 3.5 per cent interest. This encouraged many ordinary Americans to invest for the first time. Bonds could also be traded on the stock exchange, which introduced people to the idea of buying and selling stock in share markets such as Wall Street in New York.

In 1920, approximately four million Americans held shares. However, by 1929 this had increased to around twenty million (out of a population of 122 million). Making money on the stock exchange seemed so easy. Investors bought shares in a company and sold



them again when the price had gone up. The investor then pocketed the profit. With production and **consumption** running high throughout the 1920s, the share price of stock in any particular company always went up, and it seemed as though there would always be someone else willing to buy them. Investors were so certain of making a profit that many borrowed money from the banks to buy shares. When they sold their shares at a higher price, investors would repay the loan, including the interest. This was called **borrowing on the margin**, and it became extremely popular in the 1920s.¹⁶ Banks were keen to lend because it seemed certain that the loan would be repaid. In 1929, banks lent investors US\$9 billion for share market **speculation**.¹⁷ In the unregulated financial climate under Republican Party presidents Harding, Coolidge and Hoover, banks could also invest directly in the stock exchange by using their customers' lifesavings.

The value of shares in a company listed on the stock exchange is a reflection of several factors. The size, assets, debt levels, profits and potential future profits all go into the value of a company's shares. However, what can also affect share market value is *demand*. If many people want to buy a particular item, such as shares in a company or a house, its value (or price) will go up. The opposite happens when demand declines. In the optimistic atmosphere of the 1920s, when it seemed impossible that the good times would come to an end, people were confident that share prices would always go up. They bought shares, which pushed up the price, and further inflated their value. In 1925, the value of all stocks on Wall Street was US\$27 billion; by October 1929 it had reached US\$87 billion. But with manufacturing slowing down by the end of the 1920s, the share market no longer reflected the true nature of the US economy. Investors, so used to seeing the value of their shares go up, started to worry that their shares were not worth what they had paid for them.

Did you know? When borrowing on the margin, investors could put down a deposit as little as 10 per cent of the value of the shares. The banks would provide the rest and charge interest.

➔ **Source 7.23** A poster from 1917 encouraging immigrants in America to buy Liberty Bonds.

EXTENSION

7.55 Pick a well-known company on the Australian share market (the ASX) and take note of the value of their shares over a number of days or even weeks. Does it go up or down? What factors might have affected this? What has been the value of this company's shares over a longer time frame (months and years). Do some research and find out why the market value of shares in this company has fluctuated over time.

consumption

Use of goods and services.

borrowing on the margin

When someone borrows money from the bank to invest, hoping that they can cover their repayments (the margin) when they sell the shares for a profit.

speculation

When people borrow money to buy stock market shares, gambling or 'speculating' that the price of shares will rise and they will get a return that covers the original money borrowed, plus a profit from the sale of their shares.





↑ **Source 7.24** Crowds of nervous investors gather on Wall Street during the crash.

BLACK THURSDAY AND BLACK TUESDAY

Over the course of 1929, some economists started to worry about the market value of their shares. Even though the US economy was starting to slow down, the share price kept going up. Investors were concerned that if the value of their shares dropped, they would have to sell them for less than what they had borrowed from the banks. This would put many into deep debt. Roger Babson, a business analyst, summed up this fear on 5 September 1929: 'Sooner or later a crash is coming, and it may be terrific. Factories will shut down, men will be thrown out of work, the vicious circle will get in full swing and the result will be a serious business depression.'¹⁸

A little less than two months later, Babson was proved correct. On Thursday, 24 October (Black Thursday), investors started to panic about the value of their shares and started to sell heavily. By the end of the day, 12.8 million shares had been sold and US\$4 billion wiped off the value of the New York Stock Exchange. Tuesday, 29 October (Black Tuesday) was even worse. Sixteen million shares were sold. By November the value of shares on the stock exchange had fallen by US\$30 billion. The share market had completely collapsed, taking many investors' savings with it. The good times had come to an end.

→ **Source 7.25** Derrick Murphy, *United States 1776–1992* (London: Collins Educational, 2001), 171.

The price of shares in the late 1920s

COMPANY	3 MARCH 1928	3 SEPTEMBER 1929	13 NOVEMBER 1929
American Can	\$0.77	\$1.82	\$0.86
Anaconda Copper	\$0.54	\$1.62	\$0.70
Electric Bond and Copper	\$0.09	\$2.04	\$0.50
General Electric	\$1.29	\$3.96	\$1.68
General Motors	\$1.40	\$1.82	\$0.36
New York Central	\$1.60	\$2.56	\$1.60
Radio	\$0.94	\$5.05	\$0.28
United States Steel	\$1.38	\$2.79	\$1.50
Westinghouse E & M	\$0.92	\$3.13	\$1.02
Woolworth	\$1.81	\$2.51	\$0.52

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 7.25 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

7.56 Describe what happened to the price of shares on the New York Stock Exchange from 1928–1929.

7.57 Explain the series of events that led to this.

7.58 Evaluate the extent to which Source 7.25 is useful in explaining the state of the US economy by the end of the 1920s. Use evidence to support your answer.



CHAPTER 7 REVIEW

The 1920s was a particularly turbulent era for the US. It emerged in a stronger position than any other nation in the aftermath of World War I, yet retreated into isolation. The creed of the nation was liberty and equality, but many were denied basic political, civil and human rights. The land that had once welcomed millions of migrants turned its back on them. If the 1920s was an era of experimentation and **permissiveness**, it was also a time of tradition and prohibition.

The wealth generated by American-style capitalism in the 1920s was unlike anything the world had ever seen. Factories offered employment to millions and churned out consumer goods that were cheap enough for most people to afford. Even though some were left behind by the boom and still lived in poverty, business confidence was high and banks were eager to lend money to people who were looking to make a quick profit. The stock market offered such a promise, and millions took the plunge. However, the US economy was built on shaky foundations, and by the end of the decade negative economic data suggested that the share market was grossly overvalued. Panic selling in October 1929 led to a stock market crash. This created the conditions necessary for the worst economic crisis of the twentieth century.

permissiveness

A situation where certain types of behaviour that are usually not tolerated are allowed.

KEY SUMMARY POINTS

- America was seen as a land of freedom and opportunity for all.
- Immigrants, women and African Americans faced prejudice and discrimination.
- The 1920s was a decade of economic growth and prosperity.
- Many different groups in America did not share in the wealth.
- The American economy was not as strong as it seemed.
- The Wall Street Crash wiped out the savings of millions of Americans.

REVIEW

7.59 American politics in the 1920s was dominated by the Republican Party. How successful was it in improving the lives of ordinary people?

7.60 What were the underlying weaknesses in the American economic system during the 1920s?

7.61 Who do you think were the three most influential individuals in America in the 1920s? Write a paragraph for each of your choices, justifying your selection with evidence.

EXTENDED RESPONSE

7.62 Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence, and a clear conclusion.

- Explain how the 1920s was an era of both intolerance and permissiveness.
- Explain the key factors that contributed to the outbreak of the Great Depression in the US.
- Explain how artistic expression was a reflection of the confidence and disillusionment of America in the 1920s.

ESSAY

7.63 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- Analyse the extent to which everyone benefitted from the economic boom in the US.
- 'Women and African Americans achieved significant political and economic gains in the 1920s.' Discuss.
- 'The Wall Street Crash was caused by a mixture of greed and ignorance.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS

7.64 While historians agree that complex historical events such as the Great Depression have multiple causes, they frequently disagree on which cause was the most important. This does not necessarily mean that particular historians are right or wrong. It simply means that there are different interpretations about the past.

Access the works of different historians who have written about the origins of the Great Depression (such as Hugh Brogan, Howard Zinn, Paul Johnson, J.K. Galbraith, Eric Hobsbawm, Piers Brendon and any others you can find), and make a list of their positions on this debate. Once you have done this, write an essay or report outlining your own opinion. Cite various historians' works, as well as primary sources, in your response.



THE GREAT DEPRESSION IN AMERICA, 1929–1941

'The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.'

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, 1933

The Wall Street Crash of October 1929 triggered an economic depression that had a devastating effect on the US and many other countries around the world. Bank failures, business collapse and soaring unemployment destabilised society and caused some to question the very foundations of capitalism. During the 1932 presidential election campaign, Franklin D. Roosevelt offered Americans a *New Deal* to help lift the country out of poverty and get the economy back on its feet. Winning in a landslide election over Herbert Hoover, Roosevelt set about creating a new and direct role for the US government in private business and the lives of citizens. While many Americans appreciated his efforts, Roosevelt found strong opposition to his schemes, not least of all from the Supreme Court. Many Americans turned to popular culture such as films to escape the hardships of their lives. While historians debate the effectiveness of Roosevelt's New Deal policy, they all agree that only America's entry into World War II—after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan—brought an end to the worst effects of the Great Depression.

New Deal

A series of measures begun in 1933 under the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt that was intended to lift the US out of the Great Depression.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1929 OCTOBER — The Wall Street Crash

1933 4 MARCH — Roosevelt inaugurated as the thirty-second US President

1935 27 MAY — *Schechter Poultry Corp* case in the Supreme Court

1936 3 NOVEMBER — Roosevelt wins a second term in a landslide

1937 FEBRUARY — Roosevelt submits the Judicial Procedures Reform Bill to Congress

1941 7 DECEMBER — Japan bombs Pearl Harbor

KEY QUESTIONS

- How did the Wall Street Crash contribute to the Great Depression?
- Why did Roosevelt win the 1932 US presidential election?
- What was the nature of Roosevelt's New Deal policies?
- Why did Roosevelt attempt to reform the Supreme Court?
- To what extent did the New Deal achieve its aims?
- What were the causes and consequences of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor?



Source 8.01
Unemployed men lining up in front of a charity kitchen in Chicago, 1931.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS



HERBERT HOOVER

President of the United States (1929–1933)
Promoted a laissez-faire economic policy



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Defeated Herbert Hoover to become President of the United States (1933–1945)
Introduced his New Deal policies



WALT DISNEY

Made animated cartoons and films
Innovator in the field of mass entertainment

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

One of the key historical thinking concepts is 'consequence'. All actions have outcomes and repercussions. Like 'cause', 'consequence' is complex and multifaceted. There are short-term and long-term consequences. Some are perceived as significant at the time, while others are only perceived as significant with the benefit of hindsight. As you work through this chapter, consider the following questions.

8.01 What were the immediate consequences of the Wall Street Crash on the American economy?

8.02 What were the various consequences of the Great Depression for the American people?

8.03 What effect did Roosevelt's New Deal have on the economic situation of America in the 1930s?

FROM CRASH TO DEPRESSION

HERBERT HOOVER, 1928: 'We in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of our land.'

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE WALL STREET CRASH

The Wall Street Crash had an immediate and devastating impact on the New York Stock Exchange. In the two weeks after Black Tuesday (29 October), approximately US\$30 billion was wiped off the value of shares on Wall Street.¹

➔ **Source 8.02** Steve Waugh and John Wright, *The USA 1929–1980* (London: Hodder Murray, 2005), 18.

CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

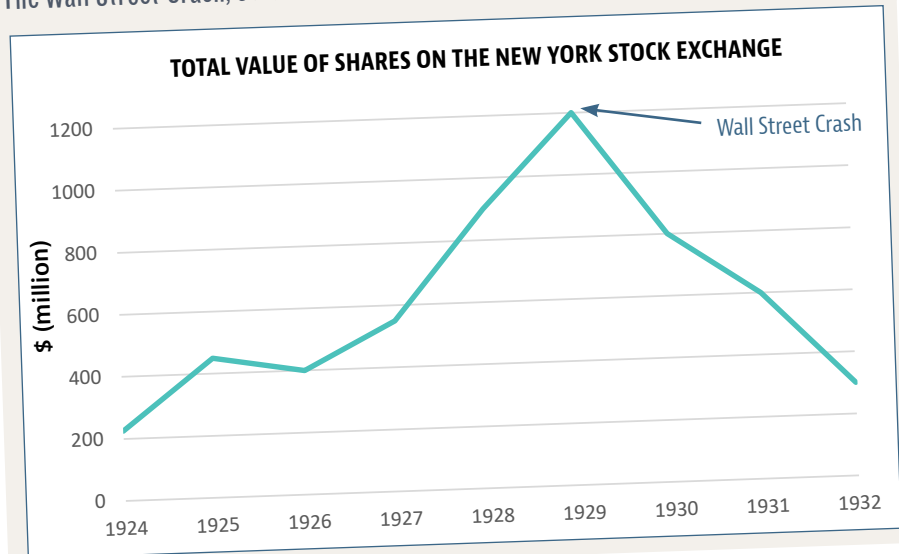
Using Source 8.02 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

8.04 What led to the rise of the share market price over the 1920s?

8.05 Why did it fall by so much so quickly?

8.06 How might this have affected those who had invested in the stock market? Explain your answer.

The Wall Street Crash, October 1929



While many investors, both big and small, lost an enormous amount of money in the crash, it was not immediately clear what this might mean for the rest of the US economy. There have been several stock market crashes in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (the 1907 panic, the 1987 crash, the 'dotcom' bubble in 2000, the global financial crisis of 2008, and the COVID-induced market collapse of February/March 2020), and they have not caused an economic depression. The difference with the 1929 market crash was that the banks were too exposed to the stock exchange due to unregulated lending practices.

THE BANKING COLLAPSE

Perhaps the most significant feature of the US economy that linked the Wall Street Crash to the depression was the collapse of the banking system. Very few banks in the US were nationwide; most were local or statewide. If these banks lent a lot of money and could not get it back, or people started to withdraw their savings, these small banks did not have vast financial resources on which to fall back. Once all the cash reserves were gone, the bank had to close. Those people not lucky enough to get their savings out in time lost everything. The banking system in the US in the 1920s was already unstable. Between 1921 and 1928, five thousand banks went out of business, mostly in rural areas. In 1929 another 659 banks closed, taking their customers' deposits with them.²



In the aftermath of the Wall Street Crash, the fact that banks had lent so much money to investors, or invested directly in the stock market themselves, made many Americans nervous. This led to a ‘run on the banks’, as people rushed to withdraw their money as quickly as possible. This panic only caused others to quickly withdraw their own savings. The cycle repeated, and bank after bank, with no cash reserves left, was forced to close its doors.

The collapse of the US banking system

	1929	1930	1931
Number of banks closed	659	1352	2294
Total deposits lost	200 million	853 million	1700 million

Source 8.03 Doug and Susan Willoughby, *The USA 1917–1945* (Oxford: Heinemann Educational, 2000), 80.

THE DEPRESSION SPIRAL



The collapse of so many banks in the US meant that millions of Americans lost all their money. In 1929 there were 25,500 banks in the US; by 1933 only 14,700 were still open. The banks that remained open were reluctant to loan money to customers, as they feared they would not get it back. With little or no money, Americans stopped spending. This fall in consumption meant that businesses lost profits. To avoid bankruptcy they cut workers’ hours, gave them a pay cut or just fired them. This led to further falls in consumer spending, which caused businesses to cut production and fire more workers. Eventually businesses started to go bankrupt, as there was no one to buy their goods. By 1933, industrial and farm production fell by 40 per cent. Average wages fell by 60 per cent.³ A depression spiral had set in.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 8.07** How stable was the US banking sector during the 1920s? Explain your answer.
- 8.08** What was the cause of the collapse of the US banking sector from 1929–1931?
- 8.09** What effect might the banking collapse have on the broader US economy?



THE IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The consequences of the banking collapse were profound. The most obvious impact of the Great Depression was on employment levels. As the number of business closures increased in the early 1930s, more people lost their jobs.

➔ **Source 8.04** Joanne de Pennington, *Modern American: The USA, 1865 to the Present* (London: Hodder Education, 2005), 103.

Business failures in the US



People in big cities with factories and offices experienced a sudden collapse in employment. Different industries were all badly affected. Car production fell by 80 per cent, and road and building construction fell by 92 per cent. GNP slumped from US\$104 billion in 1929 to US\$59 billion in 1932.

➔ **Source 8.05** Terry Fiehn et al., *The USA Between the Wars 1919–1941* (London: John Murray, 2002), 74.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Sources 8.04 and 8.05 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 8.10** Explain the impact of the Great Depression on American businesses.
- 8.11** How would business failures contribute to the depression spiral?
- 8.12** Explain the impact of the Great Depression on employment levels in the US.
- 8.13** What effect might this have on people's daily lives?
- 8.14** How would unemployment contribute to the depression spiral?

Unemployment in the US



Unemployment had a profound effect on people's lives. In just three years unemployment jumped from 3.2 per cent to almost 25 per cent. Many farmers lost their land, while thousands in the cities found themselves homeless, as they could no longer pay the rent. Malnutrition and ill-health became widespread, as people could not afford to buy enough healthy food. Many



children stopped going to school; by 1932 it was estimated that 300,000 children were out of school.⁴ The psychological effects were also severe. The incidence of suicide and family break-ups increased significantly in the early-1930s.

As the economic depression deepened in the early-1930s, so did the miserable, poverty-stricken existence of millions of ordinary people. The basic human needs of food and shelter became increasingly difficult to find. While some moved in with relatives, many others became homeless and were forced to create makeshift housing. Still others took to the roads to look for any kind of job anywhere they could find it. Some slept on park benches or in abandoned warehouses. It was not unknown for some men to deliberately get arrested so they could spend the night in jail and get some food. Others took to hitching a ride on freight trains in the hope of finding work. It was estimated in 1932 that two million men were forced into this kind of *itinerant* lifestyle as they struggled to earn money for their families.⁵

The desperate search for food

Last summer in the hot weather, when the smell was sickening and the flies were thick, there were a hundred people a day coming to the dumps ... a widow who used to do housework and laundry, but now had no work at all, fed herself and her fourteen-year-old son on garbage. Before she picked up the meat she would always take off her glasses so that she couldn't see the maggots; but it sometimes made the boy so sick to look at this offal [internal organs of animals] and smell it that he could not bring himself to eat it.

Charity and theft

Eleven hundred men standing in a Salvation Army breadline on March 19, 1930, near the Bowery Hotel in Manhattan descended upon two trucks delivering baked goods. Jelly rolls, cookies, rolls and bread were flung into the street with the hungry jobless chasing after them. Joseph Drusin of Indiana Townships, Pennsylvania, in November 1930 stole a loaf of bread from a neighbour for his four starving children. When caught, Drusin went to the cellar and hung himself. By 1932 organised looting of food was a nationwide phenomenon. Helen Hall, a Philadelphia social worker, told a Senate committee that many families sent their children out to steal from wholesale markets, to snatch milk for babies, to lift [steal] articles to exchange for food.



itinerant

Moving from place to place with no fixed address or residence.

Source 8.06 From *New Republic* magazine, February 1933, cited in Terry Fiehn et al., *The USA between the Wars 1919–1941* (London: John Murray, 2002), 76.

Source 8.07 From *Lean Years* by Irving Bernstein, cited in Terry Fiehn et al., *The USA between the Wars 1919–1941* (London: John Murray, 2002), 77.

Source 8.08 A homeless family walking from Phoenix, Arizona, to San Diego, California.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

8.15 What was the extent of the impact of the Great Depression? Using the information provided on the last few pages, write a report on the significance of the Great Depression. Consider the number of people affected, the disruption to their lives, and the overall effect on the US economy. This could be presented as a speech to your class or a newspaper article from the 1930s.

➔ US President Herbert Hoover.

Did you know? Hoover studied as a mining engineer and spent two years surveying goldfields in Western Australia in the 1890s.

self-made man

Anyone who rises from a poor or an obscure background and becomes wealthy through their own efforts. This was a crucial part of the American Dream.

voluntarism

The general approach to the economic depression advocated by Hoover. It favoured business-driven solutions rather than direct government intervention.

Hooverville

Shanty towns of self-made dwellings named after Herbert Hoover.

THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE



The US president at the time of the Wall Street Crash and early years of the Great Depression was Herbert Hoover. A Republican, Hoover won the presidential election in 1928 with 57 per cent of the popular vote. He campaigned on the promise of continuing the policies of his Republican predecessors Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge. As a **self-made man**, Hoover believed that anyone could get rich if they worked hard enough and displayed some initiative. He did not think that the government should help people with their problems; rather, it was up to the individual

to help themselves. Hoover was also a strong believer in the economic theory of laissez-faire; that is, the government should take a 'hands-off' approach to the economy. This meant low taxes, minimal government services and few government employees.⁶ The tragedy of Hoover's presidency was that he could never really shift from these views.

Initially the US government believed that this was a market crash like any other, and that the damage would be contained to the finance sector. In January 1930 Andrew Mellon, the Secretary of Treasury, said, 'I see nothing in the present situation that is either menacing or warrants pessimism [negativity]'.⁷ Nevertheless, as the economic situation deteriorated, Hoover realised that he had to act. He promoted the idea of **voluntarism** — that state governments and businesses should solve the problems of low consumption and high unemployment for themselves. Local charities were also expected to help. Congress passed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act in 1930 to protect American industry from foreign competition. This raised taxes on imported goods to 50 per cent. The Agricultural Marketing Act gave assistance to farmers through low-interest loans and produce purchased at reasonable prices.⁸

Did you know? In the 1986 film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, the Economics teacher who is boring his class is lecturing them about the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act.

It was an election year in 1932. However, with unemployment rising and businesses closing, Hoover realised that he needed to do more. He asked Congress for US\$500 million to help various agencies deal with the vast social problems, but this was not enough. The sense that Hoover needed to do more to help ordinary Americans was evident in some of the dark humour of the times. The homeless set up vast shanty towns called **Hoovervilles** on the outskirts of big cities so that they would have some sort of shelter. Newspapers, used by the homeless when sleeping on park benches, were called 'Hoover blankets'. A hitchhiker on the highway carried a sign that read, 'Give me a ride or I'll vote for Hoover'.⁹ It seemed that Hoover's defeat in the upcoming November election was inevitable.

← **Source 8.09** A Hooverville on the outskirts of New York, 1932.



THE BONUS ARMY

Hoover's reputation took a severe blow during an event that occurred in mid-1932. In 1924, Congress had passed an Act providing US Army veterans who fought during World War I with a cash bonus. The sum of money was US\$3.5 billion, but this would not be paid out for twenty years. Many veterans were out of work by the early 1930s, so more than fifteen thousand of them marched on Washington, DC to demand that Congress give them the money now when they needed it to support their families. Congress refused, so many of the Bonus Army marchers, as they were now called, built a shanty down on the Anacostia Flats in the south-western part of Washington, DC. On 28 July, Hoover ordered the US Army to evict the marchers from the Anacostia Flats. Under the command of Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur, one thousand soldiers armed with rifles, machine guns, tanks and tear gas drove the veterans out of the Anacostia Flats and burnt the shacks down. Two veterans were killed and hundreds were injured.¹⁰ This event made Hoover seem cruel and insensitive to cries for help from the American people. The forceful dispersal of the Bonus Army was a significant political blunder from which Hoover never recovered.



↑ **Source 8.10** Bonus Army marchers confronting the police, 1932.

Did you know? Two other US Army officers who were present at the Anacostia Flats incident, and later became prominent during World War II, were Majors Dwight Eisenhower and George Patton.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 8.16** What ideas about economics and the role of government in people's lives did Hoover hold?
- 8.17** What measures did Hoover undertake to alleviate the consequences of the Great Depression?
- 8.18** How did ordinary Americans respond to Hoover's measures?
- 8.19** Why did the Bonus Army march on Washington in 1932?
- 8.20** How did the government's response damage Hoover's political reputation?

THE ELECTION OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT: 'I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people.'

A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

Hoover did not expect to win the presidential election in November 1932. Afterwards he stated, 'As we expected we were defeated in the election'.¹¹ While Hoover had certainly made himself deeply unpopular with many Americans—though certainly not all—the Democrat nominee for president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, had to prove himself to the voting public.

Hoover and Roosevelt appear to be a study in contrasts. Hoover was born into a modest family in Iowa. Through mining and business he eventually made himself a fortune. Roosevelt was born into one of the most distinguished and wealthiest families in America. While Hoover could be shy around strangers and usually preferred to keep his own company, Roosevelt was welcoming and relaxed in conversation. Hoover struggled to grasp the importance of new means of mass-communication, such as radio. Roosevelt took to these innovations with ease, and used them to great effect when campaigning and later during his presidency in his 'fireside chats'.

↓ Franklin D. Roosevelt



Hoover wanted to keep any measures to bring America out of its economic slump relatively small and temporary. In contrast, Roosevelt believed that government intervention in the economy was required on a scale not yet seen in the US.

However, both had overcome significant adversity in their lives. Hoover was orphaned at age eight, while Roosevelt contracted polio in 1921, aged thirty-nine. From that year on Roosevelt was confined to a wheelchair or used leg braces to stand or take a few steps. He lived in great pain for the rest of his life.¹² Both men seemed to have been deeply affected by their circumstances. Hoover was determined to overcome his difficult childhood and make his own way in the world without anyone's help. Hoover believed that self-reliance was the most important characteristic. Roosevelt seemed to find a drive and energy despite his ailments, and was determined to help others as much as possible.

In June 1932, Roosevelt was elected by the Democrat Party to run for the presidency later in the year. At the party's convention in Chicago, Roosevelt gave one of the most famous nomination acceptance speeches of the twentieth century.

➔ **Source 8.11** Peter Clements, *Prosperity, Depression and the New Deal: The USA 1890–1954* (London: Hodder Education, 2005), 11.

