Revolution, Democracy, and Constitutionalism: The German Weimar Republic
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We will meet for two hours each day. Each day will involve a substantial amount of lecture, but also some discussion. There are no written assignments, but you need to have read the assigned reading for each day. You might want to write out several things to say in English about the reading before class.

Readings are available either from the web or as pdfs. In the latter case, please remain within the bounds of copyright law, which allow fair use within a class. Please don't reproduce further.

I have not assigned a textbook. There are many good textbooks you can look at, if you are interested in reading further. Not all of these are available in your library. I recommend but do not require in particular:

Martin Kitchen, A History of Modern Germany, for a general overview (available in your library)
Detlev Peukert, Weimar Germany, for a history that combines political and cultural history. Older--but still very influential
Hans Mommsen, The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy, a very detailed political history that stresses the role of the Social Democratic Party in the Republic
Eberhard Kolb/Dirk Schumann, Die Weimarer Republik, 8th ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2012): a general overview with extensive bibliography

At the end of this syllabus, I will include a longer list of books on the Weimar Republic.

Day One: Constitutions, Revolutionary and Anti-Revolutionary.
-Models of revolutions and constitutions from the United States, France, and Russia
-The 1871 Constitution of United Germany as an Anti-Revolutionary Constitution
No readings.

Day Two: The Constitutional Reality of the German Empire.
-Democratic aspects of the political system, in conflict with attempts to preserve monarchical authority
-Effects on political life
-The example of the Social Democratic Party
Reading: The Erfurt Program, available at: http://www.marxists.org/history/international/social-democracy/1891/erfurt-program.htm
Day Three: World War One: Toward Revolution
-The challenges of war
-Effect of war on the internal "peace of the fortress"
-Split of German socialism; food riots; strikes; military collapse

No readings.

Day Four: The German Revolution of 1918-19
-Coming of revolution
-The councils alternative?
-Toward parliamentary government
-The embittered left


Day Five: The Radical Right Alternative
-The Freikorps, radicalized Munich, the reaction
-Oswald Spengler's message
-Kapp Putsch and financial collapse


Day Six: Consolidation of Democracy/Critique of Democracy
-Did the Republic have a chance?
-Financial conditions of consolidation
-Carl Schmitt and the new right


Day Seven: Defense of Democracy/Economic Crisis
-Democracy as a defense of procedure
-Consolidation reaches an end: the Great Depression
-Constitutional Crisis


Day Eight: Constitutional Collapse and the Nazi State
-The constitutional logic of the collapse
-The rise and the limits of the Nazi Party
-Why did Hitler come to power?
-The Nazi Constitution: The permanent emergency

Readings: none
Bibliography: Listed here are several important books on different aspects of the Weimar Republic, in both English and German. The aim is not to provide a comprehensive overview, but to list some of the most important works, that provide a way into the topic. I’m happy to provide further suggestions.

I. Germany and the First World War


II. The German Revolution, 1918-19

Ulrich Kluge, *Die deutsche Revolution 1918/19* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1985)

III. The German Left in War and Revolution

Heinrich A. Winkler, *Die Sozialdemokratie und die Revolution von 1918/19* (Bonn: 1979)
Eberhard Kolb, *Die Arbeiterräte in der deutschen Innenpolitik* (Droste: Dusseldorf, 1962)

IV. Political and constitutional system

Christoph Gusy, *Die Weimarer Reichsverfassung* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1997)

V. Economic Policy and Economic Development

Heike Knortz, Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Weimarer Republik (Stuttgart: UTB, 2010)
Klaus Borchardt, Wachstum, Krise, Handlungsspielräume (Göttingen, 1982)

VI. Political Thought: Democratic and Anti-Democratic Positions

Wolfgang Mommsen, Max Weber and German Politics (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1990)
Kurt Sontheimer, Antidemokratisches Denken in der Weimar Republik, reprint (Munich: DTV, 1978)
Christoph Gusy, ed., Demokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik (Baden: Nomos, 2000)
John Willett, The Weimar Years: A Culture Cut Short (London: Thames and Hudson, 2011): Note also his many other works!
Lehnert/Megerle, Pluralismus als Verfassungs- und Gesellschaftsmodell (Opladen, 1987)

VII. The Crisis of 1929-1933

Martin Broszat, Die Machtergreifung (Munich, 1984)

VIII. The Nature of the Nazi State

Ernst Fraenkel, The Dual State (1941)