

A-level HISTORY

Component 1L The quest for political stability: Germany, 1871–1991

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 16-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7042/1L.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 1 hour on Question 01 from **Section A**
 - 45 minutes on each of the **two** questions answered from **Section B**.

Section AAnswer Question 01.

Extract A

Wilhelm II was an inconsistent, nervous person, incapable of personal rule. He was unable to work hard, listen to others, or think problems through systematically. Over time, many of those who saw him in action, or heard the monarch make silly remarks during their daily contact with him, began to pose ever more seriously the question of whether he was perhaps unbalanced. Those who came to believe this considered it their duty to support the Kaiser emotionally and politically. His chancellors, and his inner circle of friends and advisers, began to 'handle' the monarch, not only because they felt a deep personal loyalty toward him, but also because they held the firm conviction that the monarchy was the best possible system of government imaginable. Thus, they tried to prevent him from committing blunders. They shielded him from uncomfortable situations and public criticism, constantly fearing that he might have a nervous breakdown.

Adapted from VR Berghahn, *Imperial Germany 1871–1918*, 1994

Extract B

The young Kaiser tried to be both emperor and chancellor in one, which was intended as the springboard for his so-called 'personal regime'. Ultimately, Wilhelm II did not succeed however much his clique of advisers tried to surround the decision-making process with the illusion of monarchical power. In addition, the chancellors were as little able to fill the power vacuum as was the Emperor. Political power lay increasingly with secretive key figures, such as Admiral von Tirpitz, who profoundly influenced the social, financial and military aspects of domestic and foreign policy. Other key figures among the Wilhelmine power-elite were the managers of the large industrial interests, the leaders of right-wing pressure groups and the planners of the army's General Staff. These groups became the centres of power which were largely responsible for government policy. Behind the outward show of a constitutional monarchy lay concealed a high degree of weakness and lack of co-ordination at the centre.

Adapted from HU Wehler, *The German Empire 1871–1918*, 1985

Extract C

The new social classes established themselves in Wilhelm II's reign as active and influential groups. The bourgeoisie, the lower middle classes and the working class began to find ways of expressing their demands within the political system. It is important to remember that every man had a vote in imperial Germany and voters regarded Reichstag elections as meaningful events – between 1887 and 1912 voter turnout never fell below 70% except in 1898. Indeed, it can be said that during the 1890s Germany entered an era of mass politics. There was mass mobilisation of voters, modernisation of party structures and electoral tactics, and national issues increasingly dominated election campaigns. After 1890, the masses became more involved in politics and the more effective expression of grievances by political parties threatened to destabilise the fragile system constructed by the ruling classes. The politics of the elites no longer satisfied a more sophisticated electorate.

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Adapted from L Abrams, *Bismarck and the German Empire*, 1995

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Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to political developments in Germany in the years 1890 to 1914.

[30 marks]

Turn over for Section B

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0 2

'The governments of Germany dealt effectively with the economic challenges they faced in the years 1923 to 1945.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 3

How far was the dominance of the CDU/CSU, in the years 1949 to 1969, due to the weaknesses of the other political parties?

[25 marks]

0 4

'Extra-parliamentary opposition posed a significant threat to the stability of West Germany in the years 1966 to 1989.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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