Roosevelt's nomination acceptance speech

On the farms, in the large, metropolitan areas, in the smaller cities and in the villages, millions of our citizens cherish the hope that their old standards of living and of thought have not gone forever. These millions of people cannot and shall not hope in vain. I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people. Let us all here assembled constitute [make] ourselves prophets of a new order of competence and of courage. This is more than a political campaign; it is a call to arms. Give me your help, not to win votes alone but to aim in this crusade to restore America to its own people.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 8.11 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 8.21** Identify the parts of this speech where Roosevelt refers to all of America. Why would he do this?
- 8.22** Identify the parts of this speech where Roosevelt attempts to connect directly with the audience at the convention. Why would he try to do this?
- 8.23** How does Roosevelt attempt to elevate the political and economic issues facing the US at the time into something more abstract and noble? Why would he try to do this?
- 8.24** Explain what you think Roosevelt meant by the phrase 'new deal'.
- 8.25** Evaluate the extent to which this speech explains why Roosevelt won the 1932 presidential election. Use evidence to support your response.

Significant individual ➔

HERBERT HOOVER, 1874–1964

Was the thirty-first US president (1929–1933).

Believed in rugged individualism—the capacity for people to help themselves rather than relying too heavily on welfare from the government.

He said: 'Economic depression cannot be cured by legislative action or executive pronouncement.'

Said about: 'He did ... the wrong things too quickly and the right things too late and too incompletely.' (*Joanne de Pennington, historian*)

Contributed to change by demonstrating that, during the economic crisis, the government needed to do more to help end poverty.



THE NEW DEAL

legislative branch

One of the three branches of state power (the others being executive and judiciary). The legislative branch is generally responsible for proposing and debating bills before they become laws.

Did you know? To reduce the length of the 'lame duck' period, in January 1933 the US Congress adopted the Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution. This shifted Inauguration Day from 4 March to 20 January.

Source 8.13 The Blue Eagle of the National Recovery Administration.



FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT: 'This great nation will endure as it has endured, we will revive and we will prosper.'

Roosevelt had achieved a resounding electoral victory. The Democrats had also gained significant majorities in both houses of Congress. In the House of Representatives the Democrats held 313 seats to the Republicans' 117. The Democrats secured fifty-eight seats in the Senate to the Republicans' thirty-seven. This meant that Roosevelt would have little opposition to his reform program in the *legislative branch* of government.

However, Roosevelt had to wait before being sworn in as president in March 1933. The intervening period between election and inauguration is called the 'lame duck' period. During this period, Hoover attempted to put into place measures to repair the economy, but they failed. Unemployment reached fifteen million over this time, and many of those who had jobs had their wages cut. Strikes spread in many cities, and businesses continued to collapse. In February and March 1933, banks around America continued to close. On the day Roosevelt was inaugurated as the thirty-second US president, thirty-eight states shut down their banks.¹³

THE HUNDRED DAYS

In the first one hundred days of his presidency (8 March to 16 June 1933), Roosevelt announced a range of sweeping reforms designed to halt the downward slide of the American economy and slowly begin the process of recovery. His first act was to close down all the banks in the US until government officials had checked over them. This halted the collapse of the banking system and started to restore badly needed confidence in this vital sector of the economy. Roosevelt then went on to enact a series of initiatives known collectively as the First New Deal.

THE FIRST NEW DEAL

DATE	LEGISLATION/INITIATIVES	FUNCTION
9 March 1933	Emergency Banking Act	This gave the Treasury the power to investigate all banks. The government took over bank debts.
31 March 1933	Civilian Conservation Corps	This gave jobs to young men on infrastructure projects all over the country. They were paid US\$30 per week.
12 May 1933	Federal Emergency Relief Administration	Funding was given to the states to provide relief programs and construction jobs for the unemployed.
12 May 1933	Agricultural Adjustment Administration	This encouraged farmers to reduce their output so that prices for produce would rise.
18 May 1933	Tennessee Valley Authority	This planned to build sixteen dams on the Tennessee River, providing jobs and electricity to the region.
16 June 1933	Public Works Administration	This government agency was set up to provide jobs through construction and infrastructure projects.
16 June 1933	National Recovery Administration	This provided codes of practice for industry—such as fair competition, wages and hours per week—and banned child labour and collective bargaining. Its 'Blue Eagle' stamp became an iconic symbol of the government's recovery efforts.
16 June 1933	Glass-Steagall Act	This prevented banks from investing in the stock exchange. The government guaranteed all bank deposits up to US\$5000.



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FIRST NEW DEAL

Roosevelt's first one hundred days was the most productive in presidential history up to that point. With majorities in both houses of Congress, he was able to get his reforms through with minimal opposition. The First New Deal certainly had its successes:

- It restored confidence in the banking sector, and fewer banks shut their doors.
- People began depositing money instead of withdrawing it.
- Hundreds of thousands of jobs were created, and millions of people were saved from losing their homes or their land.
- As the price of agricultural produce rose, farmers were better off.
- Under the Public Works Administration, thirteen thousand schools and fifty thousand miles of road were built.¹⁴

There were some negative outcomes of the First New Deal as well, which Roosevelt's critics were quick to point out:

- Many of the so-called *alphabet agencies* overlapped in terms of jurisdiction and function. Government agencies were spending hundreds of millions of dollars, and not all of this was properly reviewed.
- Money given to the state governments for poverty relief did not always make it into the hands of the neediest.
- Many of the commerce codes established under the National Recovery Administration (NRA) were written in haste, and were often unworkable when applied in daily business situations. Some were deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

Regardless of its actual impact, the First New Deal was popular with voters. One-half of Congress was up for re-election in November 1934. The Democrat Party gained nine seats in the House of Representatives (a 322 to 103 seat majority over the Republicans) and nine seats in the Senate (a sixty-nine to twenty-five majority over the Republicans). This prompted Roosevelt to say of the New Deal, 'Everyone is against it except the voters!'¹⁵

alphabet agencies

The nickname, often derisive, for the institutions set up by Roosevelt to alleviate the Great Depression.

Did you know? One of the most popular actions in Roosevelt's first year as president was the Twenty-first Amendment, which repealed the Eighteenth Amendment. This meant that Prohibition was legally at an end.



Source 8.14 Clifford Berryman, 'The Spirit of the New Deal', *The Washington Star*, 25 July 1933

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 8.14 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 8.26** Identify the three figures in this cartoon.
- 8.27** Describe how they have been drawn. Why might the cartoonist have drawn them this way?
- 8.28** What is the cartoon trying to imply about the New Deal and the NRA in particular?
- 8.29** Analyse the extent to which the First New Deal was a success. Use evidence to support your response.



THE SECOND NEW DEAL

Roosevelt faced criticism about the First New Deal from those who thought it did too much and from those who thought it did too little. Recovery was sluggish in the US, with more than ten million still unemployed in 1935. In his State of the Union address to Congress in January 1935, Roosevelt pointed out the gains made by the First New Deal. He outlined how the role of government was to help ensure the livelihood of all Americans, to protect them from the hardships and accidents of life, and to ensure decent homes.¹⁶ However, Roosevelt acknowledged that the US economy had a long way to go before it had recovered. Roosevelt announced a new range of measures designed to alleviate the poverty still faced by millions of the poorest Americans. These measures became known as the Second New Deal.

THE SECOND NEW DEAL		
DATE	LEGISLATION/INITIATIVES	FUNCTION
8 April 1935	Works Progress Administration	Given US\$4.8 billion by Congress, this agency provided employment for eight million workers in public building projects.
July 1935	Wagner National Labor Relations Act	This confirmed the right to collective bargaining, and allowed workers to join a union of their choice.
August 1935	Social Security Act	This introduced federally funded old age pensions and unemployment benefits (the dole).
August 1935	Revenue Act	This raised the top level of income tax from 63 per cent to 79 per cent. Taxes were also introduced on estates and corporate profits.
August 1935	Banking Act	This created a Federal Reserve Board that had significant powers over state banks.

These policies went much further than the First New Deal, and provided badly-needed support for those who had missed out on government help. The achievements of the Works Progress Administration were impressive. In seven years, 2500 hospitals, 5900 schools, 350 airports, 570,000 miles of rural roads and 8000 parks were built.¹⁷

THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN OF 1936

In June 1936, Roosevelt was elected as the Democratic nominee for the presidential election that year. His Republican opponent was Alf Landon. On the back of his Second New Deal policies, Roosevelt campaigned on the basis that he was helping the common man while the Republican Party only cared about the interests of rich individuals and big business. Despite negative press coverage, Roosevelt won in a landslide. He received 27,750,000 votes to Landon's 16,600,000. In the Electoral College, Roosevelt won 523 votes to eight. The Democrat Party extended its control of both houses of Congress. In the House of Representatives the Democrats held 331 seats to the Republicans' eighty-nine, and in the Senate seventy-six seats to sixteen. This was the most one-sided electoral victory in US federal politics.



➔ Alf Landon, the Republican nominee for the presidency in 1936.



THE OPPONENTS OF THE NEW DEAL

Despite this resounding electoral victory, Roosevelt faced opponents from the left who argued that he was not doing enough to dismantle capitalism and redistribute the wealth of America evenly, and from the right who believed that the New Deal policies were exacerbating and prolonging the effects of the Great Depression.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 8.30** Explain the similarities and differences between the First New Deal and Second New Deal.
- 8.31** Who opposed the New Deals, and why?
- 8.32** In your opinion, which opponent was the most dangerous for Roosevelt? Explain your answer.

OPPONENTS OF THE NEW DEAL

HUEY LONG

Nicknamed 'the Kingfish', Long was the governor of Louisiana. He started the 'Share our Wealth' campaign, which aimed to confiscate money from those earning over US\$3 million and redistribute it to the poor. The wealthy would also be taxed heavily. Long was assassinated in 1935.

➔ Huey Long on the cover of *Time* magazine, April 1935.



SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS

Members of the socialist and communist parties in America predictably thought that Roosevelt had merely saved and protected capitalism rather than dismantled the whole system. These extreme-left groups did not have enough support to challenge the Democrats during elections.

FATHER CHARLES COUGHLIN

Father Coughlin had a radio program called 'The Golden Hour of the Little Flower', which had around thirty-five million regular listeners. Initially a supporter of the New Deal, by 1934 Coughlin felt that Roosevelt was not doing enough for the poor. However,



Coughlin started to lose support for his anti-Semitic attacks on the Jewish members of Roosevelt's administration.

⤴ Father Charles Coughlin, the radio priest.

OPPONENTS OF THE NEW DEAL

OLD AGE REVOLVING PENSIONS

Started by Dr Francis Townsend, this group focused on the needs of pensioners who felt they had been left out by the New Deal. Townsend wanted Americans to retire at age sixty and receive \$200 per month from the government. This had to be spent on US-made products.



⤴ Dr. Francis Townsend.

AMERICAN LIBERTY LEAGUE

Similar to big business, the Liberty League thought that the New Deal had gone too far. Many members of the League were conservative Democrats



like Alfred Smith who wanted to protect Americans' right to their own property and wealth. Smith went so far as to support the Republican candidates in the 1936 and 1940 presidential election campaigns.

⤴ Alfred Smith, Democrat and member of the Liberty League.

REPUBLICANS AND BIG BUSINESS

Most Republicans opposed the measures of the New Deal but did not have the numbers in Congress to block the legislation. Some, but not all, big business representatives opposed the New Deal because of the higher corporate taxes and strength it gave to unions. They helped take cases against the New Deal to the Supreme Court to be deemed unconstitutional.

THE US SUPREME COURT

Roosevelt's most persistent and potentially damaging opponent was the Supreme Court. The US system of government is based on the idea of checks and balances. This ensures that each of the three branches of government at the federal level—executive, legislative and judicial— is balanced out by the other two so that no branch, political party or individual can gain too much power.


In 1935, the Supreme Court heard a number of cases brought against New Deal legislation. The nine Justices had been appointed by Roosevelt's predecessors—most of whom were Republicans. Of the nine, four were hostile to the New Deal; they were known as 'The Four Horsemen'. They were later joined by two others, including Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes. This gave Roosevelt's opponents a majority in the Supreme Court, and this was enough to deem his legislation unconstitutional.

Did you know? The nickname for Roosevelt's staunchest opponents comes from the Book of Revelations in the Bible. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, representing War, Famine, Pestilence and Death, appear at the end of the world on Judgement Day.

THE US SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

JUDICIAL BRANCH


Supreme Court



- Eight Justices and one Chief Justice.
- Highest court of appeals.
- Can deem legislation unconstitutional by a simple majority.
- Can serve as long as they exhibit 'good behaviour', essentially until they choose to retire.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

President



- Maximum of two four-year terms.
- Must win majority of the Electoral College vote.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Congress



- Senate comprises one hundred members (two from each state).
- House of Representatives comprises 435 members (a number from each state depending on population).

A SYSTEM OF CHECKS AND BALANCES

President nominates Justices when a vacancy comes up.

The president can veto congressional legislation.

Congress can overrule presidential veto with a two-thirds majority in both houses.

The senate approves a president's nomination with a simple majority.

Congress can potentially overrule, or render obsolete, a Supreme Court ruling by passing an amendment to the Constitution. For example, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution (1865 and 1868) overruled the ruling *Dred Scott v Sandford* (1857).

DID YOU KNOW? Until 2017, a supermajority of sixty votes (out of one hundred) in the Senate was required to approve a presidential nominee for the Supreme Court. Republican senators changed this to a simple majority of fifty-one in April 2017 to approve President Donald Trump's nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court.



One of the most important cases was *Schechter Poultry Corporation v United States* in May 1935. Referred to in the press as the ‘sick chickens case’, this involved the four Schechter brothers appealing the decision of the NRA that they broke the business code by selling diseased poultry. The Supreme Court found that the NRA was unconstitutional because it interfered with the states’ rights to regulate commerce within their jurisdiction.¹⁸ Another important case was *United States v Butler* in January 1936, where the Supreme Court deemed the Agricultural Adjustment Act was illegal for similar reasons. Over the course of eighteen months, the Supreme Court found eleven pieces of legislation unconstitutional. This was remarkable because the Supreme Court had found only sixty laws unconstitutional in the 140 years before 1935.¹⁹

THE JUDICIAL PROCEDURES REFORM BILL

Many laws of the Second New Deal made up for those that had been struck down in the Supreme Court. Nevertheless, Roosevelt decided to use the increased majority the Democrats had gained in Congress in the 1936 elections to ensure that the Supreme Court could not continue to interfere with his policies in the future.

In February 1937, Roosevelt introduced the Judicial Procedures Reform Bill to Congress. This bill would force all Justices over the age of seventy to retire. Six of the nine Justices were over the age of seventy, including the ‘Four Horsemen’ and Chief Justice Hughes. The bill would also increase the number of Justices to fifteen, which would mean that Roosevelt would be able to nominate thirteen new Justices. Many Americans, even those in the Democrat Party, thought that this would give the president far too much power. They accused Roosevelt of **packing the courts** for his own ends. The Senate, which was strongly held by the Democrats, voted down the bill seventy to twenty.

What also worked against the bill was that throughout 1937 the Justices started to uphold important pieces of New Deal legislation, such as the Wagner Act, in a decision passed down on 12 April. This was popularly known as ‘the switch in time that saved nine’. Moreover, one of the most conservative Justices, Willis van Devanter, announced his retirement. This would give Roosevelt a Supreme Court Justice pick, thereby giving him another supporter in the Supreme Court.

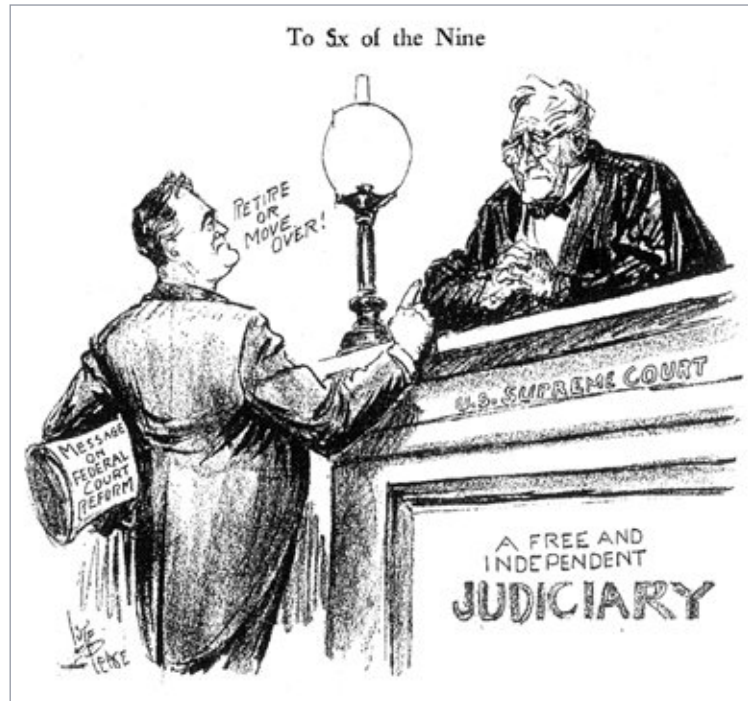
packing the courts

When a politician fills a court with supporters so that legislation is not deemed unconstitutional.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 8.33** What is the function of the Supreme Court in the federal US political system?
- 8.34** How did the Supreme Court interfere with Roosevelt’s legislative program?
- 8.35** Why did Democrats in Congress not support Roosevelt’s Judicial Procedures Reform Bill?
- 8.36** How did the Supreme Court’s opposition to Roosevelt come to an end?

Source 8.15 'The Illegal Act' from *Punch* magazine, June 1935.



Source 8.16 'To Six of the Nine', a US political cartoon critical of Roosevelt's plan to reform the Supreme Court, 1937.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 8.15 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 8.37 What does the sea represent in this cartoon?
- 8.38 Who is Roosevelt pushing back into the sea?
- 8.39 With reference to the caption, why is Roosevelt doing this and how does he feel about it?
- 8.40 What might be the 'illegal act' referred to in the cartoon's title?
- 8.41 How does the cartoonist feel about Roosevelt's struggle with the Supreme Court? Explain your answer.
- 8.42 *Punch* was a British publication. How might this affect the cartoonist's views on American politics?

Using Source 8.16 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 8.43 Identify the two figures in this cartoon.
- 8.44 Describe how they have been drawn. Why have they been drawn this way?
- 8.45 Who are the 'six' referred to in the caption?
- 8.46 What is meant by the phrase, 'A free and independent judiciary'?
- 8.47 How does the cartoonist feel about Roosevelt's struggle with the Supreme Court? Explain your answer.

Significant individual

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, 1882–1945

Was the thirty-second US president (1933–1945).

Believed that the government should alleviate the effects of the Great Depression.

He said: 'The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much, it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.'

Said about: '[Roosevelt] gave back to his countrymen their hope and energy.' (*Hugh Brogan, historian*)

Contributed to change by vastly expanding the role played by the US government in the lives of American citizens.



TALKIES AND TECHNICOLOR

DOROTHY IN *THE WIZARD OF OZ* (1939): 'Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore.'

POPULAR CULTURE

The Great Depression meant that most people did not have much money. Nevertheless, what little money they did have was often spent consuming popular culture to escape the difficulties of their lives. To connect with their audiences, the film industry worked hard to keep interest and profits during the Great Depression. Many films in this period focused on **underdogs** fighting back. They used new technology to entertain and stay viable. Sound had been introduced in 1927, and by the late 1930s most films were made as **talkies**. This was followed by the introduction of colour and, although most films were still made in black and white, two of the biggest movies of 1939 were made in **Technicolor**: *The Wizard of Oz* and *Gone with the Wind*. Comic books were also a powerful medium of escape. Characters such as Superman, Captain America, Wonder Woman, Captain Marvel and Batman were all introduced in the late 1930s as idealistic superheroes in a world full of obstacles and perils. This period is often described as the Golden Age of Comic Books.

Did you know? Many characters in Hollywood movies were played by people of different nationalities. Many white people were made-up to play Asian or black characters rather than hiring people from those nationalities.

➔ Movie poster for *Gone with the Wind* (1939).



THE HAYS CODE AND MISCEGENATION

The Hays Code, as the Motion Picture Production Code became known, was introduced to control the moral values presented and expressed in Hollywood films. It was introduced in 1930 but only strictly enforced after 1934.

📌 **Source 8.17** *Hays Code*, https://productioncode.dhwritings.com/multipleframes_productioncode.php

Some elements of the Hays Code, 1930

[On bedrooms]

In themselves they are perfectly innocent. Their suggestion may be kept innocent. However under certain circumstances they are bad dramatic locations. (a) Their use in comedy or farce (on the principle of the so-called bedroom farce), is wrong, because they suggest sexual laxity and obscenity.

[On religion]

No film or episode in a film should be allowed to throw ridicule on any religious faith honestly maintained.

[On sex]

Miscegenation (sex relationships between the white and black races) is forbidden. ... Scenes of actual childbirth in fact or in silhouette, are never to be presented.

underdog

A person or character who seems unlikely to win or succeed.

talkies

Films that featured dialogue and sound.

Technicolor

A process that allows films to be presented in colour.

miscegenation

Marriage or sexual relations between people of different races.

FILM STUDY

8.48 Both *Gone with the Wind* and *The Wizard of Oz* are escapist movies, albeit in completely different ways. *Gone with the Wind* romanticises the way of life in the pre-Civil War south, showing African Americans as compliant and childlike. *The Wizard of Oz* is a fantasy with an underlying theme of the battle between good and evil.

Examine one of these films and suggest ways in which the film reflects the events, attitudes and values of the US in the 1930s.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 8.17 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 8.49** What were three things that the Hays Code did not allow in films?
- 8.50** What values are suggested by these restrictions?
- 8.51** Which two groups are being marginalised by the code? What impact did this have on their representation in motion pictures?



ANNA MAY WONG: ACTRESS

Anna May Wong was born Wong Liu Tsong on 3 January 1905 to Chinese-American parents. She started in silent films but, unlike many other actors in silent films, made the transition to 'talkies'. Anna faced racist attitudes that led to her being typecast as a retiring 'butterfly lady' or an evil 'dragon lady'. She was a well-respected actress, and had a large fan base following her acting and her fashion sense. Due to miscegenation laws, Anna was often prevented from playing main roles, as she would have to kiss someone of another race. However, she stood out as an Asian actress in a Hollywood dominated by white actresses.

MEDIA RESPONSE

8.52 Watch a film clip of Anna May Wong on YouTube (e.g. *The Toll of the Sea* [1922]). Discuss how the film connects to the social context: historical time period, Hollywood and the Hays Code, and racism.



Anna May Wong, 1932.



Walt Disney, 1946.

THE DISNEY DREAM

THE QUEEN IN *SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS* (1937): 'Yes! One bite, and all your dreams will come true.'

WALT DISNEY

Walter Elias 'Walt' Disney was born in Chicago on 5 December 1901. He developed a passion for art and stage at a young age, taking evening classes in art while still at high school. He became interested in animation after working on animated commercials. He started Laugh-O-Gram Studio, which failed, then moved to Hollywood with his brother Roy to try again with Disney Studios. While there he met and married Lillian Bounds. Disney continued to work on animations and other projects until his death on 15 December 1966.

DISNEY AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The first major Disney animated character was called Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, but when Walt Disney lost the rights to that character he created Mickey Mouse to replace him. Mickey Mouse was a popular character, but he had serious competition from other popular characters such as Betty Boop and Felix the Cat. Walt Disney sought to gain more attention for his animations by being the first animator to use sound in the 1928 film *Steamboat Willie*. He became one of the first animators to use Technicolor when he made his 1932 film *Silly Symphony: Flowers and Trees*. When the Great Depression hit the industry, studios had to keep innovating to maintain audience interest. Disney studios worked hard to market Mickey Mouse with toys, clothing and other merchandise, and this approach helped to keep the studio going. In 1933 Disney



made a short animated film called *Three Little Pigs*. This film, in which three little pigs fight against the Big Bad Wolf, grabbed public attention, as it seemed to epitomise the spirit of the Great Depression.

FOLLY OR FAME

Walt Disney decided to be the first animator to create a full-length animated film. The project was considered such a ridiculous idea by the rest of the film community that it was called 'Disney's Folly'. Nobody believed a full-length animation could be made, thinking it would bankrupt any studio that tried. Disney worked on the project from 1934 to 1937. When he ran out of money he had to call in investors to finance the completion of the film. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) became a blockbuster hit and was so popular that it was awarded an honorary Oscar at the Academy Awards. This film dramatically changed the animation landscape with its engaging full-length story and well-developed characters with different personalities, animation and physicality. This promoted Walt Disney and his studio far beyond his competitors, leading the way for Disney Studios to become an animation powerhouse. It also started the 'Disneyfication' of traditional fairytales. The antidote to the poison was a 'kiss, symbolic of true love' rather than the arranged marriage characterising the original stories.²⁰



Source 8.18 Poster for the Disney film *Three Little Pigs* (1933).

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

8.53 What made Walt Disney's works more significant and memorable than his competitors' works?

8.54 How do the ideas presented in his films reference the US during the Great Depression? Compare and contrast *Three Little Pigs* with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

BELIEFS AND VALUES

8.55 What beliefs and values are being constructed by films like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*?

Did you know? Mickey Mouse was originally going to be called Mortimer Mouse.



Source 8.19 The Disney movie *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937).

Source 8.20 Walt Disney with the seven dwarfs on the cover of *Time* magazine, 1937.



THE NEW DEAL: SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

ED JOHNSON, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNOR OF COLORADO: 'The New Deal is the worst fraud ever perpetrated on the American people.'

The New Deal was controversial in the 1930s, and even today historians are divided on whether Roosevelt's policies brought the US out of the economic depression. One of Roosevelt's most vocal critics was Republican Senator Robert A. Taft, who thought that the New Deal was 'largely revolutionary' and made by 'sinister bureaucrats' to create a 'totalitarian tyranny' in America.²¹ While the rate of business and bank closures declined over the course of the 1930s, some critics have pointed out that unemployment in the US in 1939 still stood at 17 per cent of the working population. Others decried what they saw as the enormous waste of taxpayer money to no real effect.

