

GCSE HISTORY

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

Interpretations Booklet

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



Interpretation A Adapted from Jutta Rüdiger's autobiography, published in 1999. In it she describes the appeal of Hitler the first time she heard him speak.

At the time, Rüdiger had already joined the Nazi party and was a 22-year-old student of psychology. She became the leader of the League of German Maidens (BDM).

It was a huge rally in 1932 and everyone was waiting for Hitler to arrive as if he were a saviour. It was an electric atmosphere but when he went onto the stage it all went quiet. He began with a serious voice, speaking calmly and slowly but then became more and more enthusiastic. I can't remember exactly what he said, but afterwards I thought, 'this is a man who does not want anything for himself, but only thinks of the German people'.

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Interpretation B Adapted from the autobiography of Christabel Bielenberg, published in 1968. In it she writes about life in Berlin under the Nazis.

Christabel was an English woman who married a German lawyer, Peter Bielenberg. He was associated with the resistance against the Nazis and was arrested after the failed plot against Hitler's life in 1944. Christabel was questioned by the Gestapo but lived through the war as a German citizen.

I gave up trying to read Mein Kampf after four pages. It had no appeal for me. However, in the autumn of 1932 I persuaded my husband to hear Hitler speak at a rally. We put up with the community singing, the drums, and the boring Nazi anthems. Halfway through Hitler's speech my husband dragged me out and made one of his rare political statements, 'you may think that Germans are political idiots but they won't be so stupid as to fall for that clown'.

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END OF INTERPRETATIONS

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