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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

## Level 2 History 2023

### 91233 Examine causes and consequences of a significant historical event

Credits: Five

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Examine causes and consequences of a significant historical event.	Examine, in depth, causes and consequences of a significant historical event.	Comprehensively examine causes and consequences of a significant historical event.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

**Write ONE essay in this booklet.**

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–8 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in any cross-hatched area (DO NOT WRITE). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

**YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

High Excellence

TOTAL 08

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Write an essay on ONE significant historical event, using the essay question below.

Your essay must include an introduction and a conclusion, and use detailed supporting evidence.

You should provide context for your discussion by adding a concise paragraph describing the historical event.

Write your chosen historical event in the box below.

**ESSAY QUESTION**

How did TWO significant causes shape your chosen historical event?

Historical event: Hitler's ascendance to power, January 1933

## PLANNING

long term

28th July 1919 - Treaty of Versailles

30 billion equivalent in reparations

losses of territory = Diktat = Dictated Peace

hyper inflation in 1921-1923: 1919-14 - \$1 and 1923 4.2 billion

Undercurrent of antisemitism - "stab in the back myth"

Weimar Republic is not trusted Socialists and Jews are scapegoats for the loss in the war

Beer Hall Putsch - 8th November 1923, 2000 NSDAP soldiers in a military coup of the Weimar. Creation of the Blut fahne - blood flag

Michael Meiberg: "A different Treaty has a different outcome, yes. But you should not draw inevitability. It was part of the recipe, not the only ingredient"

Paul Von Hindenburg

Short term

Great Depression - Wall Street Crash on 3rd October 1929

International capital drops from 5 million marks to ~~2~~ less than half ~~by~~ between 1918 to 1919

~ \$900 US of short term loans with the US, led to harsh economic winter

Otto Strasser we shot arrows to every target, hitting flesh on the raw.

1924, 32 seats, huge increase to 1930 with 230 seats

Paul Von Hindenburg wants Hitler as chancellor to control political right.

You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than 4–5 pages. The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay.

Begin your essay here:

The fact that extremist leader Adolf Hitler could ascend to power through a democratic medium is an unfathomable yet confronting commentary on human desperation during economic strife. Thus, the understanding and analysis of the ~~causes~~ significant causes is essential to shape our understanding of the event. The two significant causes, the Treaty of Versailles and Great Depression, shaped Hitler's rise to power through political and economic shifts throughout Germany.

My essay will focus on Hitler's rise to Chancellor in January of 1933, and the two main causes, beginning with the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. These boundaries will allow a wide scope whilst still offering insightful focus.

The significant long term cause of Hitler's rise to power is the Treaty of Versailles which created a foundation of economic and political instability which enabled the NSDAP's growth in influence. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1919, the Treaty of Versailles enforced a harsh reparation of ~\$30 billion in US equivalent dollars, as well as substantial losses in territory, many of which had valuable oil and mineral resources which were taken away. This pushed Germany to severe economic strife, which thus led to hyperinflation, where in 1919, 14 Reichmarks were equivalent to ~~the~~ \$1 US, which grew exponentially to ~4.2 billion Reichmarks to \$1 US. In essence, this completely invalidated the savings of many Germans. Such harsh ~~reparations~~ economic

reparations caused domestic uproar, where citizens called it a "Diktat," translated to dictated peace, which further pushed the anti international narrative. The Treaty of Versailles also had extreme political impacts. During WWI, Germany propagated the idea that they were winning the war, which created a cultural whiplash when Germany was subsequently defeated and given such taxing reparations. This disillusionment created a sense of betrayal within Germany with the "Stab in the back" myth regarding the socialist and Jews of the Weimar Republic. Both economic and political repercussions of the Treaty of Versailles acted as causes which laid the foundation for the NSDAP to gain power. The economic depravity drove the lower middle class to the extreme right in search of radical economic solutions, and the dissatisfaction with international efforts drove attention to the nationalistic, extremist right Nazi party. This is shown during the Beer Hall Putsch, where on the 8th of November 1923, 2000 NSDAP members through a military coup of the Weimar Republic. Although this was successfully defeated by the Weimar Republic, leading to 16 Nazi deaths, it established the Nazi determination for revolution, shown by the "Blut Fahne," meaning blood flag which was stained during the conflict, which acted as a symbol of Nazi resolve. Overall, the Treaty acted as a long term indirect yet significant cause of Hitler's rise to power as it sowed the seeds of resentment and shaped a cultural undercurrent of anti-semitism and betrayal which would subsequently trigger Hitler's rise to power in later years.