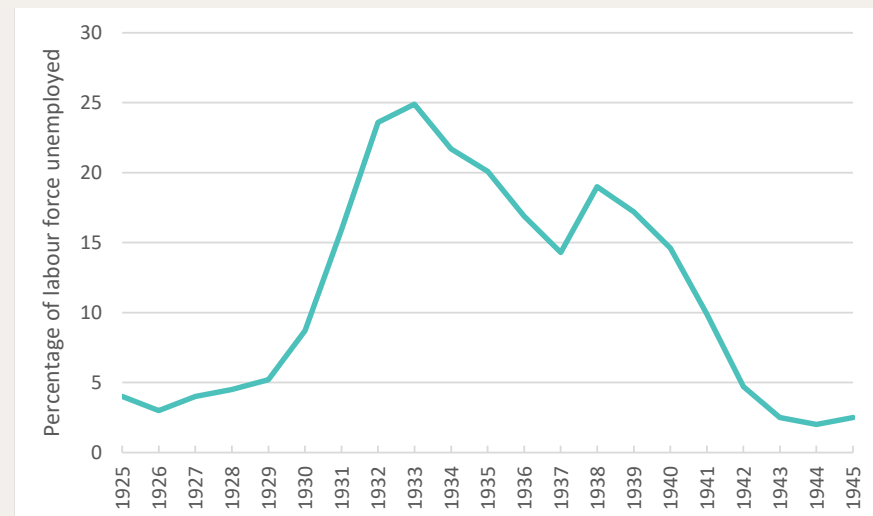
HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 8.21 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 8.56** What overall trend does this graph describe over the course of the 1930s?
- 8.57** What happened to unemployment figures when the New Deals were introduced?
- 8.58** What caused the climb in unemployment during 1937?
- 8.59** What had the most significant impact on reducing unemployment according to this graph?

Source 8.21 Terry Fiehn et al., *The USA Between the Wars 1919–1941* (London: John Murray, 1998), 116.

Unemployment in the US during the 1930s



Source 8.22 'What we need is another pump by Ray Evans', published in *The Columbia Dispatch*, 1933.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 8.22 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 8.60** List the key elements of this cartoon. What do each of these elements signify? This could be drawn up in a table.
- 8.61** Describe how the two figures have been drawn. Why do you think the cartoonist has drawn them this way?
- 8.62** What does the phrase 'priming the pump' mean?
- 8.63** What is the cartoonist trying to say about the New Deal policies?
- 8.64** Do you think this is a fair assessment of Roosevelt's policies? Explain your answer.




Michael Parrish on the New Deal

Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal failed the American people. In six years of effort, economic prosperity had not returned and the Depression lingered. Nearly ten million citizens, over seventeen per cent of the labour force, remained out of work in 1939. A much larger percentage remained in 1939 as in 1936 'ill-housed, ill-clothed, ill-nourished'. Conservative critics of the New Deal offered a simple explanation for this. Too much government regulation, too much reform and too much radical reform from the president and his administration had destroyed the confidence of businessmen, undermined the incentive to invest, and thereby prolonged the country's misery.

Hugh Brogan on the New Deal

Later critics have blamed the New Deal for not going further, faster: it is always so easy to demand the impossible, and so tempting to play down the importance of starting something ... It is better to bring out its actual achievements. Of these unquestionably the most important was the preservation of American democracy, the American Constitution and American capitalism ... [Roosevelt] must be placed along with Washington and Lincoln as a shaper, preserver and defender of the American Constitution and political system ... He enabled the American government to assume the responsibility of safeguarding the welfare of the American people in a sense far more radical than that envisaged by the Founding Fathers, but not in a fashion with what they most valued—republican government. As a side-effect of all this, the federal bureaucracy grew, and Washington became a great city at last. More important, by his gallantry, energy, eloquence and warmth of heart, he not only transformed the prestige of his office but galvanized an entire generation with faith in their country, their leader and their political system. In this way he laid the foundations for the achievements of the next generation: the impetus he gave to politics would not be exhausted for another thirty years. Thanks to Franklin Roosevelt, in short, six years (1933 to 1938) transformed America from a country which had been laid low by troubles which its own incompetence had brought on it, and which it was quite unable to cope with, to a country, as it proved, superbly equipped to meet the worst shocks that the modern world could hurl at it. It was enough.

America's entry into World War II certainly played a key role in bringing an end to the economic depression. Unemployment eventually fell below 2 per cent, and GNP rose from US\$85.2 billion in 1938 to US\$213.6 billion in 1945.²² While the New Deal may not have brought America out of the Great Depression, it did alleviate its severity. The role played by the US federal government in the lives of ordinary people, along with the powers of the office of the presidency, expanded enormously during the 1930s. Not all people benefitted equally. Many women and African Americans lost their jobs first, and the NRA and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) favoured white males as the first to be rehired. The NRA enforced strict racial segregation while the CCC refused to hire women at all.²³ However, for all of its flaws and shortcomings, it is possible that the New Deal prevented America from falling further into social, political and economic disaster. It also prepared America for the role it would play in defeating the **Axis Powers** in World War II.

 **Source 8.23** Michael Parish, *Anxious Decades: America in Prosperity and Depression 1920–1941*, cited in Derrick Murphy et al., *United States 1776–1992* (London: Collins Educational, 2001), 205.

 **Source 8.24** Hugh Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA* (London: Penguin Books, 1999), 549–550.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— INTERPRETATIONS

Using Source 8.23 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

8.65 Identify the phrases in this extract from Parrish that indicate his opinion on the New Deal.

8.66 What reasoning does Parrish offer to support this point of view?

8.67 What facts or evidence could you use to challenge Parrish's argument?

Using Source 8.24 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

8.68 Identify the phrases in this extract from Brogan that indicate his opinion on the New Deal.

8.69 What reasoning does Brogan offer to support this point of view?

8.70 What facts or evidence could you use to challenge Brogan's argument?

8.71 Evaluate the extent to which Roosevelt's New Deal policies succeeded in their aims. Use evidence to support your response.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

8.72 What criticisms did Senator Taft level at the New Deal policies? Do you think he was justified? Explain your answer.

8.73 In what way did Roosevelt's New Deal fail to end the economic depression?

8.74 How did America's entry into World War II help alleviate the effects of the Depression?

Axis Powers

The alliance of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan during World War II.



THE RAID ON PEARL HARBOR

ROOSEVELT: 'December 7, 1941—a date that will live in infamy!'

It was a Sunday, 7 December 1941. As the day dawned over the massive US Navy base of Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu, many sailors were still sleeping off the effects of partying the night before. At 7:40 am, the first wave of 183 Japanese aircraft started their bombing and torpedo runs. Surprise was complete, and they did significant damage to US ships, aircraft and facilities. The second wave of 167 aircraft struck two hours later and added to the destruction. In less than three hours the Japanese aircraft—operating from six aircraft carriers—destroyed four battleships and damaged three more. Many smaller ships were also lost. More than 180 US aircraft on the ground were destroyed and another ninety damaged. Approximately 3300 US servicemen were killed. The Japanese lost only twenty-nine aircraft during the attack.²⁴

Tensions between the US and Japan had been rising during the 1930s. Japanese aggression in China (1931 and 1937) and French Indochina (1940–1941) threatened American interests in the Pacific and east Asia. Roosevelt's response on 26 July 1941 was to cut all trade ties with Japan, including oil. Possessing no oil resources of its own, Japan realised that it would need to invade the Dutch East Indies (now known as Indonesia), which would mean war with the Western powers. The raid on Pearl Harbor in December was an attempt to destroy the US fleet before it could intervene in Japanese attacks in south-east Asia.²⁵

However, for all its seeming success, the raid on Pearl Harbor was a strategic blunder. The US Navy's aircraft carriers, which proved to be the most important weapon in the Pacific War, were not in port at the time. The Japanese aircraft also missed the oil refinery and storage site, as well as the ship repair facilities. The US fleet suffered a significant blow but the ships and installations necessary to rebuild the fleet survived. The raid on Pearl Harbor led, three-and-a-half years later, to the atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. From isolation and economic depression between the wars, by 1945 the US would emerge as the strongest, richest nation on the planet.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

8.75 What losses did the Americans suffer as a result of the raid on Pearl Harbor?

8.76 Why did Japan bomb Pearl Harbor?

8.77 Why was the raid on Pearl Harbor a tactical success but a strategic blunder for Japan?

➔ **Source 8.25** The battleship *USS West Virginia* on fire after being hit by six torpedoes and two bombs.



CHAPTER 8 REVIEW

The Wall Street Crash of October 1929 sparked one of the worst economic crises of the modern world. Initially restricted to investors, the damage caused by the stock market collapse quickly dragged down the US banking system. This pulled down the economies of the US and many other countries. The consequences were devastating. By the start of 1933, unemployment in the US was 24 per cent. Wages for those who kept their jobs fell, and businesses and bank closures reached their peak.

This was the situation when Franklin D. Roosevelt was sworn in as president on 4 March 1933. He quickly embarked on one of the boldest legislative programs in American history. A raft of laws and institutions was created to bring relief to the American people and reform the economy. Roosevelt had his critics but the New Deal brought jobs and hope to millions of unemployed people. Roosevelt won a landslide election based on his policies in 1936, but lost some support for his heavy-handed response to opposition from the Supreme Court. Many Americans forgot their troubles with a trip to the movies, where sound, colour and animated features were innovations. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor not only brought America into World War II but also helped America banish the vestiges of the Great Depression. The US later emerged from World War II as one of the world's superpowers.

KEY SUMMARY POINTS

- The Wall Street Crash brought down the US banking system.
- The banking collapse plunged the US into a severe economic depression.
- Roosevelt introduced his New Deal policies to relieve the worst effects of the Great Depression.
- The New Deal policies were criticised by some Americans and deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.
- There is debate surrounding the effect of the New Deal.
- The Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor brought the US into World War II.

REVIEW

8.78 Using the information presented in this chapter, create a series of flashcards. On one side write down a key fact (a date, event, individual, institution, law, etc.). On the other write down the significance of that event. Swap your flashcards with another student and test each other on your factual knowledge of the US during the 1930s.

EXTENDED RESPONSE

8.79 Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence, and a clear conclusion.

- Explain how the Wall Street Crash contributed to the economic depression.
- Explain the key features of Roosevelt's New Deal policies.
- Explain the effect that the New Deal had on the lives of the American people.

ESSAY

8.80 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- Historian David Nasaw argues, 'The New Deal's accomplishments, while substantial, went only so far'. To what extent do you agree with this statement?
- 'Roosevelt's New Deal policies breached the US Constitution and did more harm than good.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?
- In his evaluation of the New Deal, historian Paul Johnson argues that it took a world war to bring the US out of the economic depression. To what extent do you agree with his argument?

EXTENSION

8.81 This chapter briefly touched on the impact of the New Deal policies on a number of different social groups living in the US at the time. Research one of these groups in more detail and present your findings to the class in a speech, slideshow or poster. Be sure to compare and contrast the group's experiences before and after the New Deal policies came into effect. Select from:

- women
- African Americans (in northern or southern states)
- Native Americans
- recently arrived immigrants
- children.



CULTURAL EXPRESSION



← **Source 1** *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)* by Pablo Picasso, 1907. © Succession Picasso/ Copyright Agency, 2021.

British art historian Christopher Green on *Les Femmes d'Alger*

Those on the right, especially the crouching nude, seem literally to have been dislocated, pulled apart; one feature is wrenched out of alignment with another. This is the result of an attempt by Picasso to fuse views from varying angles, as if he, the artist, or they, the figures, were in movement.

↑ **Source 2** Christopher Green, 'Alienation and Innovation 1900–1918', in Denise Hooker, ed., *Art of the Western World* (Hutchinson: Sydney, 1991), 366.

KEY POINTS

- In the early twentieth century, rapid economic, political, social and technological changes were reflected in arts and culture.
- Rapid industrialisation and urbanisation often caused feelings of alienation, which was also depicted in the arts.
- Art and literature were sometimes significantly changed by the experiences of events such as World War I and the Great Depression.

KEY TERMS

Arts

Creative and imaginative activities, including visual arts such as architecture, sketches, paintings and photographs; literature such as plays, poetry and novels; and sound through music.

Culture

The totality of human thought, activity, expression, communication and customs.

Cultural expression

How the arts, ideas and customs are shown or expressed.

School

In culture, 'school' refers to the followers of a particular art style. For example, the Bauhaus school comprised artists, architects and designers who followed the styles and principles of the Bauhaus movement.



'In 1913, the French writer Charles Peguy remarked that "the world has changed less since the time of Jesus Christ than it has in the last thirty years". He was speaking of all the conditions of Western capitalist society: its idea of itself, its sense of history, its beliefs, pieties, and modes of production— and its art.'

AUSTRALIAN-BORN ART CRITIC ROBERT HUGHES¹

INTRODUCTION

The *fin de siècle*—the years before 1900—mark a turning point between the end of one era and the beginning of another. The last years of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century experienced rapid economic, political, social and technological change. The sense of this accelerating innovation was echoed in the arts.

Great scientific developments included the quantum theory of energy and Einstein's theory of relativity, and technological advances such as automobiles and powered flight, but the cultural lives of ordinary people were also changed by inventions such as radio and inexpensive cameras.

ART NOUVEAU

New technologies encouraged new styles in art and architecture. From approximately 1890 to 1910, Art Nouveau ('New Art') self-consciously rejected past styles to create simplified and stylised works. Architecture used 'modern' materials such as iron and glass rather than stone and brick, and elevators allowed buildings to rise above a few stories to become 'skyscrapers'.



Source 3

One of the earliest 'skyscrapers', the Wainwright Building in St. Louis, Missouri, was designed by Louis Sullivan in 1891. Sheet glass provided a thin film hung on a steel skeleton. It was the opposite of the traditional use of stone and brick that previously supported a building.

CUBISM

Until the twentieth century, art had been viewed from one *perspective* made by a stationary onlooker. However, in 1907 Pablo Picasso painted *Les Femmes d'Alger*, the first cubist painting. Rather than one perspective, it consists of all possible views of the objects. It also reflects the artist's interest in African art. British art historian Christopher Green describes the figures in the painting as 'stylised'.

FUTURISM

Cubism fed into several art movements that represented extreme political beliefs. On the political right were the Italian futurists, who believed violence had cleansing virtues. They used cubist techniques such as multiple viewpoints and the fragmentation of space, but added mobility and fluidity. Umberto Boccioni's 1913 sculpture *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* has almost 'aerodynamic' legs.



Source 4 Boccioni claimed his sculpture *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* embodied 'not the construction of the body, but the construction of the action of the body'.

fin de siècle

A French term meaning 'end of the century', marking the turning point between the end of one era and the beginning of another.

perspective

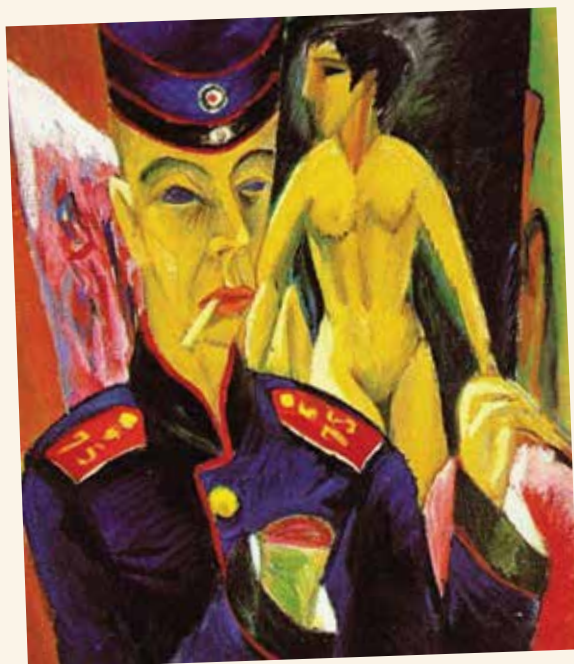
Representing three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface that gives the right impression of their height, depth and position in relation to each other.



EXPRESSIONISM

On the political left, Cubism influenced expressionists who believed their role was to oppose society's materialism and militarism. Emerging in Germany in about 1910, this style was adopted for art, poetry and theatre. It expresses emotional experience rather than physical reality, so that likeness is distorted to express the artist's feeling about the object. Edvard Munch's lithograph *The Scream* (1895) is an early example. The face and scenery are distorted to express anguish rather than beauty or a pleasant view, which was the previously accepted role for art. Expressionist artists wanted their works 'to face the stark facts of our existence, and to express their compassion for the disinherited and the ugly'.²

Ernst Kirchner's 1915 painting *Self-portrait as a Soldier* expresses what war could do to an artist. The playwright Bertolt Brecht is best known for *The Threepenny Opera*, first performed in Berlin in 1928. Brecht described the work as an opera about and for beggars, and appealed to society's disadvantaged.



Source 5 In Ernst Kirchner's 1915 painting *Self-portrait as a Soldier*, Kirchner depicts himself with his right hand removed at the wrist as a comment on what war could do to an artist.

DADAISM

Dadaism grew out of World War I. The word 'dada' had little real meaning, perhaps like a child's first words or to convey nonsense and irrationality, and was used by artists and poets from 1916 to represent an 'anti-art' movement. Dadaist artists such as George Grosz revolted against the horrors of war, and wanted to smash the society that had made it possible. Grosz's 1920 drawing *Cross Section* is fragmented with brutal depictions of power and powerlessness, and of wealth and poverty.

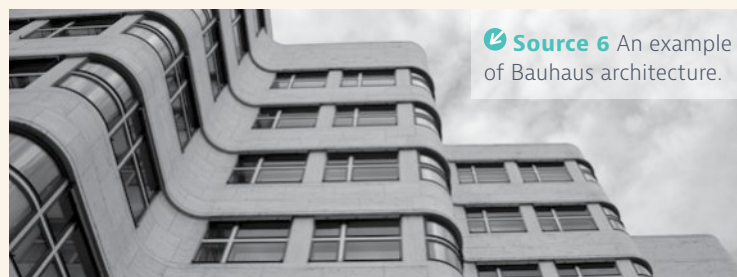
Did you know? Dadaist Hugo Ball performed a series of his dadaist poems on stage in Zurich, Switzerland, on 23 June 1916. His 'sound poems' did not have recognisable words, but there was a connection between the subject matter and the sound effects. His poem *Wolken* ends 'gluglamen gloglada gleroda glandridi', suggesting the sound of rain from heavy clouds soaking the earth. [A sound recording of Hugo Ball reading *Wolken* can be heard at https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/dada_poetry/]

BAUHAUS

Bauhaus was a German school of design combining function and beauty. It originated in Weimar in 1919 and, like the new German republic, was experimental and questioned traditional values. The architecture is functional, with clean lines and no unnecessary decoration. Furniture might use tubular steel, an uncluttered geometric design and bold primary colours.

In 1925, the Bauhaus moved to Dessau, and the new studios built there were modelled on factory buildings with walls of glass. Sometimes criticised for their lack of ornamentation, they are now UNESCO World Heritage-listed.

The Bauhaus style challenged the Nazi ideal. It was considered un-German, and its *avant-garde* style was attacked by those who wanted a return to realism and *classicism*. Its buildings were closed in 1933.



Source 6 An example of Bauhaus architecture.

avant-garde

From the French for 'vanguard' or leader. It refers to any innovative art form, but in particular to new art forms developed in the early twentieth century.

classicism

A style in painting and architecture derived from ancient Greek and Roman architecture.





THE GRIEVING PARENTS

Käthe Kollwitz was a German artist influenced by Expressionism and Bauhaus. Her eighteen-year-old son, Peter, was killed near Ypres, Belgium, in October 1914. Her sculpture, *The Grieving Parents* (1932), is a memorial to her son and features two figures—one is a self-portrait and the other is her husband. The sculpture is a monument to the grief and loss felt by millions of family members who sent young men to war.

Source 7 *The Grieving Parents* by Käthe Kollwitz (c. 1926–1932) in the Vladslo German War Cemetery, Belgium.



ART DECO

Art Deco was a visual arts and design movement originating in France in about 1914, although the name comes from a 1925 exhibition. The style is 'modern', influenced by bold geometry and colours, and its design influenced many objects including buildings, furniture, jewellery, cars and everyday objects such as radios.

Source 8 A metal relief in the lobby of the Empire State Building, the quintessential Art Deco structure, in New York.

SURREALISM

The name is derived from the French meaning 'more than real', and was used in 1924 to describe art and literature that created something more real than reality itself—the conjunction of otherwise disassociated 'realities'. Surrealists were inspired by an earlier French poet who had described a young boy being as 'beautiful as the chance meeting on a dissecting-table of a sewing-machine and an umbrella'.³ Surrealists were also influenced by Freud's studies of psychoanalysis and dreams.

Salvador Dalí is the best-known surrealist artist. His most recognisable work is *The Persistence of Memory* (1931). Its soft, melting watches suggest that time is not fixed or rigid, and seems to be influenced by Albert Einstein's theory of special relativity.



ABSTRACT ART

For some artists, alienation created by the new urban societies could be solved by joy in art. Abstraction reduced art to its essential character and spiritualism. Leading the abstract movement was Piet Mondrian, a Dutch artist who built up his pictures using the simplest elements—straight lines and pure colours.



Source 9 Piet Mondrian's *Composition No. 10: Breakwaters and the Sea* (1915) is an early example of Mondrian's attempts to abstract the essential lines and harmonies from a seascape. At the top of the picture, the sea ripples in and meets the shore with wider spacing at the bottom. However, Mondrian believed that even this abstraction was unsatisfactory. By the 1920s he completely abandoned natural forms, using rectangles and colours to create a pure harmony of art.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

S.38 How did technological innovation influence Art Nouveau as an architectural style?

S.39 Explain the similarities between cubism and futurism.

S.40 How did both expressionism and dadaism reject traditional views of society and art?

S.41 Explain the similarities between the Bauhaus and Art Deco design movements.

S.42 How did both surrealism and abstract art reject common notions of reality?

FILM AND THEATRE

Developments in science, technology and art came together in one art form: cinema. An early example is the 1902 film *A Trip to the Moon*, which was directed by Georges Méliès and influenced by Jules Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon and Round the Moon* (1865) and by H.G. Wells's *The First Men in the Moon* (1901). Méliès used 'wonderful trick effects of fade-outs, dissolves, and other photographic devices' that we now associate with modern film.⁴



Source 10 One of the most famous images from turn-of-the-century film, a still from Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon*.

As a recent invention, film was ideally suited to experimentation, and often broke new ground in content and style. For example, Robert Wiene's 1920 film *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* had sets designed by three expressionist painters, featuring crooked windows, tilting chimneys and eerie light and shadows.



Source 11 Scene from *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*.



Did you know? Many of the ‘founding fathers’ of the Hollywood film industry in the 1920s were Jewish immigrants from the Russian Empire. Louis B. Mayer and Sam Goldwyn, co-founders of MGM Studios in 1924, and the four Warner Brothers all came from poor families that also migrated from the Russian Empire. David O. Selznick was the son of Lithuanian immigrants. Author Neal Gabler, in *An Empire of their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood* (1988), argues that these men came to America and felt like outsiders because of their Jewishness. In Hollywood they ran their own industry, assimilated into the American mainstream, and produced movies that reflected their vision of the American Dream.

CREATIVE TASKS

S.43 Create a visual display of a timeline for the beginnings of the art movements mentioned in this snapshot. Include significant events and inventions that may have influenced the development of the art movements.

S.44 Examples of economic, political or social changes were often reflected in the arts and culture. Select an art movement or even a particular work, and create a visual display that demonstrates this connection.

BALLETS RUSSES



Source 12 A Russian stamp celebrating Sergei Diaghilev. In 1913, the revolutionary musical composer Igor Stravinsky composed *The Rite of Spring* for Ballets Russes. It is also performed in the 1940 Walt Disney production of *Fantasia*.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 13 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

S.45 Using only Cocteau’s description, describe *The Rite of Spring*.

S.46 According to Cocteau, what type of people attended the premiere of the ballet? How did they respond to the performance?

S.47 Explain why *The Rite of Spring* is considered revolutionary.

The Ballets Russes, which was founded by Russian theatre producer Sergei Diaghilev in 1909, performed in Paris and the Americas between 1909 and 1929. The Ballets Russes became one of the most influential ballet companies of the twentieth century. Russian composer Igor Stravinsky composed the ballet and orchestral work *The Rite of Spring: Pictures of Pagan Russia in Two Parts* (1913) and dancer Vaslav Nijinsky choreographed it for the Ballets Russes. The ballet celebrates primitive rituals associated with the arrival of spring, and a young girl is chosen as a sacrificial victim who dances herself to death. Stravinsky’s score includes many new musical features and elements of Russian folk music. It premiered in Paris on 29 May 1913 and shocked many in the audience.

Avant-garde artist and writer Jean Cocteau on the premiere of *The Rite of Spring*

The Rite of Spring was performed ... in a brash, brand-new theatre, too comfortable and too lacking in atmosphere for a Paris audience accustomed to experiencing its theatrical emotions while packed like sardines amidst the warmth of much red plush and gold. ... [T]his deluxe theatre symbolized very strikingly the mistake of pitting a strong, youthful work against a decadent public. An enervated [weak] public that spent its life lolling ... on soft divans ... Such an existence is like digesting one’s lunch in a hammock; lying in a doze, you brush away anything really new as if it were a fly. It’s troublesome. ...

[The audience] rebelled, instantly. It laughed, booed, whistled, imitated the cries of animals ... What had begun as an uproar turned into a veritable battle.

