MA99 EDUCATION

Core: Power and Authority in the Modern World 1919 to 1946: Summary

01

NSW MODERN HISTORY STAGE 6 SYLLABUS 2017 FOR HSC 2027

1. The peace: the main outcomes of Versailles

TERM	IN ONE LINE
Territory	Alsace-Lorraine to France, colonies as League mandates, Polish Corridor created.
Military	Army capped at 100,000, no air force or submarines, Rhineland demilitarised.
War guilt	Article 231 assigned Germany responsibility for the war, and justified reparations.
Reparations	Fixed in 1921 at 132 billion gold marks, later rescheduled twice.

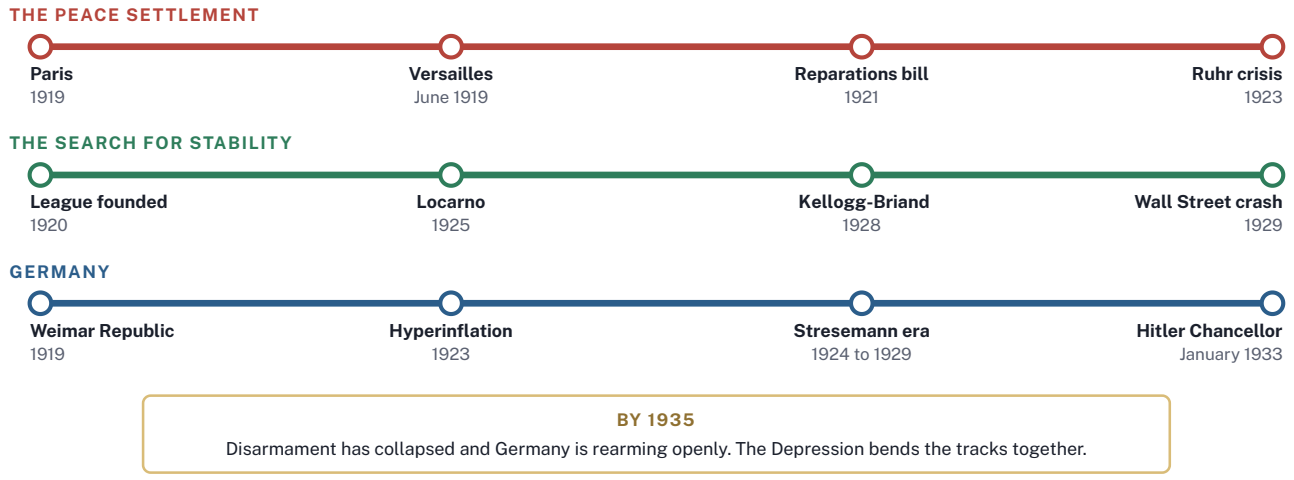


Figure 1 · The Core Study on three tracks. Read across, not down.

2. The 1920s: building and testing the peace

The League of Nations was founded in 1920, but the United States never joined, it had no army, and Council decisions needed unanimity. Early successes on small disputes, Aaland Islands 1921 and Upper Silesia 1921, did not test whether it could restrain a Great Power.

Disarmament and diplomacy. The Washington Naval Conference of 1921 to 1922 set real naval ratios. The Locarno Treaties of 1925 guaranteed Germany's western borders and brought it into the League in 1926. The Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 renounced war on paper but bound no one to act.

German recovery, 1924 to 1929. The Dawes Plan of 1924 and Young Plan of 1929 rescheduled reparations and tied German recovery to American loans under Gustav Stresemann, a dependence that made the coming crash far more damaging than it needed to be.

3. The Depression and its impact, from 1929

The Wall Street Crash of October 1929 ended American lending almost overnight. German unemployment reached about 6 million by 1932, and the Nazi vote rose from about 2.6 per cent in 1928 to roughly 37.3 per cent in July 1932. Japan's army seized Manchuria in 1931 when the Depression had left the Great Powers little appetite for sanctions, and none followed: the League's 1932 Lytton Report found Japan's night operations of 18 to 19 September 1931 were not legitimate self-defence, and refused to treat Manchukuo as a genuine independent state, but changed nothing, and Japan simply left the League in 1933.

4. The rise of Nazi Germany, 1919 to 1933

Weimar's weaknesses (proportional representation, Article 48 emergency powers, and a legitimacy problem tied to the November 1918 armistice and Versailles) combined with the 1923 hyperinflation crisis, which followed the Ruhr occupation and wiped out middle class savings. The Depression then turned a fringe protest party into a mass movement. Hitler was appointed Chancellor on 30 January 1933 by President Hindenburg, on the advice of Franz von Papen, who believed the Nazis could be controlled inside a coalition.

5. Using power, 1933 to 1939

Consolidation was fast. The Reichstag Fire (27 February 1933) enabled a decree suspending civil liberties. The Enabling Act (23 March 1933) let Hitler rule by decree. Other parties were banned by July 1933. The Night of the Long Knives (30 June 1934) purged the SA and secured the army's loyalty; Hindenburg's death that August let Hitler merge the presidency and chancellorship into the Führer title.

Rule to 1939 combined terror (the Gestapo, the SS, camps such as Dachau from 1933) with propaganda (Goebbels' ministry, the Nuremberg rallies), economic recovery through rearmament and the 1936 Four Year Plan, and escalating racial persecution through the 1935 Nuremberg Laws. By 1939 every organised check on Hitler's authority, inside the party, the army and the state, had been removed.