The short term cause is arguably more significant than the treaty, as the Great Depression acted as a catalyst to spark to trigger Hitler's rise to chancellor. On October 3rd, 1929, the

International Wall Street Crash occurred, which led to a substantial decrease in foreign capital from 5 billion marks in 1918 to less than half by November 1919. This led to another wave of economic strife throughout Germany, which was worse than their initial economic difficulties. This was because Germany had recovered from the hyperinflation using foreign policies with the US to gain loans such as the \$900 million short term loan, as well as the ill advised decision to print cheap money, meaning when the US was not in the position to financially aid Germany, the nation had nothing to lean on. This led to an explosion of unemployment from 1.5 million in 1928 to 6 million by 1932. This economic ~~strife~~ desperation led the lower middle class to extremist solutions, which was capitalized upon by the Nazi party with a promise of economic revolution. Otto Strasser, former Nazi member, is quoted stating that Hitler's speeches "shot arrows to every target, hitting flesh on the raw." This illustrates Hitler's brilliant oration, ~~while~~ in addition, the "flesh on the raw" relates to Hitler confronting the citizen's feelings of betrayal at their own country which was established by the Treaty of Versailles. The culmination of such factors led the Nazi party to explode in popularity, where they held 32 seats in 1928, growing to 230 seats in 1930. Although the Nazi party still only represented ~33% of the vote, with a decrease in 1932, it was enough to enable Hitler to claim power from president Hindenburg and rise to Chancellor. Thus, the Great Depression acts as a highly significant cause as it fully enabled the NSDAP to find influence due to the vulnerable political and economic state that such an event shaped.

In an analysis of these distinct causes, I conclude that although both causes are highly significant, the Great Depression contributed more to shaping Hitler's ascendance to Chancellor. This is because although the Treaty of Versailles planted the seeds of anti-Semitism and political extremist revolution, the Weimar Republic found stability between 1923 and 1929, due to president Paul Von Hindenburg's publicity as a renowned military general, thus gaining support from the political right, ~~and~~ thus reducing tensions between the political right and socialist groups. In addition, successful foreign policies with the US stabilized German economy and controlled hyperinflation with the introduction of a new currency gold standard. If not for the Great Depression, ~~the Treaty~~ Germany appeared to be on a path of recovery. This is shown by a quote from <sup>historian</sup> Michael ~~the~~ Heberg: "A different Treaty would have a different outcome, yes. But you ~~can~~ should not draw inevitability. It was part of the recipe, not the only ingredient." Thus, the Treaty of Versailles finds historical significance ~~in~~ in the context of the Great Depression, where Germany's dependence on the US caused by the Treaty of Versailles led to such economic desperation, which catalyzed the insane growth of the Nazi party from a minor extremist party to gaining the highest votes in the span of 6 years. Since it is clear that this stupendous explosion in popularity is impossible without the Great Depression to shape it, it makes the Great Depression historically significant as without it, Hitler would have no ground to grow in such popularity -

~~But~~ A culmination of both the Treaty of Versailles and the Great Depression were significantly essential causes of Hitler's rise to power, as the Treaty shaped the economic and political atmosphere by sowing the seeds of revolution, which were then triggered by the Great Depression.

Extra space if required.  
Write the question number(s) if applicable.

QUESTION  
NUMBER

It is vital that we remember the significant causes of such a defining and destructive event in order to learn the importance of economic equality, stability and harmony which are necessary for a healthy democracy.

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## Excellence

**Subject:** History

**Standard:** 91233

**Total score:** 08

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
1	E8	<p>The candidate comprehensively examined two causes of Hitler's 1933 rise to power. The first was the Treaty of Versailles and the second was the Great Depression, using detailed supporting evidence and relevant, insightful explanation to show depth of understanding. For example, the essay used the examination of the two causes to put forward an insightful argument concerning what is necessary for a healthy democracy.</p> <p>Insight was also demonstrated in the use of detail. In the evaluation of the Great Depression as the most significant cause, the candidate presented not only the United States loans in support of an argument for Weimar stability, but also the more nuanced point of Hindenburg's stature easing tensions between the right and left.</p>