Source 13 Jean Cocteau, ‘The Première of Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring, 29 May 1913’, in Jon E. Lewis, ed., *The Giant Book of the 20th Century* (Sydney: The Book Company International, 1995), 61–62.



LITERATURE

In the first half of the twentieth century, literature was often in the modernist style, reflecting disillusionment with the certainty and conservatism of the nineteenth century. As with art, writers were influenced by rapid changes in science, politics, economics and society. Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859), Karl Marx's writings on socialism, and the psychoanalytical theories of Sigmund Freud influenced literary **modernism**.

modernism


A term used to describe the common characteristics of a number of movements in the creative arts from the start of the twentieth century.

World War I led to an outpouring of poetry and novels, from Rupert Brooke's positive response to war in 'Peace' (1914) to the bitter poetry of men who had served three or four years on the Western Front, such as Wilfred Owen's 'Futility' (1918). Novels such as Germany's Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* and Englishman Robert Graves's *Goodbye to All That* (1929) recognised the unique experience of four years of a world war.

PHOTOGRAPHY

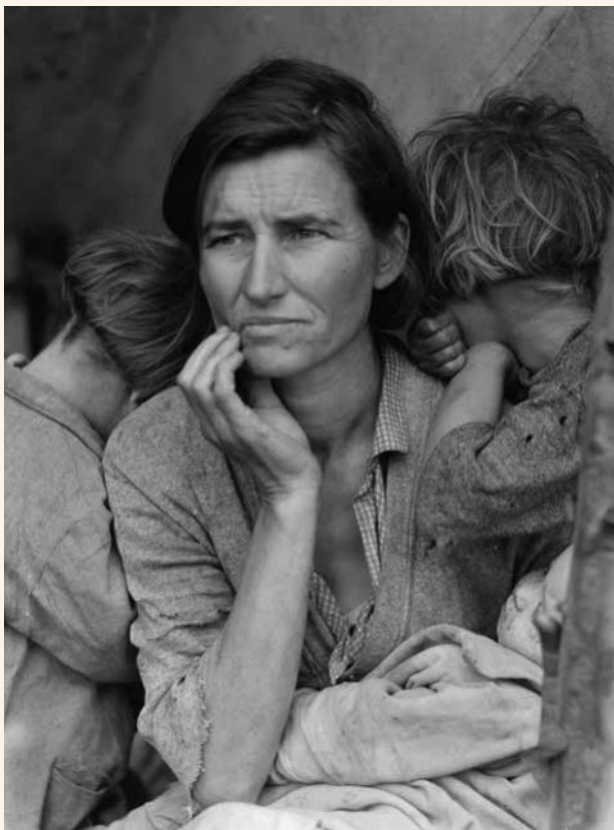
Photography was greatly advanced by several inventions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. George Eastman, founder of Kodak, introduced photographic film in 1885, and cellulose acetate (safety film) became available in 1908. Such inventions improved the flexibility and adaptability of photography as an art form. It became easier to film outdoors and moving objects. Black-and-white photography remained dominant for much of the first half of the twentieth century.

The American photographer Ansel Adams (1902–1984) is best known for his black-and-white images of the American west that also influenced the environmental conservation movement. In his youth, Frenchman Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908–2004) was influenced by cubism and surrealism before concentrating on photography. In America during the Great Depression, the Farm Security Administration commissioned photographs of rural need and desperation. Dorothea Lange's 1936 photograph *Migrant Mother* is one of the most famous examples from that extensive collection.

 **Source 14** *Migrant Mother* by Dorothea Lange, 1936.

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

S.48 Explore the story behind Lange's photograph, *Migrant Mother*. Use your own research to write a paragraph about the significance of photography in changing social attitudes. You may wish to include references to recent photographs that changed attitudes. Examples include the young Syrian refugee on a beach near Bodrum, Turkey, in September 2015, bushfires at Mallacoota, Victoria, in January 2020, and the Beirut port explosion on 4 August 2020.





HISTORICAL INQUIRY

S.49 This snapshot has introduced you to various artists, writers, poets, filmmakers and photographers, as well as artistic movements, that all contributed to social and/or political change in some way. Now it's your turn!

Choose one creator, author or artistic movement from the first half of the twentieth century. Research this in detail so that you become the class expert in that subject. Then, produce a poster and give an oral presentation so the rest of the class can learn from you.

ARTISTIC MOVEMENTS

- Art Nouveau
- Cubism
- Futurism
- Expressionism
- New Objectivity
- Dadaism
- Bauhaus
- Art Deco
- Surrealism
- Abstract

WRITERS

- F. Scott Fitzgerald (American)
- T.S. Elliot (American)
- Thomas Mann (German)
- Lu Xun (Chinese)
- Alexandra Kollontai (Russian)
- Ryūnosuke Akutagawa (Japanese)

ARTISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

- Pablo Picasso (Spanish)
- Umberto Boccioni (Italian)
- Edvard Munch (Norwegian)
- Ernst Kirchner (German)
- Wassily Kandinsky (Russian)
- Tamara de Lempicka (Polish)
- George Grosz (German)
- Salvador Dalí (Spanish)
- Käthe Kollwitz (German)
- Piet Mondrian (Dutch)
- Georgia O'Keeffe (American)
- Ansel Adams (American)
- Henri Cartier-Bresson (French)
- Laszlo Moholy-Nagy (Hungarian)
- Max Dupain (Australian)
- Alexander Rodchenko (Russian)
- Dorothea Lange (American)

FILMMAKERS AND PLAYWRIGHTS

- Bertolt Brecht (German)
- Leni Riefenstahl (German)
- Max Reinhardt (German)
- Yasujiro Ozu (Japanese)
- Lillian Hellman (American)
- Walt Disney (American)

OTHER

- Modernist literature
- War poetry and novels
- Ballets Russes
- American jazz music
- Choose your own!

Assessment will be based on the following criteria:

FEATURE	DETAILS AND SUGGESTIONS	MARKS (TOTAL 40)
Summary	Two or three sentences giving an overview of your topic. Don't forget to focus on the significance of your chosen creator or movement and how they contributed to change .	/2
Images	One main image with caption. Two or three smaller images with captions.	/4
Key terms	At least four terms associated with the subject. Each term to have a one- or two-line definition or explanation.	/2
Main text	This will provide relevant information about your subject and can incorporate primary and secondary sources. Approximately 600–800 words in addition to quotations from sources.	/10
Primary sources	At least three primary sources, with acknowledgement. These could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a statement or artwork by your artist or movement • a contemporary statement/observation about your researched artist, artwork or movement • a critique of your artist, artwork or movement. 	/5
Historical interpretations	At least two historical interpretations of your artist or movement. These could include critical analysis of the artist or movement and/or their significance. These could be contrasting views.	/2
Timeline	Six dates and events. These may relate directly to the subject (e.g. birth or death dates, first exhibition) or be contextual events (such as significant world events affecting the subject).	/3
Annotated bibliography	All useful references you used in your research. You should include at least three non-electronic references. Annotation could include how important the source was to your research or whether it gave you appropriate background information.	/2
Oral presentation	Prepare your presentation with suitable prompt notes and a display of artworks or photographs.	/10
		/40



THE CAUSES OF WORLD WAR II

'We must hold unflinchingly to our aim ... to secure for the German people the land and soil to which they are entitled.'

ADOLF HITLER, *MEIN KAMPF* (1925)

On 1 September 1939, Germany's invasion of Poland plunged Europe into war. While Hitler's actions may have acted as a trigger, the origins of World War II are far more complex. Just twenty years previously, the signing of the Treaty of Versailles had ended World War I. The perceived injustices of the terms of the treaty were exploited by Hitler as he rose to power in Germany and began to pursue aggressive expansionist policies.

The worldwide depression caused by the Wall Street Crash was also a significant contributing factor. The emergence during the interwar period of fascist and militaristic regimes resulted in nations such as Japan and Italy seeking to solve their economic problems through aggressive territorial expansion. The newly formed League of Nations was unable to prevent this, and failed in its objective of *collective security*. Britain and France seemed reluctant to deal with these diplomatic crises, as they themselves sought to overcome the problems created by the Great Depression. The *appeasement* policy they pursued only encouraged further aggression from Hitler and his ally Mussolini—and made war all the more likely.

collective security

An assurance of peace based on member nations' compliance with the decisions and arbitration of a supervisory organisation such as the League of Nations.

appeasement

Negotiating and conceding to a nation's demands to avoid war.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1919 28 JUNE — Treaty of Versailles signed

1931 19 SEPTEMBER — Japanese invasion of Manchuria

1935 16 MARCH — Rearmament and conscription commence in Germany

1936 17 JULY — Start of the Spanish Civil War

1938 12 MARCH — Anschluss between Germany and Austria announced

1938 30 SEPTEMBER — Munich Agreement signed

KEY QUESTIONS

- How did the Treaty of Versailles shape Hitler's internal and foreign policies during the 1930s?
- What were the key ideologies underpinning the aggression and tension that led to World War II?
- Why was the League of Nations unable to prevent another war?
- How did the rise of military dictatorships lead to territorial aggression which, in turn, created international tension?
- Why did some international leaders follow a policy of appeasement in the 1930s? How did this encourage the aggressors?

CHAPTER
9



Source 9.01
Political satire about the Munich Agreement.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS



BENITO MUSSOLINI
*Appointed himself dictator of Italy in 1925
Invaded Abyssinia in 1935*



ADOLF HITLER
*Appointed Chancellor of Germany in
January 1933
Pursued aggressive territorial expansion
in search of Lebensraum*



NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN
*British Prime Minister (1937–1940)
Adopted a policy of appeasement*

HISTORICAL INQUIRY

Some historians have suggested that the Wall Street Crash was the most significant factor in causing World War II, while others have suggested it was the policy of appeasement. As you work through the chapter, use the material and your own ideas to answer the following questions.

9.01 To what extent did economic hardship result in the rise of dictators and cause the outbreak of war in 1939?

9.02 How did some leaders in Europe contribute to the outbreak of World War II by pursuing a policy of appeasement?

THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

HAROLD NICHOLSON, MEMBER OF THE BRITISH DELEGATION AT VERSAILLES: 'The historian, with every justification, will come to the conclusion that we were very stupid men.'

Did you know? Just before the Paris Peace Conference began, British politician Eric Campbell Geddes famously said, 'We shall squeeze the German lemon until the pips squeak!'

The Treaty of Versailles, signed in June 1919, had a significant impact on events that led to the outbreak of war in 1939. The terms of the treaty were harsh and considered unfair, particularly in the eyes of Germans. The Treaty of Versailles was a constant reminder of Germany's defeat during World War I. The German newspaper *Deutsche Zeitung* called for vengeance, predicting that 'the German people will with unceasing work, press forward to reconquer the place among nations to which it is entitled ... for the shame of 1919'.¹

HARSH REALITY

Under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany had been stripped of productive territory and population, forced to severely restrict its army and expected to pay more than £6.6 billion in reparations. Most humiliating of all, Germany was forced to accept full responsibility for starting the war, and was denied membership of the new League of Nations.

➔ **Source 9.02** Delegates gather in the Hall of Mirrors for the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919.



GERMAN HUMILIATION CAUSED BY THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES



Part of Germany occupied by Allied troops (especially African-French troops on the left bank of the Rhine).

Restriction on the size of the German military and limitations for the future.



The diktat or 'dictated peace'. German leaders were not invited to the Paris Peace Conference, and were made to sign the Treaty of Versailles with no objection, including the clause that Germany was responsible for the war.

One of the aims of the Treaty of Versailles was to prevent another major war, but this was unsuccessful. Instead, the terms of the treaty led to major economic and social problems in Germany, such as hyperinflation. The economic distress, unemployment and loss of German pride created by the terms of the treaty created an environment in which extremism could flourish. Coupled with the 1930s Great Depression, the terms of the treaty provided a platform that Hitler would use to rise to power.



ITALIAN DISAPPOINTMENT

The Germans were not the only ones outraged by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Italy also felt cheated. Italy had been in an alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary before the war but had not joined Germany's side at the outbreak of war in 1914, claiming that the 1882 Triple Alliance was for defensive purposes only. Germany had entered the war by attacking Belgium, so Italy no longer felt bound by the terms of the Triple Alliance.

Instead of joining Germany, Vittorio Orlando, prime minister of Italy, declared war on Germany in April 1915. Orlando was encouraged by Britain and France because war between Italy and Germany would mean that Germany had to fight on three fronts. Under the 1915 Treaty of London, Italy was promised territorial gains along the Adriatic coast in return for fighting on the Allied side. However, instead



↑ Vittorio Orlando.

of honouring this agreement, the Treaty of Versailles allowed only the Istrian Peninsula and the region of South Tyrol to pass to Italy. The bulk of the Adriatic Peninsula was included in the newly created nation of Yugoslavia. Orlando now felt that the sacrifices of the Italian people and the deaths of 460,000 of his countrymen were not recognised by the Allies.

There was also widespread resentment among the Italian people about Italy's treatment under the Treaty of Versailles. The war had almost bankrupted Italy, unemployment was very high and there was considerable political unrest. Although Italy was to receive some reparations from Germany, the amount was very limited and in no way compensated for Italy's war losses. Many Italians blamed Orlando, and he resigned as prime minister late in 1919 and withdrew from Italian politics in 1922.



↑ Gabrielle D'Annunzio.

Some Italians were particularly unhappy that the port of Fiume (now Rijeka in Croatia) was awarded to Yugoslavia, as the population there was Italian-speaking by a narrow majority. So unhappy were Italian nationalists that Gabriele D'Annunzio led two thousand ex-soldiers and seized the port, occupying Fiume for three months. He only surrendered following bombardment by the Italian navy.

Many people who would later support Benito Mussolini backed D'Annunzio in this venture.

Returning veterans were subjected to abuse from the populace if they wore their uniforms as Italians sought another target for their frustration. The economic problems suffered by Italy in the years following the Treaty of Versailles made the newly emerged *Fasci di Combattimento* (Fascist Party), founded in 1921, especially attractive to former soldiers. They blamed the sudden unemployment caused by rapid **demobilisation** and the 'mutilated victory' on the weakness of the ruling liberal conservative politicians.

Thus, both Italy and Germany were left severely dissatisfied by the Treaty of Versailles, and this created a climate in which extremist movements would flourish.

Historian A.J.P. Taylor on reparations

Reparations counted as a symbol. They created resentment, suspicion and international hostility. More than anything they cleared the way for World War II. Every touch of economic hardship stirred the Germans to shake off 'the shackles of Versailles'.

↑ **Source 9.03** A.J.P. Taylor, *Origins of the Second World War* (London: Penguin, 1991), 71.

The Treaty of Versailles caused—or was blamed for—numerous problems in the two decades following World War I. It is true that many of the social and economic problems that occurred in the 1920s and 1930s can be traced back to the postwar treaties. However, other problems were the result of actual involvement in war, rather than the treaties. For example, much of the best and most productive farmland in France and Belgium had been destroyed during the fighting. However, the treaties provided an easy target and a scapegoat for extremist political movements that campaigned for power. During the 1920s and 1930s, extremist movements flourished on both the right and the left in Germany, the USSR, Italy and Japan.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

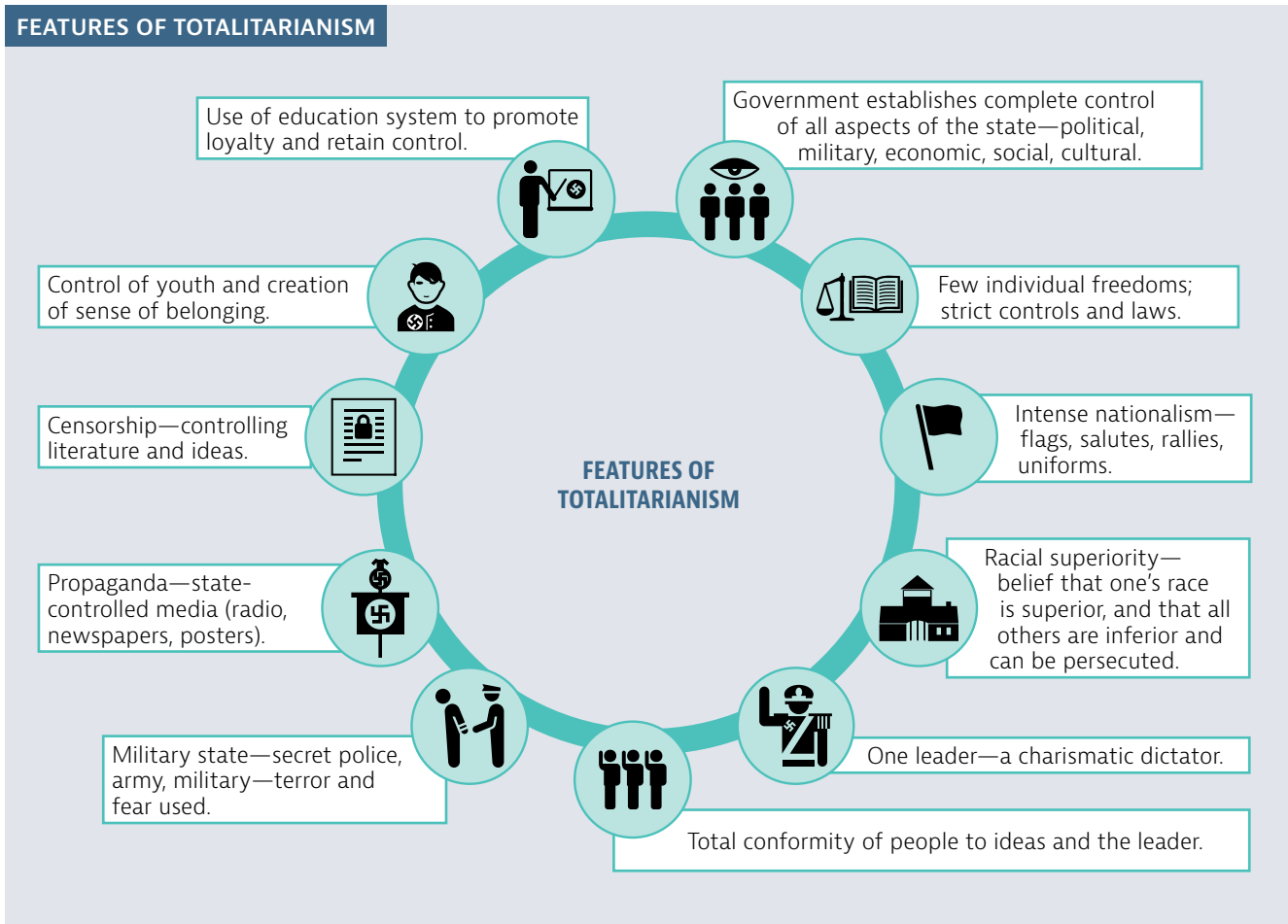
- 9.03 What is meant by the term *diktat*?
- 9.04 What were the key features of the Treaty of Versailles?
- 9.05 Why did people in Germany and Italy resent the Treaty of Versailles?

demobilisation

The process of reducing the size of an army by releasing soldiers back to civilian life.



TERRITORIAL AGGRESSION AND THE RISE OF EXTREMIST REGIMES



THE RISE OF JAPAN

VISCOUNT CECIL, BRITAIN'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, 1931: 'I do not think there is the slightest prospect of any war.'

By 1919, Japan was acknowledged as a great power with a position as a permanent member on the Council of the League of Nations. Like many of its European counterparts, Japan was relatively new to democracy. The Meiji Constitution, Japan's first constitution, had been introduced in 1889, establishing Japan as a constitutional monarchy. There were two houses in the Diet (or parliament)—an upper house made up of members of the nobility, and a lower house elected by a limited section of the male population. The prime minister and the cabinet were appointed by the emperor who, according to Article XI of the Japanese Constitution, was the supreme commander of the army and navy. The emperor was the sovereign authority in Japan. However, considerable power still lay in the hands of old aristocratic families who were closely allied to the Japanese military and navy.



Japan had undergone rapid development in the second half of the nineteenth century, improving food-production methods and expanding secondary industry and manufacturing. However, Japan lacked the raw materials and resources to support the developing industries, as well as the land required to grow sufficient food. This shortage of land was behind Japan's territorial expansion in the early twentieth century. Japan's victory over China in 1895 in the First Sino-Japanese War gave it control of the Korean Peninsula. In 1905, Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War, gaining further influence in Manchuria and the southern half of Sakhalin Island. Japan had formed an alliance with Britain in 1902 and fought on Britain's side during World War I, using the alliance to secure its strategic position in the Pacific region.

JAPAN AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

In the years following World War I, the Japanese economy grew rapidly. Investment in heavy industry, including coal and iron, underpinned expansion in the building of railways and ships. Small-scale manufacturing of chemicals, china, household goods, textiles and toys provided employment and profits for the growing middle class. However, this industrial expansion depended on trade with other countries. Japan relied on China as the major source of iron ore and coal for manufacturing, and the Japanese economy relied heavily on China, Britain, the US and Australia to purchase its manufactured goods.

Despite its overall prosperity, Japan faced a number of challenges during the 1920s. In 1923, more than one hundred thousand people were killed when an earthquake destroyed much of Tokyo and left thousands of people homeless. In the countryside, many agricultural labourers struggled with low wages and poor working conditions, and there was tension between younger people who wanted to embrace Western styles of dress and music and the older generations who feared the loss of their traditional culture. Moreover, the decade was one of political instability.



↑ **Source 9.04** Britain watches calmly as Japan thrashes Russia during the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War.

Did you know? There had been a Japanese–Chinese proposal for a racial equality clause in the Treaty of Versailles, but this was rejected by the Western powers. Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes was the main driver of the push to reject the racial equality clause.

↓ **Source 9.05** A devastated urban district in Japan immediately after the 1923 earthquake.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

9.06 Who held sovereign power in Japan?

9.07 Why was territorial expansion important to Japan?

9.08 In what ways did the Great Depression affect Japan?

yen

The unit of currency used in Japan.

kowtowing

Showing deep respect or obedience. The Mandarin word *koutou* means to kneel and touch the ground with the forehead in worship or submission.

The veneer of prosperity and stability was shattered by the Great Depression, which began in 1929. The onset of the financial crisis disrupted trade relationships and destabilised the Japanese economy. Many countries, including the US and China, introduced trade tariffs that made it more difficult to sell manufactured goods. Unemployment rose to unprecedented heights between 1929 and 1932, and peasants became desperate as agricultural prices plummeted.² In particular, silk workers were affected as the price of silk dropped by 50 per cent.

Attempts to deal with the crisis had mixed results. Japan's Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo introduced successful measures to control the situation such as devaluing the **yen** and deficit spending. However, the army still pushed for aggressive territorial expansion, believing this would solve Japan's problems. This stance was dealt a severe blow when the government signed the Naval Treaty of London in 1930, which severely limited Japan's naval capacity. The Japanese military saw 'Japanese politicians **kowtowing** to Western governments'.³ This also reinforced Japanese resentment towards the US and Britain, which refused to acknowledge or accept Asian equality.



THE INVASION OF MANCHURIA

Manchuria was an area of China that bordered Japanese-controlled Korea. However, the authority of the Chinese government was weak and did not extend as far as Manchuria. By 1931, Japan had invested substantial amounts of money in the South Manchuria Railway Company, and kept a large army in the area to protect this investment. An explosion that occurred near the railway line at Mukden (now Shenyang) was blamed on Chinese troops. Using this as an excuse, the Japanese army claimed sabotage and invaded the whole of Manchuria without consulting the Japanese government. In September 1932 Manchuria was renamed Manchukuo, and a new government was installed under the control of the Japanese army. Despite being told to withdraw by the civilian government, the army continued to occupy the region.

Source 9.06 Japanese territorial expansion in the 1930s.



It was clear that the Japanese government had lost control of the army. The success in Manchuria was popular and was praised in Japanese newspapers, which supported the growth of Japan as a dominant empire in east Asia. Democratically elected Japanese politicians were gradually discredited. China appealed to the League of Nations, which ordered Japan to withdraw from Manchuria. However, the Japanese ignored this order and withdrew from the League of Nations instead.

The incident in Manchuria demonstrated that the Japanese army was loyal to the emperor rather than the Japanese government. The military gradually began to take over Japanese politics, with several attempted coups and assassinations of key ministers, including Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo. In February 1936, a coup led by junior officers of the Imperial Japanese Army attempted to take control of the government. Initially supported by army headquarters, the rebellion was suppressed after four days when Emperor Hirohito demanded that the army put an end to the incident.

A military dictatorship was then established. This was done legally as Japan's constitution and Diet remained in place. Following the invasion of China in 1937, the military took over Japanese politics completely. An authoritarian state was created in which students were taught to obey the emperor and government unconditionally. Critics of the regime were immediately arrested.



↑ Emperor Hirohito.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'AXIS POWERS' ALLIANCE

Japan's invasion of China led Hitler and Mussolini to realise that their regimes had some common aims. Although the threat of communism was less pronounced in Japan, the Japanese had faced spontaneous urban riots during periods when rice prices increased. A significant step towards war was taken when Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact on 25 November 1936. The pact was designed to limit the influence of the Communist International (Comintern) in the Soviet Union. Japan and Germany promised to 'keep one another informed about the activities of the Communist International' and to 'confer upon the necessary measures for defense and carry out such measures in close cooperation'. They also agreed that if the Soviet Union attacked they would take measures to 'safeguard their common interests'. When Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact in November 1937, the countries in this alliance—Japan, Germany and Italy—became known as the Axis Powers.