6. Dictatorships in Russia, Italy and Japan

	RUSSIA	ITALY	JAPAN
Route to power	Bolshevik coup, October 1917	Appointed by the King, October 1922	Army and navy pressure, 1931 to 1936
Repression	Cheka (Dec 1917), NKVD, Gulag, Great Terror 1936 to 1938	Laws of 1925 to 1926, OVRA, Special Tribunal	Assassinations: Inukai 15 May 1932; revolt of 26 February 1936
Economy	Five-Year Plans from 1928, collectivisation	Corporatist state	Controlled war economy from 1937

Conditions that helped dictators: war losses, resented peace terms, inflation and the Depression, fear of communism, weak new democracies and a weak League.

7. Nazi ideology and control

Ideology. Race (the "Aryan" master race), antisemitism, Lebensraum, the Volksgemeinschaft, the Führer principle, hatred of Versailles. The 25 point programme dates from 24 February 1920. Mein Kampf appeared in 1925 and 1926. **Individuals.** Goebbels (propaganda), Göring (Gestapo in Prussia, Four Year Plan), Himmler and Heydrich (SS and police), Röhm (SA, killed 1934), Ley (Labour Front), Schirach (youth).

Six methods. Laws (fire decree 28 February 1933; Enabling Act 23 March 1933, 444 to 94); repression (civil service law 7 April 1933); terror (Dachau 22 March 1933, Gestapo April 1933); censorship (book burnings 10 May 1933); propaganda (ministry 13 March 1933, Nuremberg rallies); cult of personality (army oath, August 1934).

8. Life in Nazi Germany

Culture. Reich Chamber of Culture, September 1933; "Degenerate Art" exhibition, Munich 1937. **Religion.** Concordat 20 July 1933; German Christians against the Confessing Church; encyclical of March 1937; Jehovah's Witnesses persecuted. **Workers.** Unions destroyed 2 May 1933; Labour Front from 10 May; Strength Through Joy from 27 November 1933; real wages stayed below 1928 levels. **Youth.** Hitler Youth law 1 December 1936; compulsory 25 March 1939. **Women.** Motherhood ideal, Mother's Cross from 1938, sterilisation law of 14 July 1933. **Jews.** Boycott 1 April 1933; Nuremberg Laws 15 September 1935; pogrom 9 to 10 November 1938 with a one billion mark fine.

9. Opposition

Most Germans welcomed the regime; a minority resisted. Forms: workers' movement, churches (Confessing Church, Barmen 1934), youth (Edelweiss Pirates, Swing Youth), White Rose (1942 to 1943), Elser (8 November 1939), the plot of 20 July 1944. It stayed weak because of the Gestapo, informers, the People's Court and divisions among opponents.

10. Peace and security to 1946

Germany. Leaves League October 1933; Rhineland 7 March 1936; Anschluss March 1938; Munich 29 to 30 September 1938; Prague 15 March 1939; Pact 23 August 1939; Poland 1 September 1939. **Japan.** Mukden 18 September 1931; China war 7 July 1937; Tripartite Pact 27 September 1940; Pearl Harbor 7 December 1941.

League and UN. League in force 10 January 1920, ended 20 April 1946, no army, unanimity. UN Charter signed 26 June 1945, in force 24 October 1945; five permanent Security Council members with a veto; Articles 41 and 42 allow sanctions and force.

Key dates and figures to memorise

28 Jun 1919 Versailles signed · 24 Feb 1920 Nazi programme · 1920 League founded · 1921 reparations fixed at 132 billion gold marks · Feb 1922 Washington naval treaty signed · 1925 Locarno · 1926 Germany joins League · 1928 Kellogg-Briand · Oct 1929 Wall Street Crash · Sep 1931 Manchuria invaded · 30 Jan 1933 Hitler Chancellor · 27 Feb 1933 Reichstag Fire · 22 Mar 1933 Dachau opens · 23 Mar 1933 Enabling Act · 1 Apr 1933 boycott · 7 Apr 1933 civil service law · 10 May 1933 book burnings · 20 Jul 1933 Concordat · 30 Jun 1934 Night of the Long Knives · 15 Sep 1935 Nuremberg Laws · Mar 1936 Rhineland remilitarised · 1 Dec 1936 Hitler Youth law · 9 to 10 Nov 1938 pogrom · 23 Aug 1939 German-Soviet Pact · 1 Sep 1939 Poland invaded · 26 Jun 1945 UN Charter signed · 24 Oct 1945 UN exists · 20 Apr 1946 League ends

Figures: German unemployment about 6 million by 1932 · Nazi Reichstag vote share 2.6 per cent (1928) to 37.3 per cent (Jul 1932) · army capped at 100,000 by Versailles

About this resource

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Scope

NSW Modern History, Year 12. Written to the NSW Modern History Stage 6 Syllabus (2017), Core: Power and Authority in the Modern World 1919 to 1946, for students sitting the HSC in 2027. A new Modern History syllabus is first examined in HSC 2028. Every worked context uses the historical record, with every source quotation of fifteen words or fewer and every invented illustrative source labelled as invented, and every number was recomputed from its inputs before printing.

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