WEIMAR REPUBLIC: RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING IN ENGLISH

Evans, Richard J. The Coming of the Third Reich. (Orig. Allen Lane, 2003; a Penguin pb since 2004). This is the first vol. of Evans’s 3 vol. magnum opus, A History of the Third Reich. A tremendous achievement: thoroughly researched, beautifully written with a deep sense of politics and diplomacy.

Weitz, Eric. Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy. (Princeton U Press 2007; a PUP pb since 2009; Weimar centennial edition, 2018). Outstanding on both politics and culture, with a tilt toward the latter. Many excellent illustrations. Weitz is a Distinguished Prof. of History at CUNY.

Dahl, Robert A. and Ian Shapiro. On Democracy (2nd edition. Yale, 1998). The late Robert Dahl, a great political scientist, spent a lifetime studying the theory and practice of democratic politics, and his writings are straightforward and clear. On Democracy is available in paperback; Dahl’s Preface to Democratic Theory (1956) is also concise and seminal.

Craig, Gordon A. The Germans. (1982). Excellent, the best short introduction to German history and culture in English.


Steinberg, Jonathan. Bismarck: A Life. (Oxford, 2011). Steinberg’s biography brings Bismarck to life with all his foibles, and thoughtfully evokes the mechanics and spirit of dynastic politics during the Second Empire established in 1870-1.


Wright, J.R.C. Gustav Stresemann: Weimar’s Greatest Statesman (Oxford, 2002). Excellent, thoroughly researched, clearly written. It is the leading biography of Stresemann in English. However, Henry A. Turner’s older book of 1963, Stresemann and the Politics of the Weimar Republic is very good and still useful. Also, Turner did major work on the role of big business during the Weimar Republic.
Fest, Joachim C. Hitler (HBJ, 1973.). Called rightly “a towering achievement,” written by an outstanding writer at the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, translated into 17 languages, for many years this biography was the best choice among the many, many biographies of Hitler. It is still, of course, a wonderful, rewarding read.


Holborn, Hajo. A History of Modern Germany, from the Reformation to 1945. 3 vols. (Knopf 1961, 1964 and 1969). Lucid narrative history by one of the German emigrés of the 1930’s. A critic of the Nazi’s, Holborn left Germany in 1933, came to the USA in 1934, worked in the Office of Strategic Services during World War II, and taught history at Yale until his death in 1969. His daughter, Hannah, was also an accomplished historian and President of the University of Chicago.


Mann, Thomas. Doctor Faustus (Knopf, 1948). One of Mann’s late novels, Doctor Faustus tells parallel stories of how a German musical genius and Germany at large trade their souls for a temporary, grand achievement that in the end collapses in disaster. Long, difficult, and moving.


Robert Bunselmeyer
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