Dispatch to Washington, 13 November 1937

If the present triangular combination is analyzed, it becomes immediately apparent that not only is the group not merely anti-communist, but that its policies and practices equally run counter to those of the so-called democratic powers. Thus it can be seen that the question resolves itself into the simple fact that it is a combination of those states which are bent upon upsetting the status quo as opposed to those states which wish to preserve the status quo, or, more simply, of the 'have-nots' against the 'haves,' and that anticommunism is merely the banner under which the 'have-nots' are rallying. The threat to England is very real and immediately apparent upon reflection that with the addition of Japan to the Rome–Berlin axis the life-line of the British Empire is threatened from the North Sea through the Mediterranean and beyond Singapore.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 9.07 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.09** Explain the context in which this dispatch was written.
- 9.10** Explain why Italy, Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact.
- 9.11** Explain how the Anti-Comintern Pact was a threat to Britain.
- 9.12** Evaluate the significance of the Anti-Comintern Pact as a challenge to the global status quo in the 1930s. Use evidence to support your response.

↪ **Source 9.07** United States Department of State, Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, Japan: 1931–1941 Volume II, 160.



Japan had invaded China in July 1937 and started a war it could not win—and could not end.⁴ Japan expected that China would be easy to defeat, given that China had been embroiled in a civil war for the past decade and that Japan had superior forces.

Source 9.08 US naval ships burn and sink following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.



However, the Japanese had not counted on both sides in the Chinese Civil War placing their opposition to Japan ahead of their own differences. In 1937, the communists and the nationalists, known as the Guomindang, joined forces to attempt to drive the Japanese out of China. Western countries—especially Britain and US—sent aid to China to help in the fight against Japan. This increased Japanese resentment of the Western countries. By 1939 the war had reached a stalemate: China was unable to force the Japanese to retreat and Japan was unable to defeat China.

As events in Europe were moving quickly towards war in the late 1930s, the eyes of Britain and the US were temporarily distracted from Japan. It took the 1941 Japanese invasion of French Indochina, followed by the bombing of Singapore and Pearl Harbor, to awaken Western nations to the threat of Japanese aggression. Britain and the US declared war on Japan in December 1941.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 9.13** Why did Japan invade Manchuria?
- 9.14** What effect did Japan's invasion of Manchuria have on international relations?
- 9.15** Why did the bombings of Singapore and Pearl Harbor come as a surprise to Britain and the US?

TIMELINE

- 9.16** Create an annotated timeline to show Japanese territorial expansion from 1900–1941.

CREATIVE TASK

- 9.17** Imagine you are a reporter from a Japanese newspaper. Write a report on the invasion of Manchuria.

OR

- Imagine you are a commander in the Japanese army. Write a speech justifying your invasion of Manchuria.

EXTENSION

- 9.18** To what extent can it be argued that Japan was a fascist state from the late 1920s?

THE RISE OF ITALY

BENITO MUSSOLINI: 'For my part I prefer 50,000 rifles to five million votes.'

During the 1920s and 1930s, Italy was also grappling with unstable government and tensions between democracy and an authoritarian government. Italy had become a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary form of government when it became a nation in 1861. The Chamber of Deputies, Italy's democratically elected governing body, was unpaid and susceptible to bribery and corruption. In 1912 the introduction of the right to vote for all males led to a fairer parliamentary system. However, this also led to political instability, as Italy was then governed by a succession of coalition governments that were ill-equipped to deal with Italy's problems.



Historian John Pollard on political problems in Italy

After 1919, it became very difficult to manage a system of government: the Socialists, who believed that proletariat revolution was just around the corner and that 'all we have to do is wait,' refused to participate in government at all and though the People's party did so, the uneasy alliance between the [members of parliament] of that party and the liberal-conservative political leaders like Nitti, Giolitti and Bonomi was like mixing oil and water.

← **Source 9.09** Dr John Pollard, 'The many problems and failures of Liberal Italy led the establishment to turn to Mussolini,' in *New Perspectives for Modern History Students*, vol. 9, no. 3 (March 2007).

HISTORICAL SOURCES—INTERPRETATIONS

Using Source 9.09 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.19** Explain why the Italian Socialist Party refused to participate in government.
- 9.20** Explain why an alliance between members of parliament was 'like mixing oil and water'.
- 9.21** Analyse the significance of the political situation in Italy as the cause of the problems facing that country after World War I. Use evidence to support your response.

Italy in the 1920s was economically unstable. World War I had left the country with a debt that was six times the pre-war level. Like many other countries, Italy had borrowed large amounts of money to finance the war. This problem was exacerbated by rapid demobilisation of troops after the war, which led to high unemployment levels. The *lira* was subject to runaway inflation and taxes rose, leading to an increase in poverty. Disruption to trade had further damaged the economy, and industrial disputes aggravated an already unstable economy.

Influenced by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917, Italian workers held strikes and demonstrations, demanding higher wages to compensate for inflation. These demonstrations often became violent. Increased belligerence led to the occupation of several factories in northern Italy in the autumn of 1920. Although Italian Prime Minister Giolitti negotiated a peaceful end to the dispute, fears remained that a revolution might occur. No sooner had this political issue been resolved than another arose in the countryside. It was against this backdrop that Mussolini and his Blackshirts stepped in.

lira

The official currency of Italy prior to its adoption of the euro in 1999.

.....
Did you know? In 1921 Italian Prime Minister Giovanni Giolitti dismissed fascism as 'fireworks'.



THE RISE OF MUSSOLINI

Benito Mussolini established the *Fasci di Combattimento* on 23 March 1919. The movement was particularly popular with ex-soldiers, who were drawn to the strong militaristic and nationalist ideas promoted by the fascists. Mussolini was determined to establish a fascist Roman empire. Throughout the northern countryside there was increasing violence between landowners and peasants. Wearing their distinctive black shirts, the fascists fought on behalf of landowners against the peasants. Violence escalated. In the summer of 1922, the socialists organised a general strike protesting fascist violence, but this was ignored by the government.

← Benito Mussolini.



Many of the landowners and the middle class were shaken by the threat of socialism and communism. They looked to the fascists for law and order, and Mussolini took advantage of people's fears—just as Adolf Hitler would do ten years later. In October 1922, Mussolini's *squadristi* ('squads') marched on Rome, demanding that the government make changes.

Fearing that if he failed to support Mussolini he would be ousted in favour of his cousin, King Victor Emmanuel III invited Mussolini to become prime minister and form government. This meant that, technically, Mussolini legally gained power in Italy through constitutional appointment by the king—even though the Fascist Party was a minority in the parliament. Once in power, Mussolini gradually began to establish his dictatorship. Hitler would use some of the same strategies in his rise to power in Germany in the early 1930s.

Historian John Pollard argues that many in the Italian political class, including centre-liberals, allowed Mussolini to take power because he would be useful to them in the short term. They were confident that they could control the political upstarts they had allowed into government when it suited them to do so. Many moderate Germans took a similar attitude to Hitler and the Nazis in the 1930s.

➔ **Source 9.10** Benito Mussolini, *The Doctrine of Fascism* (1932).

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 9.10 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

9.22 Identify the features of fascism as Mussolini outlines them.

9.23 Which of these principles do you believe to be most dangerous to human rights? Explain why.

9.24 Identify three processes that a fascist state would have to put in place to achieve the aims of fascism.

9.25 Suggest three 'pointless' or 'harmful' freedoms that Mussolini would have sought to take away.

Mussolini on fascism

Above all, Fascism believes neither in the possibility nor in the usefulness of peace. War alone brings out the best in people and puts the stamp of nobility upon the people who have the courage to face it.

Fascism attacks democratic ideals. Fascism denies that the majority can rule human societies. It insists that the inequality of men is beneficial. Some men are greater than others, and these men should rule.

The Fascist State organizes the nation. It takes away pointless or harmful freedoms, and preserves those that are essential. It cannot be the individual who decides what freedoms matter, but only the State.

In the tradition of ancient Rome, the Fascist State seeks to create an empire. For Fascism, the creation of an empire is a demonstration of strength and health. Its opposite, which is staying at home, is a sign of weakness and corruption.

If every age has its own doctrine, it is clear from a thousand signs that the doctrine of the current age is Fascism. The Italian people will rise again after many centuries of abandonment and neglect. The Italian people will rise again to create a new Roman Empire, and once again the Italian people will lead the world.

The lack of a majority in parliament meant that Mussolini was forced to form a coalition government. To counteract this, in November 1923 he used intimidation and the threat of violence to have the Acerbo Law passed. This law stated that the party that won 25 per cent of all the votes would automatically get two-thirds of the seats in the parliament. In April 1924, the Fascist Party won 375 seats out of 511. Giacomo Matteotti, the outspoken leader of the Socialist Party, accused the fascists of fraud. Matteotti disappeared on 10 June and his body was discovered a month later.

Matteotti's murder was met with outrage. The fascists were widely believed to be behind his death but King Emmanuel III refused to sack Mussolini. In January 1925 Mussolini declared, 'I alone assume the political, moral and historic responsibility for everything that has happened. Italy wants peace and quiet, work and calm. I will give these things with love if possible and with force if necessary.' In November 1926, all opposition political parties were banned. In 1927 the secret police force was established. Unlike Hitler, who took just months to establish a dictatorship in Germany, Mussolini took far longer to set up a totalitarian regime in Italy.



SYMBOLS OF NATIONALISM

Fasces

The term 'fascism' comes from the word 'fasces'—a bundle of sticks bound together, sometimes acting as the handle of an axe. In ancient Rome, a fasces was carried by civil servants responsible for guarding magistrates. Today, a fasces still represents magisterial or collective power and jurisdiction.

➔ A Roman lictor carrying a fasces.



Imperial eagle

For more than 800 years the German coat of arms had also included a link to ancient Rome—an *aquila* or eagle—a symbol of the military.

Two years after Hitler came to power, the stylised black eagle above a laurel wreath, with a swastika in its centre, became the official national emblem of Germany. The Nazis used the imperial eagle to reinforce the idea of the Third Reich—'Reich' meaning 'empire'.



➔ An *aquila*, or eagle, is a symbol from ancient Rome.

ITALY AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The Great Depression hit Europe in 1929, and by the early 1930s most countries (including Italy) were suffering an economic downturn resulting in loss of trade, business closures and rising unemployment. A decline in international trade led to reduced demand for Italian manufactured goods. However, the impact was not as severe for Italy as it was for more industrialised countries, as the Italian economy was largely based on agriculture.

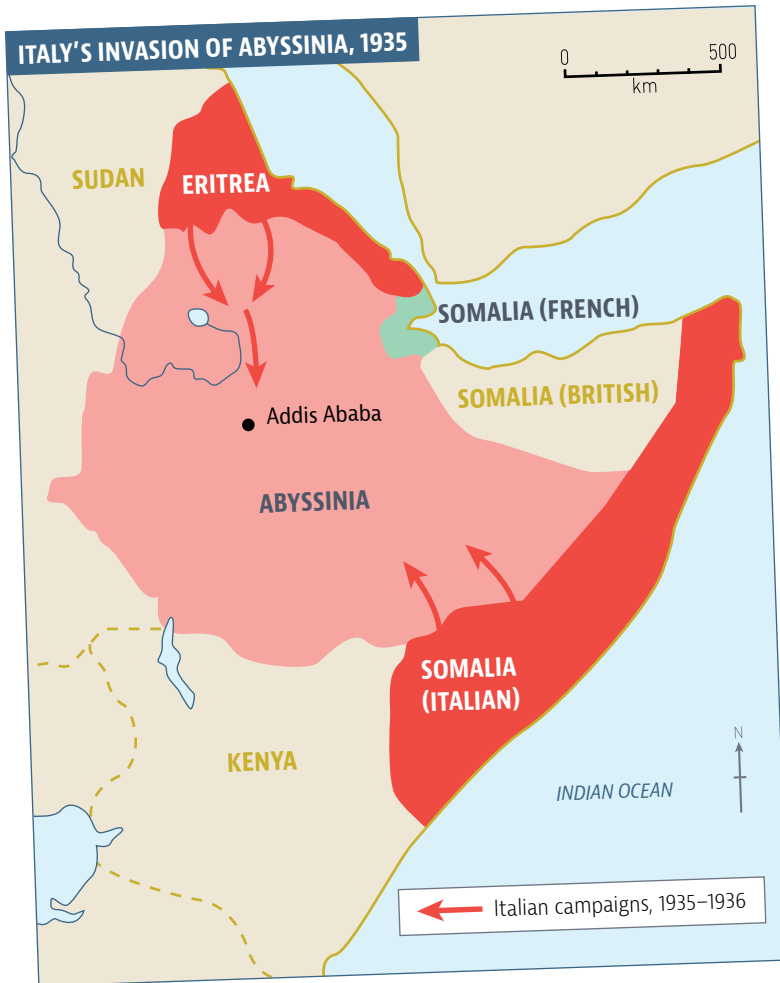
ABYSSINIA

One of Mussolini's objectives was 'to make Italy great, respected and feared'. To prove Italian greatness he planned to expand Italy's territory. Italy already had interests in Africa, and it was in this direction that Mussolini turned to distract Italians from the effects of the Great Depression. The Italian economy had always been a weak, agrarian-based economy. These problems persisted throughout the 1920s, despite Mussolini's creation of a corporate state with the economy under government control. In October 1935, Italian troops invaded Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) using tanks, aircraft and poison gas. The Abyssinians were quickly defeated. The League of Nations was slow to react and was seen to be powerless, despite a half-hearted attempt to impose sanctions.

contravention

An action that goes against a law or treaty.

Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia encouraged Hitler to pursue his territorial ambitions in Europe. Germany invaded the Rhineland in March 1936 in **contravention** of the Treaty of Versailles, but no action was taken. Mussolini's territorial aggression pushed him politically closer to Germany as his actions isolated him from Britain and France.



Source 9.11 Italy's invasion of Abyssinia.

A.J.P. Taylor on Mussolini

Everything about Fascism was a fraud. The social peril from which it saved Italy was a fraud; the revolution by which it seized power was a fraud; the ability and policy of Mussolini were fraudulent. Fascist rule was corrupt, incompetent, empty; Mussolini himself a vain, blundering boaster without either ideas or aims. Fascist Italy lived in a state of illegality.

Source 9.12 A.J.P. Taylor, *Origins of the Second World War* (London: Penguin, 1991), 85.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—INTERPRETATIONS

Using Source 9.12 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

9.26 A.J.P. Taylor wrote this description of fascism in 1991. What might have happened to Taylor if he had written or spoken these words in Italy in 1935?

9.27 Imagine you are one of Mussolini's closest advisors and supporters. Write a response to Taylor's assessment of fascism, answering each assertion with the kind of propaganda that would have been used in 1930s Italy.

Significant individual

BENITO MUSSOLINI, 1883–1945

Benito Mussolini was the fascist leader of Italy from 1922 to 1943. His doctrine of fascism and some of the more dramatic aspects of his leadership such as military-style uniforms, one-armed salutes and tumultuous speeches inspired Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Mussolini took advantage of Hitler's success early in World War II by invading France, Greece and Egypt. However, their alliance quickly became a liability for Hitler, as he was forced to send military aid to North Africa and rescue Mussolini when he was imprisoned by anti-fascist Italians.

He said: 'History teaches us that empires are conquered by arms but are held by prestige.'

Said about: 'So fell, ignominiously, the modern Roman Caesar, a bellicose-sounding man of the twentieth century who had known how to profit from its confusions and despair, but who underneath the gaudy façade was made largely of sawdust.'⁵ (*William L. Shirer, journalist and historian*)



ROME–BERLIN AXIS, 25 OCTOBER 1936

The Rome–Berlin Axis was a treaty of friendship between Mussolini and Hitler. Italy had become isolated from its allies, Britain and France, after conquering Abyssinia. The treaty gave Germany protection on its southern borders. The Spanish Civil War provided an opportunity for Germany and Italy to draw closer, united in their support for Spain's fascist General Francisco Franco. The agreement led the two powers to pursue common foreign policies. The treaty was extended in 1939 to become the Pact of Friendship and Alliance (commonly known as the Pact of Steel).



← **Source 9.13** Hitler and Mussolini, 1940.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

9.28 Draw a mind map to identify the key features of Italian fascism.

9.29 To what extent did violence and intimidation help the fascists gain power in Italy?

CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

9.30 Complete a fishbone diagram to show how the combination of politics, economics, ideology and the military allowed the fascists to come to power in Italy.

9.31 Create a concept map to show how the rise of fascism in Italy contributed to the outbreak of World War II.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

9.32 Create a Venn diagram comparing Japan with Italy and Germany in the 1920s and 1930s. Consider each country's ideology, grievances, economic problems and territorial expansion.

THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

secular

An institution or organisation, usually a government, that is not associated with religion or faith in any way.

Did you know? George Orwell, the author of *Animal Farm* (1945) and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), served in one of the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War. His memoir of his time in Spain, *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), is a classic of modern war writing.

schism

A great rift or divide between two groups.

At the same time that extreme right-wing governments were appearing in Japan, Italy and Germany, a fascist regime was emerging in Spain. Spain had been neutral during World War I but faced the same difficulties as other European nations in the 1920s and early 1930s. In April 1931, King Alfonso XIII abdicated and a republic was declared. The republic was largely supported by peasants and industrial workers, and held socialist- and communist-style policies. It was also **secular**, which drew strong opposition from Spain's majority Catholic population.

Due to this perceived socialist influence, the parties on the right, with military support, campaigned to overthrow the democratically elected government. The Spanish army attempted a coup in July 1936 under the leadership of General Francisco Franco. The coup failed but a civil war broke out. Spain was divided between the republicans and the nationalists led by Franco. The war would last three years.

The republicans received help and support from thousands of volunteers who joined the International Brigades. These were largely organised by the USSR. The Soviet Union also sent arms, advisers and technicians.

However, the nationalists had an advantage. Both Hitler and Mussolini supported Franco's nationalists, and sent troops with military training against the volunteers of the International Brigades. Mussolini, despite advice to the contrary, sent hundreds of planes, tanks and artillery, and more than 40,000 troops. Hitler also sent planes, pilots and troops to support the nationalists. He saw an opportunity to fight communism and to give his military forces combat training. The Condor Legion of the German air force controversially bombed the city of Guernica, deliberately targeting civilians with the loss of 800 lives. Although there was international condemnation, the League of Nations looked on without interference.

The Spanish Civil War contributed to a **schism** in Europe between the democracies and the dictatorships. France was in no position to support the Spanish Republic even though there were sympathisers in the French government. Léon Blum, the newly elected socialist leader of France, already faced an economic depression. Britain had no desire to become involved in the conflict, and urged France to adopt a policy of

non-intervention. This merely encouraged Hitler in his expansionist plans, as the Spanish Civil War—coupled with a lack of reaction to his invasion of the Rhineland in 1936—gave him the impression he could manipulate and intimidate the weak democracies. Ties between Italy and Germany were strengthened further a year later when Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact. Further, the Spanish Civil War served to increase suspicion between the Soviet Union, Britain and France, beginning the alienation of the Soviets that eventually led to the German–Soviet Non-aggression Pact.



Source 9.14 The devastation in Guernica caused by German bombers.



General Franco's nationalist forces won the Civil War in April 1939 and established a military dictatorship. During World War II, Spain occupied a position of neutrality yet supplied arms and money to Italy and Germany in recognition of the support both countries had given to the nationalists during the Spanish Civil War.

CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

9.33 Create a spider diagram to show the reasons why Hitler and Mussolini supported Franco in the Spanish Civil War.

CREATIVE TASK

9.34 Design a poster on behalf of the International Brigade calling for volunteers in the Spanish Civil War.

PICASSO'S GUERNICA

➔ **Source 9.15** A wall in the town of Guernica, Spain, displaying a mosaic-tile reproduction of Picasso's *Guernica* (1937).

Did you know?

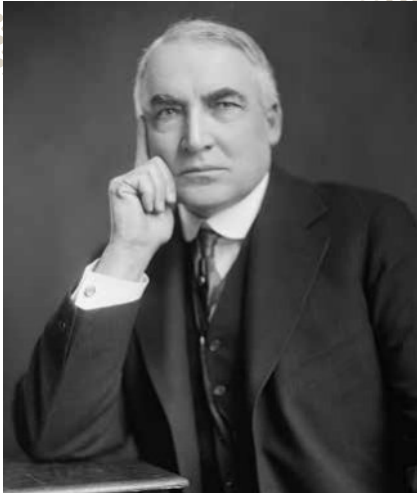
In April 2021, to mark the 85th anniversary of the bombing, forty chocolatiers in Spain made a life-size replica of Picasso's *Guernica* out of chocolate.



Pablo Picasso created his famous mural depicting the bombing of Guernica for the Spanish Pavilion of the World Fair, which was held in Paris in 1937. Guernica was a Basque village in northern Spain that was subjected to heavy bombing by the Condor Legion on 24 April 1937, resulting in hundreds of deaths. The deliberate targeting of a civilian population was a taste of the total war that was to come. *Guernica* toured the world and drew attention to the Spanish Civil War. The mural has since come to stand for the barbarity, cruelty and tragedy of modern warfare. It is now on permanent display in Madrid.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 9.35** Which social groups supported the republican government of Spain?
- 9.36** Why did right-wing forces attempt to overthrow the republican government?
- 9.37** What advantages did the nationalists have over the republicans?
- 9.38** How did the Spanish Civil War reflect the deeper divisions in Europe at the time?



↑ Warren Harding, US president from 1921–1923.

AMERICAN ISOLATIONISM

WOODROW WILSON: 'If America does not join the League I can predict with absolute certainty that within a generation there will be another war.'

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, America pursued a policy of isolationism. At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, US President Woodrow Wilson had argued for the creation of a League of Nations. This organisation was designed to provide a forum for international negotiation in the hope that future wars could be avoided. However, when the League of Nations was established in 1919, the US Congress failed to support America's involvement. Thus, the organisation lost the one country that might be counted on to ensure stability in the postwar period. Further, when Warren Harding was elected US president in November 1920, he made it clear that while he expected the war debts to be paid back promptly, he was uninterested in Europe's political squabbles.

The reasons for American isolationism and unwillingness to join the League are quite complex. Some of them were:

- **perceptions of World War.** Some Americans questioned their nation's involvement in the war. It had not seemed to solve anything, and the only people who appeared to benefit were businessmen who made profits from war supplies.
- **the risk to American lives.** As the League of Nations relied on the armies of its members, some Americans feared that US soldiers would be sent all around the world.
- **suspicion of imperialism.** America had fought for independence against the British in the 1770s. Even though the US had gone to the aid of Britain and France in 1917, it had many questions about the large empires controlled by these nations. There were also many Irish people in America who supported the movement for independence in Ireland and did not want anything to do with Britain.
- **trade concerns.** American businessmen were keen to ensure that their international trade was not affected. Having to impose **economic sanctions** as part of the League could prove costly.
- **Wilson's views.** Wilson would not accept changes to the Treaty of Versailles, and this inability to compromise contributed to the rejection of its terms.
- **American culture.** The vast majority of Americans were the descendants of people who had left Europe to escape the 'evils of the old world'. They were reluctant to become embroiled in European conflicts.

America had lent the Allies billions of dollars during World War I. The economic effects of war meant that many countries struggled to pay back the loans, but America refused to cancel the debts. However, in 1924, US Vice-President Charles Dawes worked with Gustav Stresemann, the foreign minister of Germany, to set up a series of loans to help reduce the reparations repayments. This was known as the Dawes Plan, and provided Germany with loans to aid economic recovery. The countries were locked in a vicious cycle: Germany depended on continued US loans to pay back reparations to the Allies, and the Allies used these payments to repay their own US loans. The situation was only worsened when the 1929 Wall Street Crash plunged the world into depression. This led to a drop in prices and profits, a 50 per cent reduction in international trade and the introduction of trade tariffs.

Did you know? American political opponents of the Treaty of Versailles said it removed their ability to declare war. They argued that Article 10, which dealt with collective security, meant that this power now lay in the hands of the League of Nations Council.

economic sanctions

Punishing another country by restricting or banning trade to damage the target nation's economy.



THE END OF AMERICAN ISOLATIONISM

The US government pursued the policy of isolationism, even after the 1939 outbreak of World War II. It was only after the 1941 Japanese attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor that the US became involved. Some historians have argued that if the US had been part of the League of Nations—and more actively involved in Europe in the 1930s—Hitler may have been deterred in his territorial expansion. However, Hitler did not have great respect for—or fear of—the US. He was suspicious of the multiracial nature of the population, and perceived the US to be weak and lacking the will to fight. He was reported to have said, ‘What is America but beauty queens, millionaires, stupid records and Hollywood?’⁶

America’s continued refusal to become involved in events in Europe and the passing of a series of **Neutrality Acts** in the mid-1930s only reinforced Hitler’s attitude. While American isolationism did not directly lead to the outbreak of World War II, it certainly undermined the League of Nations. Walsh argues that America’s failure to join was a ‘body blow to the League’.⁷

Neutrality Acts

Three laws passed by the US Congress from 1935 to 1937 that made it illegal to sell or transport arms and ammunition to countries at war.

Richard Overy on American forces

In the mid-1930s the USA had no more than skeleton [minimal] armed forces. The army only had 100 000 men. Other countries’ armies were numbered in millions. The morale of US forces was poor. Their weapons dated from World War I. US soldiers were more at home with horses than tanks. In September 1939, the US Air Corps and Navy had together only 800 combat aircraft; many of them biplanes. Germany had 3600 aircraft. Roosevelt had very little to threaten with.

