



---

History

Paper 20 (AS) Specimen Question Paper

Question 03 Student 1

Specimen Answer and Commentary

V1.0 26/02/16

---

## **Specimen Answer plus commentary**

The following student response is intended to illustrate approaches to assessment. This response has not been completed under timed examination conditions. It is not intended to be viewed as a 'model' answer and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

### **Paper 20 (AS): Specimen question paper**

**03** 'By the late 1920s, the Weimar Republic was politically stable.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

**[25 marks]**

#### **Student response**

Arguably, compared to the previous years after the war, the Weimar Republic had begun to be more politically stable as a result of new Stresemann policies and a decreased support for extremism. However, it could be argued that the Weimar Republic still had many underlying issues with politicians and their new written constitutions.

During the 1920s, there were no attempted coups from the right or the left wing. As a result of the slowly recovering economy, more and more people began supporting the republic as oppose to turning to extremist parties for radical change. This meant that extremist groups weren't strong enough to attempt any coups. Furthermore, there had been no important political assassinations throughout the 1920s which further emulates that there was more stability in the Weimar Republic politically.

On the other hand, it could be argued that despite there being no major riots or attempted takeovers from ant extremist groups, as a result of decreasing support for them, many groups still made a lot of noise on the streets. Meaning that, even though these groups had no power politically, they were still attempting to increase support. This shows that the idea of the Weimar Republic being stable was simply a façade and it had many underlying problems of people trying to get more support on the streets. Arguably, this would have hit the Republic harder than if the extremist groups tried to get power through the Reichstag.

However, the fact that the Weimar Republic had finally joined the League of Nations in 1926 showed that it was becoming more stable politically. As a result of Stresemann's negotiations, Germany had been reintroduced into the global community once again, as a global superpower. This presents their political stability as they had to be strong in order to be recognised as a respected country in the global community.

It could, however, be argued that, as a result of Hindenburg's undemocratic and blatantly Nazi opinions, many people still had a strong distrust for the Republic. Many Germans still believed that the Weimar republic were November criminals and were to be blamed for their problems. This was due to the fact that Germans believed that the root of all their issues as a country were as a result of the signing of the treaty of Versailles. Furthermore, as a result of the stab in the back theory, many of their people did not believe in the Republic. This, therefore, shows that the government was not politically stable as a result of the lack of support from their people.

Before Ebert died, he had made the Ebert-Groener pact which ensured that Ebert would be supported by the army no matter what in exchange for Groener elevating his status in the Reichstag.

This point could be argued both for and against the statement. On one hand, when Ebert for the support of the army, this ensured political stability and the backing of the army for Weimar. However, one could argue that the fact that Ebert had to make this pact in the first place did nothing but highlight the instability of the Weimar Republic politically.

Stresemann had negotiated the Dawes Plan with the U.S. in 1923 which provided Germany with loans from the United States for investment in industry and infrastructure. This helped to bring Germany into full economic recovery, thus pleasing the German people and increasing support for Weimar. This, however, also proved the instability of politics in Germany in the 1920s as they were criticised for being too dependent on foreign loans to bring them stability and that, when they had to pay these loans, they would be more politically and economically unstable than ever. Thus, again, this proves that the Weimar Republic was not politically stable and the idea of political stability was simply a façade.

Overall, I believe that the Weimar Republic was not politically stable despite the façade it had put on. The underlying problems the Weimar Republic faced previously were not completely gone and the general disrupt for politics. Within the German people was its biggest weakness, their stability need based on a façade and funded by foreign loans meaning that the little stability they may have thought they found could have been taken away from them just as quickly.

### **Commentary – Level 3**

The answer has some range, but lacks precision and supporting information in places. The focus of the question is on the late 1920s, so references to the 1920s as a whole in relation to attempted coups is unconvincing and, as written, inaccurate. The assertion that more radical groups continued to foment division is not supported and appears assertive. The reference to Hindenburg's election is relevant and developed but somewhat overstated and comments on Germany's international position are not clearly relevant and again are overstated. The assessment of the Ebert-Groener Pact lacks clear relevance. This is a low Level 3 response.