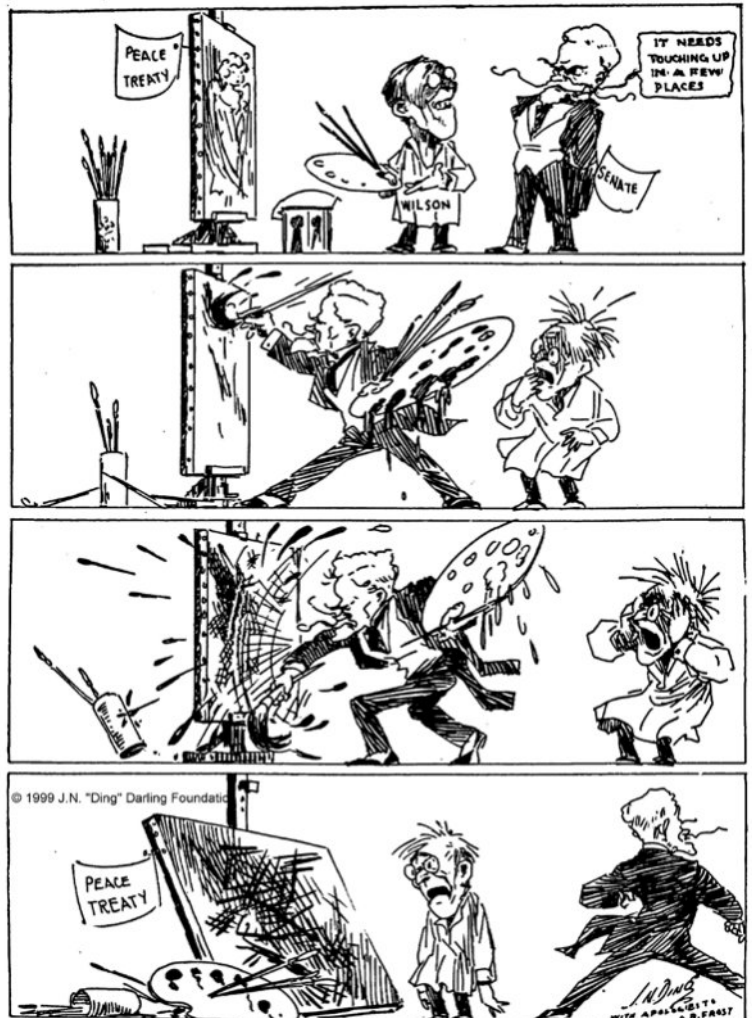
↑ **Source 9.16** Richard Overy, *The Road to War* (London: Penguin, 1999), 316.

→ **Source 9.17** ‘The art student’s masterpiece and the professor’s criticism.’ Cartoon by J.N. (Ding) Darling, 19 November 1919.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 9.17 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.39** Identify two groups and/or individuals represented in the cartoon.
- 9.40** Identify two interpretations of the Treaty of Versailles presented in the cartoon.
- 9.41** Explain why America failed to join the League of Nations after World War I.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

9.42 Why did the US Senate reject the Treaty of Versailles?

9.43 Create a spider diagram to explain the reasons America pursued a policy of isolationism.

9.44 How did the Wall Street Crash affect international trade and finance?

9.45 What effect did American isolationism have on international affairs?

9.46 What brought America out of isolation?

The US maintained its neutral position through the first two years of war. It was Japan rather than any of the European countries that finally drew the US into World War II. Japanese territorial aggression in the Pacific during the 1930s had concerned the US, and the Japanese occupation of French Indochina in 1940 prompted American economic action in the form of cutting off oil and iron supplies. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the US declared war on Japan the next day. In his announcement, President Roosevelt stated that it was 'a day that will live in infamy'. In the eyes of historian A.J.P. Taylor, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor also provoked Hitler into declaring war on the US.⁸

THE ROLE OF HITLER AND THE THIRD REICH

Throughout the 1930s, extreme right-wing movements gained popular support, and fascist or militarist governments were established in Japan, Italy and Spain. One of the most extreme of these right-wing regimes was established in Germany in 1933 by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Hitler shared a similar ideology to the other fascist nations, but he was also driven by a strong desire to avenge Germany's defeat in World War I and the humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles.

One of Hitler's election promises was to rip up the Treaty of Versailles and reverse its terms. This is exactly what he set about doing once he came to power in 1933. Hitler sought to reclaim the territory that had been lost by Germany and to establish **Anschluss** (union) with Austria. He also wanted to ensure that Germans living as minorities in other countries became part of Greater Germany. Further, he desired an empire—a Third Reich—and to do this he would seek Lebensraum in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. One of Hitler's first actions was to stop paying reparations.

Did you know? In German, Lebensraum means 'living space'. Hitler used this term to describe his desire to expand Germany's territory into eastern Europe.

Anschluss

The annexation of Austria by Germany in 1938.

HITLER BEGINS TO REARM

Rearmament was the first term of the treaty that Hitler attempted to undo. In 1919, Germany's army had been restricted to 100,000 men and its navy to six battleships. An air force was forbidden altogether. At the World Disarmament Conference, beginning in 1932, Germany demanded that the restrictions on its armaments be lifted. When this was denied, Germany withdrew from the conference and from the League of Nations. This limited the ability of other nations to monitor the build-up of German arms and equipment.

Source 9.18 A parade of tanks at the Nazi Party's 'Rally of Freedom' in Nuremberg, 1935.



During 1933 and 1934, the Nazis were secretly rearming and building up Germany's military strength. By 1935, the German army (*Wehrmacht*) stood at 300,000 men and the air force (Luftwaffe) had 2500 planes. Conscription was reintroduced, and in March 1935 Hitler held a 'Freedom to Rearm' rally where he paraded the Nazis' military strength and publicly announced conscription to increase the size of the army to 550,000 men.

No country other than France questioned these rearmament policies, which violated the Treaty of Versailles. Britain sympathised with Germany, believing that the Treaty of Versailles had been too harsh. The British government also believed that a strong Germany would act as a barrier against communism. Hitler's prestige grew and his popularity within Germany increased as rearmament reduced unemployment and restored German pride.

Wehrmacht

The name of the German armed forces between 1935 and 1945.



Source 9.19 'Cause Precedes Effect', by British cartoonist David Low, 20 March 1935.

WORKING IN HITLER'S FAVOUR

One of the territorial terms of the Treaty of Versailles was that the Saar region, an important German coalfield, would be run by the League of Nations for fifteen years, after which a plebiscite (or vote) would determine sovereignty. On 13 January 1935, 90 per cent of the population of the Saar voted to return to German rule. The valuable output of the Saar coalfields was now under German control and no doubt provided Hitler with greater assurance of pursuing his Greater Germany scheme. It also reinforced French concerns about German aggression.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 9.19 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.47 Identify two of the leaders saluting Hitler.
- 9.48 Identify two ways Hitler had broken the terms of the Treaty of Versailles by 1935.
- 9.49 Explain why countries had failed to disarm in the years following World War I.
- 9.50 Evaluate the significance of the actions of world leaders as a cause of World War II. Use evidence to support your response.



↑ **Source 9.20** The first units of the German army march into the Rhineland.

➔ **Source 9.21** Ruth Henig, *The Origins of the Second World War 1933–41* (New York, Routledge: 2005), 27.

THE REMILITARISATION OF THE RHINELAND

On 7 March 1936, Hitler marched 22,000 troops into the Rhineland. Located along the Rhine River, the Rhineland acted as a natural barrier between Germany and France. It was also a rich industrial area. Under the Treaty of Versailles, Germany retained political control but was forbidden from stationing troops there. Hitler used the excuse that Germany was under threat, referring to the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance signed between France and the USSR in May 1935.

Hitler was again testing the resolve of nations to enforce the Treaty of Versailles. His troops had orders to withdraw if they were opposed by France. He commented at the time that ‘our forces were not strong enough even to put up a moderate resistance ... If the French had taken any action our resistance would have been over in a matter of days.’ France was in the middle of an election and was reluctant to oppose Hitler without the support of Britain, while Britain was militarily weak and more concerned with events in Abyssinia. Many British felt that the Germans were only ‘going into their back garden’—although they condemned Hitler’s actions, the British did not feel that his actions were worthy of armed retaliation. This lack of support for France put a strain on Anglo–French relations. Hitler’s gamble had paid off.

Ruth Henig on the remilitarisation of the Rhineland

In retrospect, many politicians and commentators have claimed that this was the decisive point at which Hitler should have been challenged, and that, when no action was taken in the spring and summer of 1936 to check his aggression, he could no longer be stopped from an expansionist course which would sooner or later inevitably plunge Europe into a war. However, the perception at the time, particularly in Britain, was rather different. Popular sentiment in both Britain and France was very strong that any action which might lead to hostilities and to war should be avoided. [British politician] Lord Lothian’s comment that the Germans were, after all, ‘only going into their own back garden’ was widely supported. The Rhineland remilitarization coincided with the beginning of an election campaign in France, which led to a low-key approach to the crisis by politicians. Germany’s violation of its treaty obligations was referred to the League by the French government in the hope that economic sanctions against Germany might be invoked. But though the German action was condemned, no punishment was suggested. Sanctions were still in force against Italy, and many countries were feeling the economic pinch.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—INTERPRETATIONS

Using Source 9.21 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.51** Explain why Britain refused to condemn Hitler’s remilitarisation of the Rhineland.
- 9.52** Explain how Hitler violated the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
- 9.53** Evaluate the significance of Hitler’s remilitarisation of the Rhineland as a cause of World War II. Use evidence to support your response.

CREATIVE TASK

9.54 Imagine that you are a British citizen whose father and brother were killed in World War I. You are horrified at the German occupation of the Rhineland and at the British government’s unwillingness to challenge Hitler. Write a letter to Lord Lothian explaining why he is wrong and outlining the dangers that Hitler embodies.



ANSCHLUSS WITH AUSTRIA

Hitler wanted to create a Greater Germany where all German-speaking people lived in the same country. To this end, he desired German unification with Austria. This was forbidden under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Hitler's first attempt to achieve unification was in 1934, when Austrian Nazis assassinated Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss in an attempt to force an Anschluss. However, this aggressive action alarmed Mussolini. Although Mussolini, like Hitler, was a fascist leader, he was not going to stand for territorial expansion that might threaten Italy. Mussolini sent troops to the Brenner Pass, the main access point into Austria from the south, honouring his 1934 agreement with Austria to protect it from external aggression. This allowed the Austrian government to stabilise the unrest and restrict the Nazi threat in Austria, at least for a few years.

The new Austrian chancellor, Kurt Schuschnigg, tried to cooperate with Hitler in an attempt to appease him by allowing some Nazi officials to hold key posts in government. Austria was economically weak and there were many people in Austria who supported the idea of a union with Germany. In 1938, Schuschnigg agreed to Austrian Nazi leader Arthur Seyss-Inquart becoming Minister of the Interior. This was not enough to satisfy Hitler, who ordered the Austrian Nazi Party to stir up trouble and demand that Anschluss take place. Schuschnigg appealed to Britain, France and Italy for help, but they all refused. Schuschnigg called for a referendum but Hitler, fearing that they might lose, used the unrest he had created as an excuse and ordered Seyss-Inquart to request German support to restore order. Hitler sent his troops into Austria, forced the resignation of Schuschnigg and held a referendum. It was no surprise that the Austrians then voted in favour of Anschluss. The lack of reaction from Britain and France convinced Hitler that they were unlikely to stand in his way in the future.

Churchill on the Anschluss

Chamberlain was not opposed to the *Anschluss* as such, but to the way it had happened. He accepted that 'Nothing could have arrested this action by Germany unless we and others with us had been prepared to use force to prevent it.' Britain was not prepared to use the limited force it possessed. France, with a large army but without a government throughout the Austrian crisis, did nothing but protest. Mussolini, who had protected Austria in 1934, did nothing at all. It was hard to argue that a great crime had occurred when so many Austrians expressed their joy at joining the Third Reich. Perhaps the most important feature of the Anschluss was not that it had happened, but how it had happened. If one frontier could be changed in this way, why not others?

📌 **Source 9.23** Alan Farmer, *Britain Foreign Affairs: Saving Europe at a Cost? 1919–1960* (London: Hodder Education, 2009).



📌 **Source 9.22** Nazi parade in Vienna on May Day 1938. The Anschluss with Nazi Germany violated the Treaty of Versailles.

HISTORICAL SOURCES— PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 9.23 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.55** Outline why the major European powers tried to stop the Anschluss.
- 9.56** Explain the role played by Chamberlain during Germany's expansion in the 1930s.
- 9.57** Analyse the significance of political instability in France as a cause of World War II. Use evidence to support your response.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 9.58** What were Hitler's foreign policy aims when he came to power in January 1933?
- 9.59** How did Britain and France react to Germany's rearmament program in the 1930s?
- 9.60** What were the causes and consequences of the Anschluss with Austria?



CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THE MUNICH AGREEMENT

WINSTON CHURCHILL: 'You were given the choice between war and dishonour. You chose dishonour, and you will have war.'

Hitler then decided to address the issue of Lebensraum and turned his attention to eastern Europe. It became apparent that Britain and France were not going to stand up to Hitler. The first country he looked towards was Czechoslovakia, a new country that had been created after World War I. It was predominantly a nation of Slavs and Czechs, but about 25 per cent of the population were German-speakers who had formerly been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Most of the German-speakers lived at the western end of Czechoslovakia in an area known as the Sudetenland. The Sudeten Germans identified with Germany and claimed that they were discriminated against by the Czech government.

In 1938 the Sudeten Germans, led by Konrad Henlein, began to call for self-government and caused civil unrest in their quest to become part of Germany. In an attempt to intimidate the leader of Czechoslovakia, Edvard Beneš, Hitler moved troops to the Czech border in May 1938. In response, the Czechs mobilised their army to counteract German troops. Hitler's own generals warned him that due to its strong, modern army and mountainous terrain, Czechoslovakia would not be an easy country to overcome. However, Beneš realised that Czechoslovakia was next on the German 'menu', and sought assurances of support from Britain and France should Hitler invade.

Tensions rose and Europe began to prepare for war. In Britain, cities began to dig air-raid shelters expecting that war, when it came, would result in the kind of destruction experienced by the civilians of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. At the Nuremberg Rally in September 1938, Hitler demanded self-determination for the Sudeten Germans, provoking rioting in that area. The Czechoslovakian government imposed **martial law**.

In an effort to avert a crisis, on 15 September 1938 British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain flew to Berchtesgaden, Hitler's summer retreat on the Austrian border, to discuss the situation. The two leaders agreed that any areas of the Sudetenland with a German-speaking majority who decided they wished to be part of Germany would be transferred to the Reich. Chamberlain put pressure on the French and Czechoslovakian governments. Beneš realised that these demands were a forerunner of more aggressive demands and was proved right when, on 22 September, Hitler demanded that the whole of the Sudetenland be handed over. Citing mistreatment of Germans living in Sudetenland, Hitler pencilled in military action to liberate them on 1 October. Chamberlain refused to give in to these demands and mobilised the British navy.

In an attempt to avert the war that now seemed to be looming, Mussolini stepped in to act as mediator. On 29 September 1938, a meeting attended by Mussolini, Hitler, Chamberlain and French Prime Minister Édouard Daladier took place in Munich. Czechoslovakia and the USSR, with whom Czechoslovakia had a treaty, were not invited. Without consulting the Czech people, it was decided to give Hitler what he wanted and the whole of the Sudetenland was ceded to Germany. In return, Chamberlain persuaded

Did you know? In a conversation with British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in 1938, Hitler gave his word of honour that Czechoslovakia had nothing to fear from Germany.

martial law

Temporary rule by the military in an emergency situation.

Did you know? After Munich, Hitler said, 'That fellow Chamberlain has ruined my entry into Prague ... Do you know why I finally yielded at Munich? I thought the Home Fleet [the warships of the Royal Navy stationed in Great Britain] might open fire.'



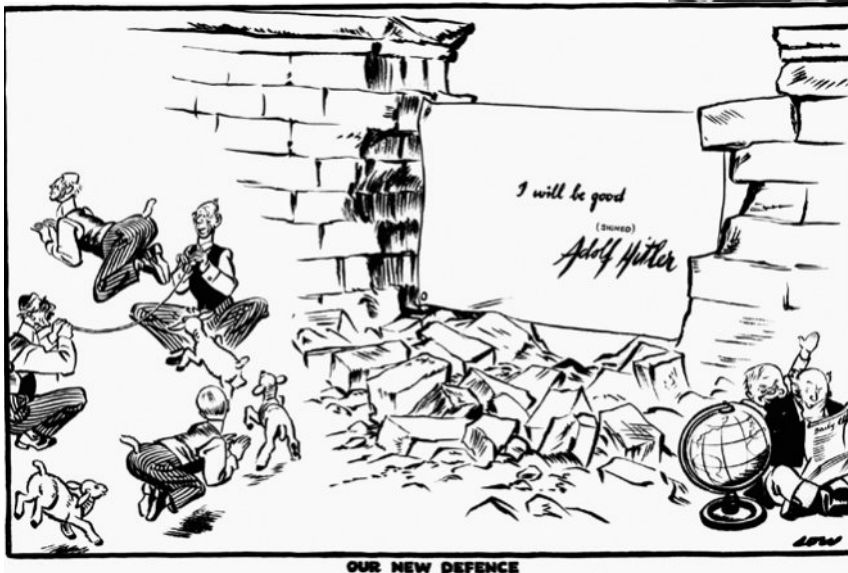
Hitler to sign an agreement not to make any more territorial demands in Europe. Chamberlain returned to a hero's welcome in Britain, declaring 'peace in our time'. Beneš resigned.



A.J.P. Taylor on the Munich Conference

Those who welcomed the Munich conference and its solution represented it as a victory for reason and conciliation in international affairs—appeasement as it was called at the time. The opponents of Munich saw in it an abdication by the two democratic powers, France and Britain; a surrender to fear; or a sinister conspiracy to prepare for a Nazi war of conquest against Soviet Russia. Munich was all these things.

📌 **Source 9.24** A.J.P. Taylor, 'The Myths of Munich', in *Struggles for Supremacy: Diplomatic Essays* by A.J.P. Taylor (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 276.



📌 **Source 9.25** Neville Chamberlain waves the Munich Agreement in the air after meeting with Hitler and Mussolini.

📌 **Source 9.26** 'Our New Defence' by British cartoonist David Low, published in the *Evening Standard*, 5 October 1938.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Using Sources 9.24–9.27 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

9.61 Outline how the solution reached at the Munich Conference was perceived at the time according to Taylor.

9.62 Compare the depictions of Western politicians and their actions at the Munich Conference in Sources 9.25–9.27.

9.63 Analyse the significance of Hitler's territorial ambitions as a cause of World War II. Use evidence to support your response.



📌 **Source 9.27** 'Chamberlain Confronts Mars' by British cartoonist Sidney 'George' Strube, published in the *Evening Standard*, 3 October 1938.



HISTORICAL ARGUMENTS

9.64 Create a two-column chart. On one side list all the arguments that justify the handing over of the Sudetenland to Hitler. On the other side, list all the arguments that suggest it was a disastrous decision that paved the way to war.

OR

Debate this topic: 'Hitler's invasion of the Sudetenland was inevitable and unpreventable.'

Within five days of the Munich Agreement, British Member of Parliament Winston Churchill made a speech in the House of Commons (see p. 274) in which he condemned the agreement and predicted that the whole of Czechoslovakia would be invaded within months. His views were supported by a public opinion poll that found 93 per cent of respondents did not believe Hitler when he said he had no more territorial ambitions.

Both Churchill's speech and the opinion poll proved to be correct. Less than six months later, on 15 March 1939, Hitler invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia, and its prosperity now fed the Nazi war machine. Britain and France did nothing but it was clear that Hitler intended to continue his eastward expansion.

Significant individual ↗

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, 1869–1940

Neville Chamberlain was the prime minister of Great Britain from 1937 to May 1940. He came to power when Hitler had already been breaking the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and reclaiming territory that had once been part of the German Empire. Chamberlain continued Britain's policy of appeasement—allowing Hitler to violate the terms of the treaty—to avoid another world war. Chamberlain signed over part of Czechoslovakia in September 1938 as part of the appeasement policy, but was forced to declare war on Nazi Germany on 3 September 1939 after Hitler invaded Poland.

He said: 'It is evil things that we will be fighting against.'

Said about: 'You have sat here too long for any good you are doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!' (*Leo Amery, Labour Party politician*)



Significant individual ↗

WINSTON CHURCHILL, 1874–1965

Winston Churchill served as British prime minister twice (1940–1945 and 1951–1955). He had a checkered career before his first term in power. For example, Churchill had devised and overseen the disastrous Gallipoli campaign in 1915. He spent much of the 1920s and 1930s isolated in parliament, an almost lone voice warning against the rising dangers of fascism and Hitler. Appointed prime minister following the resignation of Chamberlain in May 1940, Churchill rallied Great Britain during the disaster at Dunkirk with his great speeches and determination to fight on against the Nazis, even if it meant doing so alone.

He said: 'Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.'

Said about: 'An inspirational leader, he seemed to typify Britain's courage and perseverance in adversity and its conservatism in success.' (*Dwight D. Eisenhower, US general and president*)



THE GERMAN–SOVIET NON-AGGRESSION PACT

After Germany's invasion of Czechoslovakia there was fear that Hitler's attention would now turn to Poland. France and Britain guaranteed that they would declare war on Germany if Poland was invaded. In March 1939, Joseph Stalin suggested an alliance between the Soviet Union, Britain and France against Germany. However, despite the three countries meeting to talk, this never took place. The Soviet Union was seen by many people in Britain as a bigger threat than Germany; in fact, many people in Britain felt that a stronger Germany could act as protection against the communist threat in the east.

Although France had signed a mutual assistance treaty with the USSR in 1936, the failure of the French to stop the remilitarisation of the Rhineland led Stalin to doubt whether the French would honour the agreement. Stalin was suspicious about the motives of the Western democracies when he was not invited to Munich. He was also disillusioned with Britain and France when they did little to oppose Hitler's move into the Sudetenland. In turn, Chamberlain was suspicious of the Soviet Union. He wrote, 'I must confess to the most profound distrust of Russia. I have no belief whatever in her ability to maintain an effective offensive, even if she wanted to. And I distrust her motives, which seem to me to have little connection with our ideas of liberty, and to be concerned only with getting everyone else by the ears.'⁹

The breakdown of talks between the USSR, France and Britain opened up a further opportunity that Hitler was quick to take. Despite their mutual dislike, on 23 August 1939 Hitler and Stalin signed the German–Soviet Non-aggression Pact. The two sides agreed not to attack one another and, in private, they agreed to divide Poland between them. Hitler had known that to attack Poland he would need to make some kind of agreement with the USSR. This would enable Hitler to avoid a war on two fronts—and this is precisely what Stalin relied on. He strongly suspected that Hitler had no intention of sticking to the agreement. However, by signing the agreement Stalin would be able to buy time to build up his own armed forces.



Source 9.28 Hitler and Stalin as bride and groom. Cartoon by Clifford K. Berryman on the announcement of the German–Soviet Non-aggression Pact, 1939.

Soviet historian on the Anglo–French plan, 1969

The Anglo–French plan was to direct Germany towards the east and involve Hitler in conflict with the Soviet Union. Munich and the negotiations of 1939 provided clear proof of the willingness of the British and French governments to form an anti-Hitler alliance. The treaty with Germany was a step which the USSR was forced to take in the difficult situation that had come about in the summer of 1939. The Soviet government realised Hitler's aims and understood that the treaty would only bring a breathing space which would give them time to carry through the political and military measures needed in order to ensure the country's security.

Source 9.29 Cited in David Ferriby and Jim McCabe, *Modern World History for AQA Specification B* (London: Heinemann, 2002), 43.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—INTERPRETATIONS

Using Source 9.29 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.65** Outline the plans of the British and French.
- 9.66** Explain why the Soviets signed the German–Soviet Non-aggression Pact.
- 9.67** Evaluate the significance of the breakdown in relations between Britain, France and the Soviet Union as a cause of World War II.

THE INVASION OF POLAND

On 1 September 1939, the descent into the chaos of war came when Hitler invaded Poland. He had dismissed the British and French promises to guarantee Poland's security as an empty threat. Two days later Britain and France declared war. However, Poland was unprepared for the *Blitzkrieg* tactics employed by the Wehrmacht, and the expected support from Britain and France never materialised. Furthermore, Stalin ordered the Soviet invasion of Poland from the east on 17 September. Just twenty-six days after the country was invaded, Poland surrendered.

Over the next two years, the Nazis conquered most of Europe, controlling much of eastern Europe, half of France and threatening Britain. It was not until late 1942 that the tide began to turn against Germany, and it was another three years before the Third Reich was defeated.

Blitzkrieg

The 'lightning war' was a German military tactic of coordinated air and land forces with an emphasis on mechanised formations, such as massed tanks and speed.



➔ **Source 9.30** The German army invades Poland, 1939.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 9.68** Explain three causes and three consequences of the Munich Conference.
- 9.69** What factors led to the signing of the German–Soviet Non-aggression Pact in August 1939?
- 9.70** What were the consequences of the Nazi invasion of Poland in September 1939?

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- 9.71** Draw a timeline of Hitler's actions in the lead-up to World War II. Beside each event, note whether they were somewhat important or very important in contributing to the development of war. Justify your choices.

FLOWCHART

- 9.72** Construct a flowchart to show when, where and how Hitler might have been stopped. How might have alternative actions by international leaders prevented war?



ACTIONS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

A.J.P. TAYLOR, 1966: 'The League died in 1935.'

In any discussion of the reasons for the outbreak of World War II, the failure of the League of Nations is always considered. Along with the Great Depression and the severity of the Treaty of Versailles, the League's failures are regarded as a contributor to the second breakdown of world peace in twenty-five years.

The League of Nations was established in 1919 as part of the Treaty of Versailles. It was an international organisation designed to allow nations to discuss their problems rather than using military force and aggression to solve disputes. However, the League had two significant weaknesses: it was poorly organised and unable to act quickly and decisively, and it had no armed forces of its own. It was also hampered by the refusal of the world's most powerful nation, the US, to join. The League was also undermined when member countries such as Italy, Germany and Japan simply withdrew their membership when their territorial aggression was criticised. The lack of quick action in response to territorial aggression and military force made the actions of the League of Nations look weak and ineffective.

However, during the 1920s the League of Nations did experience some successes:

- The Refugee Commission was responsible for repatriating 400,000 refugees and prisoners of war after World War I. It successfully settled border disputes between Finland and Sweden, and between Greece and Bulgaria.
- The International Labour Organization attempted to establish trade union rights at an international level.
- The League of Nations Health Organization attempted to wipe out leprosy and prevent epidemic diseases such as cholera, malaria and typhoid. It also sent teams to dig freshwater wells in developing nations.

However, these successes were overshadowed by the failures of the League.

DIFFICULTIES FACING THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

One of the League's key aims was to encourage international disarmament. It failed to do this. Only Germany had disarmed, and that was because it was forced to under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. The nearest the League came to disarmament was the 1921 agreement of Britain, France, Japan and the US to limit the size of their armies. However, the lack of trust among nations meant no one was willing to be the first to disarm. When Germany began to rearm in 1935 nothing was done—and this made a mockery of the League's aims.

The main inadequacies of the League of Nations stemmed from its inability to respond effectively to international crises. The powers of the League relied on **moral condemnation**, economic sanctions and the military force of its member countries. The last power was the most inadequate. Following World War I, most nations were unable—and, more importantly, unwilling—to use military force. Moral condemnation was insufficient in the face of militaristic authoritarian governments, and the most powerful countries put their own self-interest ahead of supporting the League. The US government, having decided not to join the League of Nations, pursued a policy of isolationism, refusing to involve itself in the affairs of the rest of the world.

moral condemnation

Criticising the behaviour or actions of another based on a moral or ethical standpoint.



The League was further hampered by its organisation, as any action taken had to be agreed upon unanimously. Britain and France were the two most powerful countries in the League, and permanent members of its Council. Therefore, their support was required for any action to be taken. However, neither country held the power and status that they had prior to World War I. Both had been weakened economically by the conflict. France had been left with widespread devastation to its agricultural land and industrial areas, and Britain was more interested in maintaining its empire. Italy and Japan were also permanent members of the League of Nations Council, yet they were among the worst offenders in the 1930s.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND THE LEAGUE

The worldwide Great Depression, sparked by the Wall Street Crash, affected the economies of many countries. Imports and exports were subject to tariffs, and this severely disrupted international trade. Despite heavily depending on food imports to support a growing population, Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931 with its industry on the brink of collapse. The Chinese appealed to the League of Nations, and Japan was ordered to withdraw its troops.

Britain and France refused to risk war with Japan. Britain was concerned that its interests, notably Singapore and Hong Kong, would be at risk. Economic sanctions were an empty threat, as one of Japan's main trading partners, the US, was not part of the League. The League's inability to prevent invasion by its own members only reinforced the notion that it was inadequate, weak and ineffective as an international organisation.

The failure of the League to prevent the Italian invasion of Abyssinia also undermined faith in the organisation. Driven by a desire to re-establish Italy's greatness—and to divert attention from the misery brought on by the Great Depression—Mussolini sent troops into Abyssinia in 1935. The League's inability to stop this invasion encouraged Hitler to reoccupy the Rhineland.

By 1936 it was obvious to the international community that the League of Nations was a failure.

Source 9.31 'The Awful Warning.' This cartoon, published in *Punch* magazine, 1935, shows Britain and France reprimanding Mussolini.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 9.73** Outline the aims of the League of Nations.
- 9.74** What were the weaknesses of the League of Nations as an organisation?
- 9.75** Draw a table to show the successes and failures of the League of Nations.
- 9.76** Why was the League slow to react to Japan's invasion of Manchuria?
- 9.77** How did Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia help Hitler's plans?



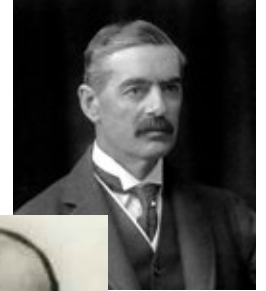
THE POLICY OF APPEASEMENT

During the 1930s, as Germany, Italy and Japan showed increasing aggression, many nations, especially Britain and France, pursued a policy of appeasement. Appeasement involves giving in to someone's demands, as far as is reasonably possible, to avoid conflict. The dreadful impact of World War I was still very raw during the 1930s, and certain leaders believed that every step should be taken to prevent another breakdown of peace.

One of the chief exponents of the policy of appeasement was British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who was so determined to avoid another war that he took no action when Hitler invaded the Rhineland or joined with Austria. Chamberlain's most famous act of appeasement was the Munich Agreement in 1938, where he and French Prime Minister Édouard Daladier agreed to allow Hitler to take control of the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia in return for a promise of no more aggression. It soon became clear that Hitler had no intention of keeping his promise, but at the time Chamberlain was praised for having secured 'peace in our time'.

There has been considerable debate as to how far appeasement was to blame for causing the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Did it encourage Hitler to assert himself more aggressively? Was it a reasonable and viable policy for politicians to have followed?

British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.



French Prime Minister Édouard Daladier.

REASONS FOR APPEASEMENT

- **Financial strain.** Britain and France did not have the finances to go to war. There were still severe economic problems as a result of the Great Depression. Debt and high unemployment meant that Britain and France concentrated on the welfare of their own countries and protecting their interests.
- **Military limitations.** Germany had a head start on rearmament. The British government had reduced the size of its armed forces after World War I and believed that the nation was not ready to go to war.
- **The Treaty of Versailles.** There was a widely held belief in Britain that the Treaty had been too harsh on Germany. It was felt that if the injustices of Versailles were put right there would be no need for German aggression.
- **Fear of communism.** Many countries saw Hitler as the lesser of two evils. A strong Germany would prevent the spread of communism across Europe by acting as a buffer between the Soviets in the east and the rest of the Western democracies. They feared communism more than they feared Hitler.
- **Public opinion.** Britain was the driving force behind appeasement, and many people felt that Czechoslovakia was not worth fighting for, especially as the majority of people in the disputed area were German. It was also unlikely that British Commonwealth countries, such as Australia and Canada, would support a war in 1938. However, attitudes changed when Hitler invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia and then invaded Poland.
- **Pacifism.** World War I had a massive psychological effect on people. A total of 16.5 million people died, including 8.5 million troops. Many people would do almost anything to avoid the horrors that had been experienced. In 1935, Britain held a Peace Ballot where 11.5 million people voted in favour of the League of Nations and its policy of collective security.

REASONS FOR APPEASEMENT

Financial strain

Military limitations

Treaty of Versailles

Fear of communism

Public opinion

Pacifism

Pacifism

The view that war is absolutely wrong and that people and governments should avoid war at all costs.



ARGUMENTS AGAINST APPEASEMENT

Sign of weakness

Strengthened Germany

Alienated Stalin

Hitler was untrustworthy

ARGUMENTS AGAINST APPEASEMENT

- **Sign of weakness.** It encouraged Hitler to be aggressive. Hitler gained more confidence every time he challenged the Treaty of Versailles and got away with it, becoming convinced that Britain and France would not oppose his expansion.
- **Strengthened Germany.** It enabled Hitler and Germany to become stronger and more difficult to defeat as they increased their access to land, people and resources.
- **Alienated Stalin.** Stalin had been quite prepared to form an alliance, but the failure of Britain and France to stand up to Hitler made him seek his own agreement.
- **Hitler was untrustworthy.** Hitler had made no secret of his determination to dominate eastern Europe and seek Lebensraum for Germans. It should not have been a surprise when Hitler broke his word.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

9.78 Define the term 'appeasement' in the context of Europe in the 1930s.

9.79 Why did Chamberlain and Daladier employ this policy in their dealings with Hitler?

➔ **Source 9.32** Richard Overy, *Origins of the Second World War* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), 20–22.

Richard Overy on appeasement and World War II

[Appeasement] was more or less consistent with the main lines of British foreign policy going back into the nineteenth century ... By appeasement was meant a policy of adjustment and accommodation of conflicting interests broadly to conform with Britain's unique position in world affairs ...

Many British politicians had been unhappy with the treaty [Versailles] from the outset and had already made moves to conciliate Germany before Hitler came to power. The feeling was widespread that German grievances were, up to a point, justified and that a lasting peace could only be secured by removing the more vindictive aspects of the peace settlement ...

The problem was that appeasement, in order to be successful, had to be conducted from a position of some strength. Instead, the two western states found themselves offering concessions from a position of relative weakness ... The pursuit of appeasement was therefore necessary to buy time for rearmament ... There was strong pressure from pacifist opinion in both Britain and France to avoid any confrontation that might involve war ...

British and French governments were as frightened of communism as they were of fascism.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—INTERPRETATIONS

Using Source 9.32 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

9.80 Outline three reasons why Britain and France decided to appease Hitler.

9.81 Explain the relative difference in military preparedness between the British and the French, and Germany.

9.82 Evaluate the significance of the policy of appeasement as the main cause of World War II. Use evidence to support your response.



THE CAUSES OF WORLD WAR II: USING SOURCES AS EVIDENCE



Source 9.33 'Ho hum! When he's finished pecking down that last tree he'll quite likely be tired' by Ted Geisel, published in *PM Magazine* (New York City), 22 May 1941.

Did you know? Ted Geisel is better known as Dr Seuss, the author of many famous children's stories such as *The Cat in the Hat* (1959), *Green Eggs and Ham* (1960) and *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* (1990) Geisel adopted Dr Seuss as a pen-name while in college to avoid punishment for breaking college regulations. Before he started writing children's books, Geisel was an illustrator and political cartoonist.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—PERSPECTIVES

Using Source 9.33 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.83** What message or view is conveyed in the cartoon?
- 9.84** What language, symbols and gestures are used to express a point of view in the cartoon?
- 9.85** When and where was the cartoon written or created? What was happening at that time? How might events and conditions at the time have influenced the content of the cartoon?
- 9.86** Can the cartoon be corroborated with other sources? What do other sources say?
- 9.87** Is this an accurate depiction of America's role in world affairs at the time? Explain your answer.



CONTINUED ...



➔ **Source 9.34** Winston Churchill's speech in the House of Commons, 5 October 1938.

Winston Churchill

We have sustained a total and unmitigated defeat ... I am not quite clear why there was so much danger of Great Britain or France being involved in a war with Germany at this juncture if, in fact, they were ready all along to sacrifice Czechoslovakia ... I believe the Czechs, left to themselves and told they were going to get no help from the Western Powers, would have been able to make better terms than they have got after all this tremendous perturbation; they could hardly have had worse ... Herr Hitler's victory, like so many of the famous struggles that have governed the fate of the world, was won upon the narrowest of margins ... I think you will find that in a period of time which may be measured by years, but may be measured only by months, Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime.

➔ **Source 9.35** Interviewed by Laurence Rees from *WW2History.com*, ww2history.com/experts/Richard_Overy/Professor_Richard_Overy

Richard Overy

There is no simple answer to the question why the Second World War happened. There are short term explanations, there are long term explanations, but I think that the explanation most people reach; that without Hitler there would never have been a war is, I think, a vast oversimplification. The war happened principally because of the consequences of the First World War that distorted the international order. It created all kinds of problems for the international economy and basically marked the point where all those areas of the world that Europe had tried to dominate for the previous century were waking up and saying, what is Europe doing to us?

This created a whole series of different dis-equilibriums ... All of this fed into a whole series of crises in the 1920s and the 1930s and Hitler, it seems to me, is part of that pattern but he's not the only part of that pattern.

➔ **Source 9.36** Interviewed by Laurence Rees from *WW2History.com*, ww2history.com/experts/Sir_Ian_Kershaw/Why_the_war_started

Ian Kershaw

It depends on your perspective, but it became a world war with the entry of the United States and Japan into this war in December 1941. But the war had been running in Europe since September 1939, and it had been running in the Far East since the beginning of the Japanese-Chinese war in July 1937. So you have two wars at opposite ends of the globe which then become a world war in December 1941. But the short answer to the question, therefore, is that this war happened because of the expansionist aims and policies of Germany and of Japan.

HISTORICAL SOURCES—INTERPRETATIONS

Using Sources 9.34–9.36 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 9.88** What would the consequences of appeasement be according to Winston Churchill?
- 9.89** What were the causes of World War II according to Richard Overy?
- 9.90** How does the opinion of Ian Kershaw differ from that of Overy?
- 9.91** To what extent do these two interpretations explain the causes of the outbreak of World War II?

9.92 What other factors should be considered?

9.93 Referring to this book and at least two other sources, write a paragraph explaining which of the two approaches (Overy or Kershaw) you favour. Give evidence to support your comments.

HISTORICAL ARGUMENTS

9.94 'If Chamberlain and Daladier had stood up to Hitler in the 1930s, World War II could have been averted.' To what extent do you agree? Use evidence to support your response.



CHAPTER 9 REVIEW

The German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 plunged Europe into war. The causes of World War II are numerous and often interlinked. The Treaty of Versailles gave Hitler a point around which he could rally the support of the German people, whose pride and economy had been damaged. The economic impact of World War I was exacerbated by the Wall Street Crash.

The subsequent economic depression contributed to the rise of fascist and militaristic regimes, and encouraged countries such as Italy and Japan to seek answers to their economic and social problems outside their borders. Hitler sought to gain territory on Germany's borders that had been lost or ceded under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Italy felt that it did not receive sufficient territorial rewards at the end of World War I, so Mussolini sought to expand Italy's empire in Africa. Wracked by economic decline and military coups, Japan attacked China in search of raw resources and a greater role in world affairs.

The inaction of the League of Nations seemed, at times, to encourage this territorial aggression. Arguably, the preoccupation of politicians struggling to deal with their own economic problems caused by the Great Depression also contributed to the outbreak of war in 1939. The subsequent war lasted six years and cost the lives of up to eighty million soldier and civilian deaths.

KEY SUMMARY POINTS

- The Paris Peace Conference created many resentments and frustrations.
- This contributed to the growth of extremist, militarist regimes in Italy, Germany and Japan.
- Under Hitler, Germany began to reclaim territory lost under the Treaty of Versailles.
- The British and French adopted a policy of appeasement with Hitler and Mussolini to avoid war.
- American isolation encouraged the expansionistic aims of the dictators.
- The League of Nations was powerless to stop the onset of war.

REVIEW

9.95 Create a mind map to show how Britain, France, Italy and the USSR contributed to the outbreak of war in 1939.

9.96 Summarise the following causes of World War II:

- Treaty of Versailles
- Japanese expansion
- economic depression
- Hitler's actions
- appeasement
- militarism
- the rise of fascist Italy
- the failure of the League of Nations
- anti-communism.

9.97 Prioritise the nine causes of World War II listed above using a graphic organiser such as a 'Diamond 9'. Justify your choices.

EXTENDED RESPONSE

9.98 Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence, and a clear conclusion.

- Explain how the Treaty of Versailles contributed to the outbreak of war in 1939.
- Explain how the failure of the League of Nations encouraged territorial aggression in the 1930s.
- Explain how the actions of Hitler led to the outbreak of war in 1939.

ESSAY

9.99 Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- According to A.J.P. Taylor, war broke out not because of Hitler's design but because of Chamberlain's blunders. To what extent do you agree?
- Richard Overy wrote, 'No single factor was more important in explaining the breakdown of the diplomatic system in the 1930s than the world economic crisis'. To what extent do you agree with this assessment?
- 'The League of Nations was too weak to keep the peace.' How accurate is this statement in relation to the events of 1939?



A

abdicate

To give up the throne.

abolished

Legally removed.

absolute monarchy

A form of government in which a monarch has absolute power that is not limited by laws or a constitution.

agrarian

A society whose economy is predominantly based on farming instead of industry.

alienation

The state of feeling isolated or cut off from one's social group or society.

alphabet agencies

The nickname, often derisive, for the institutions set up by Roosevelt to alleviate the Great Depression.

American Dream

The idea that anyone in America, regardless of their status or class, can be successful.

Anglo-Celts

The people who inhabit England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. This term also refers to the descendants of those people in many countries around the world.

annexed

Take possession.

Anschluss

The annexation of Austria by Germany in 1938.

antagonism

Active opposition.

anti-Semitism

'A certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews.'

appeasement

Negotiating and conceding to a nation's demands to avoid war.

armaments

Military weapons and equipment.

armistice

A truce; an agreement from opposing sides to stop fighting.

arms race

When nations increase their spending on military resources to compete with a rival or rivals. In response, the rivals increase their own spending, and a military escalation begins.

Arts

Creative and imaginative activities, including visual arts such as architecture, sketches, paintings and photographs; literature such as plays, poetry and novels; and sound through music.

Aryan

The misconceived notion that northern European and Scandinavian people are inherently superior to all others.

Austro-Hungarian Empire

The empire that controlled lands in Central Europe from the 1860s to its breakup in 1918.

autarky

Economic independence for a nation.

authoritarian

A government that has total power over its citizens and rules by force or fear.

autobahnen

German freeways

autocratic/autocracy

A system of government in which supreme power lies in the hands of one person, an autocrat, such as an emperor or tsar. This person has absolute power and is not limited by the law. In Russia this person was the tsar and the system was known as tsarist autocracy.

avant-garde

From the French for 'vanguard' or leader. It refers to any innovative art form, but in particular to new art forms developed in the early twentieth century.

Axis Powers

The alliance of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan during World War II.

B

backroom deals

When politicians make decisions without public knowledge or scrutiny.

balance of power

The belief that peace will be preserved if no single nation becomes too powerful so that power is balanced among several nations.

Balkans

A culturally and ethnically diverse region in south-east Europe that today includes Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece. Before 1914, the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires had particular interests in Balkan territories.

bank run or 'run on the bank'

When a large number of customers try to withdraw their deposits from a bank or financial institution at the same time. This creates a spiral of more panicked customers, and may lead to the bank being forced to close its doors as it runs out of cash.

barter

To trade goods or services for other goods or services instead of using money.

Bauhaus

A highly influential German design school first established in the city of Weimar. The influence of the Bauhaus is evident in many fields of the arts, most notably architecture, interior and graphic design.

Big Four

The name given to the leaders of Great Britain, France, the US and Italy.

blackface

When a performer, usually white, blackens their face to mimic and parody darker-skinned people, often African Americans. This is considered deeply offensive.

Blackshirts

The paramilitary force of Mussolini's Fascists; named after the colour of their uniform.

Blitzkrieg

The 'lightning war' was a German military tactic of coordinated air and land forces with an emphasis on mechanised formations, such as massed tanks and speed.

Bolshevik

A small revolutionary group of communists led by Lenin; the Reds.

Bolshevism

Revolutionary political doctrine of Russia's Bolshevik Party, which focused on overthrowing capitalism.

boom

An economic period of high employment, wages, confidence and consumer spending.

bootlegged

Goods produced illegally.

borrowing on the margin

When someone borrows money from the bank to invest, hoping that they can cover their repayments (the margin) when they sell the shares for a profit.

bourgeoisie

The property-owning middle class.

C

cabaret

A performance or form of musical entertainment usually held at night in a restaurant, nightclub or bar.

caricature

A drawing or impression of a person that exaggerates certain features or mannerisms in a humorous or critical way.

ensorship

Banning or strictly limiting forms of media that do not conform to the government's ideology.

Central Powers

The countries opposed by the Allies in World War I, principally Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

chancellor

The head of the legislative body in the Weimar Republic, similar to a prime minister.

Cheka

Soviet secret police service.

civil war

A conflict between two or more armed groups within a nation state fighting for control of that country.

classicism

A style in painting and architecture derived from ancient Greek and Roman architecture.

coalition

When several political parties unite to form government.

collective security

An assurance of peace based on member nations' compliance with the decisions and arbitration of a supervisory organisation such as the League of Nations.

collectivisation

A Soviet program initiated in the late 1920s to consolidate small peasant farm holdings into large-scale collective farms.

colonies

Foreign territories ruled by another country.

Comintern

The Communist International, established in 1919, was an umbrella organisation for communist parties.

concentration camps

Generally used to denote a facility for holding political opponents of a regime. The term is most generally applied to those established in Germany during the Third Reich.

concessions

Agreements that granted the German government special trading rights over particular areas in China.

Congress

The legislative branch of the US government comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate.

conscription

Compulsory service in the armed forces for the citizens of a particular nation.

conservative

A political ideology favouring the status quo.

consort

A secondary wife to the emperor.

constituent assembly

A representative government body elected by the people based on a constitution; similar to Australia's parliament.

constitution

A written document that outlines how a government will function and who is permitted to participate.

constitutional monarchy

A form of government that recognises a monarch (a king or queen), as the head of state. The powers of the monarch are limited by a form of constitution.

constructivism

An artistic movement in the early twentieth century that reduced reality to simple objects and bright colours.

consumerism

The idea that people should purchase goods in an ever-increasing amount.

consumption

Use of goods and services.

contravention

An action that goes against a law or treaty.

Cossacks

People from Ukraine and southern Russia who served in the tsar's army on horseback

coup

The takeover, usually with force, of a legitimate government by a well-organised group, usually part of the military.

Covenant

An agreement.

cubism

An art style, especially in painting, in which objects are presented in several superimposed views, almost as if the viewer is seeing the object from more than one side.

cultural expression

How the arts, ideas and customs are shown or expressed.

culture

The totality of human thought, activity, expression, communication and customs.

cynical

Sceptical or distrustful of people's motives, believing that people only act in self-interest.

D**deflation**

A general decrease in the price of goods and an increase in the purchasing value of money. This may be associated with higher unemployment, when jobs are scarce and people have less money to spend on goods.

degenerate

An immoral or corrupt person.

dekulakisation

Soviet campaign to eliminate the kulaks as a class.

demilitarised

Removing soldiers, equipment and military bases from a designated area.

demobilisation

The process of reducing the size of an army by releasing soldiers back to civilian life.

democracy

'Rule by the people.' A system of government that allows the people to elect representatives and be involved in decision-making.

denigrate

To belittle, criticise or attack.

denounce

To publicly condemn, or to inform against or accuse.

devout

Very religious.

dictator

A ruler with total power.

dictatorship

A type of government where one individual holds all political power.

diktat

An official order that people must obey.

disarmament

The deliberate decision of a nation to reduce its armed forces to promote peace.

discrimination

Unfair or unjust treatment on the basis of gender, sex, race, class, ethnicity or religion.

disenfranchised

To take away the right to vote.

domestic sphere

Work done in the house, such as cooking, cleaning and raising children.

dual authority

The period from March to October 1917 when the Provisional Government and Petrograd Soviet ruled Russia.

duma

The Russian Parliament, established in 1905.

dynasty

A series of rulers from the same family.

E**economic depression**

A prolonged and sustained period of low economic activity, with high and rising unemployment and low demand for goods.

economic sanctions

Punishing another country by restricting or banning trade in order to damage the target nation's economy.

empire

A group of states or countries ruled over and 'owned' by another country.

expressionism

An artistic movement of the early twentieth century that featured images of reality distorted by emotion and subjectivity.

F**fascism**

A political movement or system of government that is led by a dictator. It features extreme nationalism, suppression of opposition, anti-liberalism and anti-communism.

Federation

The act of joining states together under one central authority.

feminine

Appearance, behaviours and activities that are usually associated with women.

feudal

A system where peasants worked land owned by a lord.

fin de siècle

A French term meaning 'end of the century', marking the turning point between the end of one era and the beginning of another.

Final Solution

A term used by the Nazis to describe their plan for the physical extermination of European Jews during World War II.

flapper

A term for a young American woman in the 1920s who defied traditional gender roles due to her appearance, actions and habits.

Fourteen Points

Wilson's plan to end the fighting with neither rewards nor punishments for belligerent nations.

Führer

'Leader' in German; the title used by Adolf Hitler to declare himself absolute ruler of Germany.

G**Gauleiter**

German for 'district leader'. In the Nazi Party, a Gauleiter was in charge of party administration in a large city or region.

gentile

People who are not part of the Jewish faith or culture.

ghetto

A walled-off section of a city where Jews were forced to live.

Gosplan

The Soviet agency responsible for setting quotas in the Five-Year Plans.

great migration

The movement of significant numbers of African Americans to northern US states in the early twentieth century.

grievances

A hardship suffered, or complaint.

Gross National Product (GNP)

The approximate value of all goods and services produced by one country in a year.

gulag

A prison or forced-labour camp.

H**hedonism**

Living according to the belief that pleasure or happiness is the best or most important thing in life.

high treason

Betraying one's country, usually by attempting to overthrow the government or kill the leaders. This is usually punishable by death.

Holocaust

A term used to describe the murder of six million European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II.

Holodomor

Meaning 'death by hunger' in Ukrainian, the term refers to the starvation of millions of people in the Ukraine in 1932–1933, as a result of Soviet policies.

Hooverville

Shanty towns of self-made dwellings named after Herbert Hoover.

humanism

A philosophy or belief in the idea of human freedom and progress. It is generally non-religious and based on a view that all humans have value.

hyperinflation

An economic situation when the value of a currency declines extremely rapidly due to overprinting. Prices soar and wages fail to keep up.

I**immigration**

When people leave their country of birth to live in another country.

imperial

Relating to an empire

imperialism

A policy to increase a nation's influence by expanding beyond its own territories and acquiring and creating an overseas empire

imperialist

A supporter of imperial rule or an imperial power.

indoctrinate

To force one's views (usually political) on another through education and propaganda.

industrialisation

The process whereby a country expands its manufacturing output on a vast scale by increasing the number of factories.

infallible

Someone or something that is never wrong or failing and not liable to fail or mislead.

inflation

A general increase in prices and a fall in the purchasing value of money. The opposite of deflation. People may have work, but their wages buy increasingly less.

institutionalised

Set in law or formalised as a norm by custom.

International Brigades

Military units made up of volunteers sent to fight in the Spanish Civil War on the republican side.

internationalism

The idea that nation-states can put aside self-interest for the greater good of all the people on the planet.

isolationism

The policy of isolating one's nation from involvement with other countries by not becoming involved in politics, joining alliances or making economic commitments.

itinerant

Moving from place to place with no fixed address or residence.

J**jurisdiction**

The area over which an institution has authority or control.

K**kaiser**

The German word for emperor.

Komsomol

The Communist youth organisation for children aged 14–28.

kowtowing

Showing deep respect or obedience. The Mandarin word koutou means to kneel and touch the ground with the forehead in worship or submission.

Kristallnacht

On 9–10 November 1938, a night of violence by the SA and civilians was directed against Jewish businesses and synagogues in Germany.

Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

An American terrorist hate group that believes white people are the master race, and that African American, Jews, Catholics, Muslims, immigrants and other groups should be eliminated to keep society 'pure'.

kulaks

A term initially used to describe peasants who were wealthy enough to own land and hire labour; later used as a label for any member of the peasantry identified as a threat to the regime.

L**laissez-faire**

A government policy of not interfering with or attempting to control the economy.

Lebensraum

Hitler used the term 'Lebensraum' to describe his desire to expand Germany's territory into eastern Europe.

legislative branch

One of the three branches of state power (the others being executive and judiciary). The legislative branch is generally responsible for proposing and debating bills before they become laws.

legislatures

Where each state's laws are made; the equivalent of Australia's state parliaments.

liberalism

The belief that people should be equal under the law and have individual civil rights.

lira

The official currency of Italy prior to its adoption of the euro in 1999.

lobby

Representatives who seek to promote the interests of a particular company or industry, usually to gain favourable government attention.

lynch

Execution, usually by hanging, without legal authority.

M**mandate**

When a country is given the responsibility for administering the affairs of another.

Mandate of Heaven

Chinese belief that Heaven bestows the right to rule ('mandate') on a just ruler.

martial law

Temporary rule by the military in an emergency situation.

means-tested

Investigating someone's financial position to determine if they are eligible for assistance.

Meiji Restoration

Meaning 'enlightened rule', the Meiji Restoration was series of events that restored imperial rule in Japan.

metropolis

A large city; from the ancient Greek word for 'mother city'.

migrant

Someone who moves from one place or country to another.

migration

The movement of people from one place to another.

militaristic

When military commanders exert excessive influence on government and policy, and when civilians, even elected representatives, have limited control.

miscegenation

Marriage or sexual relations between people of different races.

modernism

A term used to describe the common characteristics of a number of movements in the creative arts from the start of the twentieth century.

moral condemnation

Criticising the behaviour or actions of another based on a moral or ethical standpoint.

mutiny

Similar to a strike, when soldiers and sailors refuse to fight or to obey orders.

N**nationalism**

Pride in belonging to one's country.

Neutrality Acts

Three laws passed by the US Congress from 1935 to 1937 that made it illegal to sell or transport arms and ammunition to countries at war.

New Deal

A series of measures begun in 1933 under the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt that was intended to lift the US out of the Great Depression.

New Economic Policy (NEP)

Lenin's pragmatic compromise to promote economic recovery by allowing concessions to the market economy.

new objectivity

A variety of expressionism that was particularly significant in Germany. The most well-known form stressed political sentiments.

NKVD

The secret police organisation that replaced the OGPU.

O**OGPU**

Replaced the Cheka as the secret state police of the USSR.

Okhrana

The tsar's secret police.

old world

The countries of Europe, which were considered to have old customs and traditions

oppressed

The person being treated cruelly or unfairly.

oppressive

Treating people cruelly and unfairly.

oppressor

Someone who treats others cruelly or unfairly.

Ottoman Empire

The empire based on today's Turkey once stretched from the Austrian border, through southern Russia, the Middle East and North Africa, with its capital at Constantinople (today's Istanbul). During World War I it was allied with the Central Powers; after its defeat in 1918, the empire was broken up and the Republic of Turkey emerged from its core lands.

P**pacifism**

The view that war is absolutely wrong and that people and governments should avoid war at all costs.

pacifist

Opposing violence to resolve conflict.

packing the courts

When a politician fills a court with supporters so that legislation is not deemed unconstitutional.

pageantry

An elaborate ceremony.

paramilitary

Forces that are armed and dressed like soldiers but are not part of the official army of the state.

patriarchal

Relating to a system in society, government or the family where male members dominate and make the decisions.

partitioning

To divide into parts. Those regions of the subcontinent with mostly Hindu populations became India, and those with mostly Muslim populations (in the north-west and in the east) became Pakistan. In 1971, the eastern portion gained independence from Pakistan and became Bangladesh.

passive resistance

Defying oppression using non-violent tactics and non-compliance.

passivity

Enduring, receiving or submitting to an action without resistance.

periodical

A publication that is released on a regular basis, such as a magazine or journal.

persecution

Hostility or ill-treatment on the basis of gender, sex, race, class, ethnicity or religion.

perspective

Representing three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface that gives the right impression of their height, depth and position in relation to each other.

perversion

Change to or distortion of the original course, meaning or state of something.

petition

A note, list or document that outlines demands or requirements that is delivered to authority.

Pioneers

The Communist youth organisation for children under the age of fourteen.

plantation system

The agricultural system common in the southern states of the US prior to the Civil War, consisting of large farms that relied on slaves to do most work.

plebiscite

A vote held to determine the people's opinion. The result is not necessarily legally binding on the government.

plenary session

A meeting attended by all the members or participants.

Politburo

A small committee at the head of the CPSU that set government policy for the USSR.

populist

A political approach that aims to appeal to the concerns of the common people.

procurement

When the state takes the resources or produce of its citizens; requisitioning.

progressive

Liberal and forward-thinking.

Prohibition

Making particular items or behaviour forbidden or illegal. In America, it was prohibited to make, sell or transport alcoholic drinks between 1920 and 1933.

proletariat

The working class; wage-earners.

propaganda

An organised means of spreading a particular philosophy. It uses art, literature, radio, film, media releases, education and other forms of communication to transmit a message that a government or organisation wishes to relay.

Provisional Government

The temporary government established to administer Russia after the abdication of the tsar.

Prussia

The largest and most powerful Germanic state. Centred on its capital, Berlin, Prussian lands stretched across what is now north-east Germany and included much of present-day Poland. In the 1860s, its prime minister, Otto von Bismarck, led the unification of German states that resulted in the formation of the German Empire in 1871.

puppet emperor

An emperor installed by a dominating country to give the appearance of local authority. The emperor was like a puppet controlled by Japan.

purged

Remove unwanted members from a political party.

putsch

The German word for 'thrust' or 'knock'. An attempt to overthrow a government by force.

Q**quota**

A set number or proportion.

R**Raj**

Meaning 'rule'; applied to the period of British rule in India.

real wages

The amount of money a worker takes home relative to the price of everyday goods. This is often referred to as 'purchasing power'.

rearmament

The process of arming a nation with new or better weapons.

recession

A period in time when there is a decline in economic activity.

Reconstruction

The era in the southern US states lasting from 1865–1877.

Red Army

The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army was founded during the Civil War by Leon Trotsky in February 1918. In 1922 it became the army of the Soviet Union. 'Red' symbolises the blood of the workers in their struggle against capitalism.

Red Guard

The armed wing of the Bolshevik Party. It was made up mainly of armed factory workers.

referendum

A vote taken by the citizens of a state on important matters, such as changing the constitution.

regent

A person appointed to administer the kingdom when the monarch is too young to rule.

Reichstag

The German Parliament.

renaissance

A cultural or social rebirth, named after the Italian Renaissance of the fifteenth century.

reparations

A set amount of money one nation has to pay another to cover the damage caused during a war.

repatriation

The process of returning people to their place of origin. This includes the process of returning refugees or military personnel to their place of origin.

republic

A country or political system whose head of state is not a monarch, and where the people have the right to elect representatives. Republics often have a president.

requisitioning

Another term for procurement.

revolutions

A series of drastic political and social changes that occur within a short space of time.

Roaring Twenties

A phrase used to describe the 1920s, particularly in America, where people and the economy prospered.

roubles

The currency of imperial Russia and the Soviet Union.

Russification

The policy of enforcing Russian language, culture and religion on non-Russians, especially ethnic minorities in Imperial Russia.

S**sanction**

A penalty or punishment.

satirical

Something that uses humour to mock or criticise.

schism

A great rift or divide between two groups.

School

In culture, 'school' refers to the followers of a particular art style. For example, the Bauhaus school comprised artists, architects and designers who followed the styles and principles of the Bauhaus movement.

scuttled

Deliberately sinking one's own ship, usually to prevent it from falling into enemy hands.

secular

An institution or organisation, usually a government, that is not associated with religion or faith in any way.

segregation

When two groups in a society are kept separate by law, typically on the basis of race and to the considerable disadvantage of one of those races.

self-determination

The process by which a country determines its own statehood and forms its own government.

self-made man

Anyone who rises from a poor or obscure background and becomes wealthy through their own efforts. This was a crucial part of the American Dream.

separatism

When a region seeks to break away from a state and form its own nation.

share market

Also known as the stock exchange, this is a place where shares in companies are bought and sold. Shares give the buyer part-ownership of a company and a portion of its profits.

sharecroppers

Farmers who worked on rented land.

shares

Shares are bought and sold on the stock exchange or share market. Shares give the buyer part-ownership of a company

shilling

A monetary unit and coin used in Australia until decimalisation in 1966.

socialist realism

An artistic movement of the early to mid-twentieth century that features realistic depictions of nature and human activity but has overtly political overtones.

soviet

A council or committee of the Soviet Union. The term emerged from the various revolutionary councils of workers and soldiers during the 1917 Russian Revolution. When used as 'Soviets', it refers to the Soviet Union of Socialist Republics.

Sovnarkom

The Soviet government that came to power in the October Revolution.

speak-easies

Places where alcohol was sold illegally.

speculation

When people borrow money to buy stock market shares, gambling or 'speculating' that the price of shares will rise and they will get a return that covers the original money borrowed plus a profit from the sale of their shares.

spheres of influence

Territories over which an imperial power has exclusive influence without actually annexing them.

stagnant

Not growing or developing.

stalemate

When a conflict has reached a point where neither side can make further progress or win.

subjugate

To bring under complete control or domination by submission or conquest.

Sudetenland

The German-speaking area of Czechoslovakia.

suffrage

The right to vote.

suffragette

A woman who campaigned for the right to vote.

Supreme Court

The highest court of appeals in the US. It also hears matters relating to the Constitution.

surplus

More than what is needed.

swastika

The symbol used by the Nazi Party that, they believed, represented the pure Aryan race.

synagogue

The Jewish place of worship; equivalent to a mosque or church.

T**tactless**

Lacking sensitivity in dealing with others; often offensive.

talkies

Films that featured dialogue and sound.

tariff

A duty or custom imposed on imports or exports. A tariff on imports is designed to protect local industry or production.

Technicolor

A process that allows films to be presented in colour.

temperance

Refusing to drink alcoholic beverages.

Third Reich

The name given to Germany when Hitler came to power and wanted to establish an empire under his Nazi regime (1933–1945)

total war

A war fought without limitations, where no resources (including people) are exempt. War is prioritised over all other aspects of society.

totalitarianism

A totalitarian society is one in which the government, a group or an individual has absolute control over the people and all aspects of their public and private lives.

trade unions

Organisations set up in workplaces to represent interests of the workers, such as fair wages and safe working conditions.

treaty

A formal agreement between one or more nations related to peace, alliance, commerce or other international matters.

Triple Alliance

A treaty signed in 1882 by Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy that tied all three nations in a military pact. Italy made a similar secret treaty with France in 1902.

Triple Entente

Formed in 1907 by Britain, France and Russia, the Triple Entente formed a counterbalance to the Triple Alliance.

troika

Government rule by a group of three powerful individuals.

tyrant

An absolute ruler who is often cruel and unjust.

U**underdog**

A person or character who seems unlikely to win or succeed.

unemployment

Being without paid work.

unification

Two or more countries combine to become one.

urbanisation

When a large amount of people move from the countryside to the cities over a period of time.

USSR

Acronym for the confederation, eventually comprising fifteen states, which was dominated by Russia and lasted until 1991.

usurers

People who lend money at extremely high levels of interest.

utopia

A perfect society where everyone is happy and everyone's needs and desires are met.

V**vanguard**

A group of people leading the way.

Volksgemeinschaft

The idea of a national community that transcended class, religious and regional differences.

voluntarism

The general approach to the economic depression advocated by President Hoover. It favoured business-driven solutions rather than direct government intervention.

W**Wall Street**

The location of the New York Stock Exchange.

War Communism

A series of economic policies serving the militaristic and political objectives of the Bolshevik Party in civil war conditions.

war of attrition

Wearing down an enemy gradually over time through a series of small actions or through loss of soldiers and military equipment.

Wehrmacht

The name of the German armed forces between 1935 and 1945.

Weimar Republic

The name given to the republican government that ruled in Germany from 1919 to 1933. It was named after the city where it first sat in 1919.

Westminster system

The British system of government with three branches—the legislature (makes laws), the executive (administers laws) and the judiciary (interprets laws).

white supremacist

An organisation or group that believes in the racial and cultural superiority of white people.

white supremacy

The belief that white people are superior to other racial groups.

Y**yen**

The unit of currency used in Japan.

TIMELINE: 1858–1921

POLITICAL

1858

The British Raj (British rule in India) commences

1861

Dowager Empress Cixi becomes regent, effectively ruling China



1 JANUARY 1863

US President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation

APRIL 1865

Civil war in America ends

1870

Unification of Italy

1871

Unification of Germany

1901

Federation of Australia

1906

First Duma opens in Russia

1912

End of Qing Dynasty in China

1915

Gandhi returns to India and leads the national movement

1917

Revolution in Russia

Abdication of Tsar Nicholas II

Provisional Government formed

Bolsheviks seize power

5–6 JANUARY 1918

Newly elected Constituent Assembly formed in Russia

8 JANUARY 1918

Woodrow Wilson delivers Fourteen Points

3 MARCH 1918

Treaty of Brest-Litovsk sets out peace terms between Germany and Russia

17 JULY 1918

Romanov family of Russia assassinated

3 OCTOBER 1918

Wilhelm II of Germany handed authority on military decisions

9 NOVEMBER 1918

Wilhem II abdicates

FEBRUARY 1918

Red Army formed in Russia

APRIL 1918

Civil War begins in Russia

9 NOVEMBER 1918

German delegation begins formal armistice negotiations at Compiègne

11 NOVEMBER 1918

Germany signs armistice, formally ending World War I

1904–1905

Russo–Japanese War

1905

Bloody Sunday in Russia

10 OCTOBER 1911

Wuchang Uprising leads to the end of imperial rule in China

28 JUNE 1914

Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, is assassinated, sparking World War I

1 AUGUST 1914

Germany declares war on Russia

4 AUGUST 1914

Germany invades Belgium; Britain declares war on Germany

22 APRIL 1915

German army uses mustard gas for the first time in Ypres

25 APRIL 1915

ANZAC troops land at Gallipoli



6 APRIL 1917

US President Wilson declares war on Germany

MILITARY

ECONOMIC

BEFORE 1918

1909

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) founded in the US

1915

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) revival starts in Georgia, US

1905

Die Brücke art movement begins in Dresden



1910

Beginning of German film industry

1913

Russian constructivism emerges

1918

NOVEMBER 1918—JANUARY 1919

Street fighting, attempts at communist revolution in Germany

SOCIAL

CULTURAL

America refuses to join the League of Nations; pursues an isolationist policy

JANUARY 1919

DAP founded by Drexler in Germany

First elections held in new Weimar Republic

25 JANUARY 1919

Plenary session of Paris Peace Conference accepts proposal for creation of League of Nations



MARCH 1919

Benito Mussolini forms the Italian Fascist Party

28 JUNE 1919

Treaty of Versailles signed in the Hall of Mirrors

JULY 1919

Weimar Constitution adopted

10 SEPTEMBER 1919

Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (Austrian treaty with Allies)

SEPTEMBER 1919

Hitler joins DAP

21 JUNE 1919

German Navy sinks seventy-four of its own ships at Scapa Flow, Scotland

JANUARY 1919

Grain requisitioning introduced in Russia



16 JANUARY 1920

First session of the League of Nations, Paris

24 FEBRUARY 1920

DAP renamed NSAP

13 MARCH 1920

Kapp Putsch attempted in Germany

1 NOVEMBER 1920

The seat of the League of Nations moves to Geneva

15 NOVEMBER 1920

First assembly of League of Nations convened in Geneva by US President Wilson

15 DECEMBER 1920

Austria admitted to the League of Nations

8-16 MARCH 1921

Tenth Communist Party Congress in Russia

JULY 1921

Hitler becomes leader of the Nazi Party



NOVEMBER 1921

The SA is formed in Germany

Famine conditions in parts of Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan

MARCH 1921

End of War Communism in Russia; Lenin ushers in NEP

1919

1920

1921

4-15 JANUARY 1919

Spartacist uprising in Germany

16 JANUARY 1920

Prohibition laws come into force in the US

18 AUGUST 1920

Nineteenth Amendment ratified, giving American women the right to vote



20 AUGUST 1920

Radio broadcasting begins in the US

MARCH 1921

Kronstadt Rebellion in Russia

30 JUNE 1921

International Conference for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children, Geneva

2 SEPTEMBER 1921

The Permanent Court of International Justice established

JULY 1919

Bauhaus art school founded in Weimar

POLITICAL



MILITARY



ECONOMIC

SOCIAL



CULTURAL

TIMELINE: 1922–1931

POLITICAL

FEBRUARY 1922
Cheka renamed GPU (Russian initials for State Political Administration)

18 SEPTEMBER 1922
Hungary admitted to the League of Nations

DECEMBER 1922
USSR (Soviet Union) officially formed



28 SEPTEMBER 1922
Benito Mussolini and the Blackshirts march on Rome to demand government authority

JULY 1923
GPU becomes OGPU in Russia

1 SEPTEMBER 1923
First Nazi Party rally held at Nuremberg

1924
Johnson-Reed Immigration Act limits the number of immigrants allowed into the US

21 JANUARY 1924
Lenin dies after a series of strokes

10 JUNE 1924
Italian socialist leader Giacomo Matteotti is kidnapped and killed by fascists

FEBRUARY 1925
Hitler released from prison

APRIL 1925
Hindenburg elected Weimar Republic president

17 JUNE 1925
Geneva Protocol bans mustard gas and chemical weapons in international armed conflict

DECEMBER 1925
Stalin announces doctrine of 'Socialism in One Country'

25 FEBRUARY 1926
Francisco Franco becomes General of Spain

8 SEPTEMBER 1926
Germany admitted to the League of Nations and given permanent membership of the assembly

14 SEPTEMBER 1926
Locarno treaties ratified and come into effect



NOVEMBER 1925
The SS formed in Germany

MILITARY

ECONOMIC



Hyperinflation in Germany

1922

1923

1924

1925

1926

SOCIAL

1922
Hitlerjugend (HJ) formed, renamed Hitler Youth in 1926

8-9 NOVEMBER 1923
Beer Hall putsch



Bauhaus art school moved to Dessau

14 NOVEMBER 1922
British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) begins radio service in the UK

10 APRIL 1925
The Great Gatsby published

CULTURAL

12 NOVEMBER 1927

Stalin becomes undisputed leader of the Soviet Union after Trotsky is expelled from the Soviet Communist Party



20 MAY 1928

Nazi Party gains 2.6 per cent of votes in Germany's elections

6 NOVEMBER 1928

Herbert Hoover elected US president



FEBRUARY 1929

Trotsky deported from USSR

DECEMBER 1929

Stalin demands acceleration of collectivisation process and liquidation of kulaks

14 SEPTEMBER 1930

Nazi Party gains 18.3 per cent of votes in Germany's elections

19 SEPTEMBER 1931

Japan invades Manchuria

29 OCTOBER 1929

Black Tuesday; Wall Street stock market crashes and starts the Great Depression

NOVEMBER 1929

Writing in *Pravda*, Stalin declares full-scale collectivisation of agriculture



OCTOBER 1928

First month of Five-Year Plan; abandonment of NEP in USSR

1927

1928

1929

1930

1931

20-21 MAY 1927

Charles Lindbergh flies solo from New York to Paris in thirty-three hours

6 OCTOBER 1927

First 'talkie' film *The Jazz Singer*



31 MARCH 1930

The 'Hays Code' is introduced as a moral guide for Hollywood

NOVEMBER 1931

Al Capone jailed



POLITICAL



MILITARY



ECONOMIC

SOCIAL



CULTURAL

TIMELINE: 1932–1945

POLITICAL



10 APRIL 1932
Hindenburg re-elected president of Germany

31 JULY 1932
Nazi Party gains 37.3 per cent of votes

6 NOVEMBER 1932
Nazi Party gains 33 per cent of votes

8 NOVEMBER 1932
Franklin D. Roosevelt wins the US election



MILITARY

30 JANUARY 1933
Hitler appointed chancellor of Germany

27 FEBRUARY 1933
The Reichstag fire in Germany

4 MARCH 1933
Roosevelt inaugurated as US president

13 MARCH 1933
Goebbels appointed Minister of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment in Germany

22 MARCH 1933
First concentration camp established at Dachau, near Munich in Germany

27 MARCH 1933
Japan withdraws from League of Nations

14 JULY 1933
The Law against the Formation of Parties in Germany

21 OCTOBER 1933
Germany withdraws from Geneva Disarmament Conference and announces intentions to leave the League of Nations

30 JUNE 1934
Hitler purges members of his own party in Night of the Long Knives

2 AUGUST 1934
Death of German President Hindenburg. German Army swears oath of loyalty and Hitler declares himself Führer

13 JANUARY 1935
Saar plebiscite

MARCH 1935
German rearmament begins, conscription introduced

OCTOBER 1935
Italy invades Abyssinia

25 NOVEMBER 1936
Anti-Comintern Pact signed by Germany and Japan

1936–1939
Stalin executes an estimated 1–1.5 million 'threats' to his rule

7 MARCH 1936
German remilitarisation of the Rhineland

JULY 1936
Start of Spanish Civil War; Italy and Germany send troops to support General Franco

ECONOMIC

DECEMBER 1932
Completion of first Five-Year Plan in the USSR

1933
US drought creates dust bowl regions; New Deal introduced by Roosevelt to combat Great Depression

JANUARY 1935
Second New Deal is introduced by US President Roosevelt

1932

1933

1934

1935

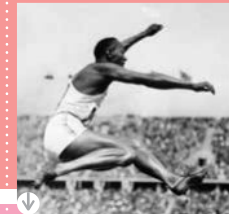
1936

SOCIAL

1932–1933
'Holodomor' in Ukraine—millions of people die by forced starvation

5 DECEMBER 1933
Prohibition ends in the US

SEPTEMBER 1934
Nuremberg Laws outlaw marriage between Jews and non-Jewish Germans, and restrict Jews from certain employment



CULTURAL

1932
Social realism becomes the dominant and state-approved form of artistic expression in the USSR

1933
Enabling Act gives Hitler total control over media and the arts
Bauhaus school closed by Nazis

SEPTEMBER 1933
Reich Chamber of Culture is established

1934
Hays Code starts to be rigorously enforced

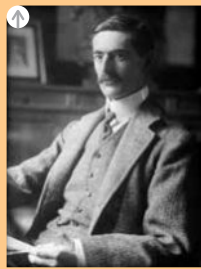
5-10 SEPTEMBER 1934
Leni Riefenstahl films the Nuremberg Rally that became the *Triumph of the Will*



1936
Berlin Olympics

MAY 1937

Chamberlain becomes prime minister of Great Britain



6 NOVEMBER 1937

Italy joins the Comintern Pact—becomes known as the Axis Powers Agreement

22 MAY 1939

Pact of Steel signed between Mussolini and Hitler



23 AUGUST 1939

German–Soviet Non-aggression Pact signed

1 OCTOBER 1941

Republic of China is proclaimed

DECEMBER 1941

Indian independence achieved

18 APRIL 1946

League of Nations transfers all its assets to the United Nations

1940

France, Belgium, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands fall to Germany

JUNE 1941

Germany attacks Soviet Union

JULY 1941

Japanese occupy French Indochina

DECEMBER 1941

Japan bombs Pearl Harbor and attacks Singapore; America declares war on Japan; Germany declares war on America

30 APRIL 1945

Hitler dies by suicide in Berlin

MAY 1945

German forces surrender

AUGUST 1945

America drops atom bombs on cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, killing hundreds of thousands of people

AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 1945

Japan surrenders, ending World War II

24 APRIL 1937

Village of Guernica bombed during Spanish Civil War

JULY 1937

Japan invades China

MARCH 1938

Anschluss announced after German troops march into Austria

29–30 SEPTEMBER 1938

Czechoslovakian crisis and Munich Agreement

15 MARCH 1939

Hitler invades the rest of Czechoslovakia

1 SEPTEMBER 1939

Germany invades Poland, starting World War II

4 SEPTEMBER 1939

Britain and France declare war on Germany

1937

1938

1939

AFTER 1939

9-10 NOVEMBER 1938

Kristallnacht (Night of the Broken Glass)—Jewish businesses and synagogues attacked by Nazis



1941–1945

The Holocaust—six million Jewish people are murdered by the Nazi regime



1937

Pablo Picasso creates *Guernica*

18 JULY 1937

Exhibition of German Art opens in Munich

19 JULY 1937

'Degenerate Art' exhibition opens in Munich



POLITICAL



MILITARY



ECONOMIC

SOCIAL



CULTURAL

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