



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Tuesday 19 May 2020 – Afternoon

A Level History A

Y314/01 The Challenge of German Nationalism 1789–1919

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes



You must have:

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
- Answer the question in Section A and **any two** questions in Section B.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document has **4** pages.

ADVICE

- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

SECTION A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the role of Wilhelm II in the government of Germany. [30]

Passage A

Wilhelm II played a smaller part in the formation of policy than was permitted by the constitution or supposed by the public. Bismarck's departure was undoubtedly his doing, but in the controversies leading to it there was much to be said on the side of the Kaiser, who was in any case only anticipating by a few years the action of natural causes. As regards the failure to renew the Reinsurance Treaty, the Morocco Crisis of 1905 to 1906 and the Agadir episode, Wilhelm was a somewhat unwilling accessory to the acts of other people. The only major policy for which prime responsibility must be laid at the Kaiser's door is that regarding the fleet. In building such a fleet, Wilhelm was only carrying to their logical consequence the aspirations of many of his subjects. This major error points to the main judgement which history must pass on Wilhelm II. He was a distracting rather than a steadying influence who, instead of helping his ministers to identify and pursue the ends which really mattered, impeded the cool, objective study of Germany's problems. Holding a position in which he could have done much to counterattack the tendencies around him, he instead gave them added emphasis. While claiming to be a leader, he in fact followed others and allowed himself to be moulded by his environment instead of impressing his personality upon it. Wilhelm's story demonstrates clearly that good intentions and intelligence are not enough in a ruler. Energy unaccompanied by steadying qualities is a menace rather than an advantage. The simple truth about the Kaiser is that, for all his undoubted gifts, he was not up to the outsize job assigned to him.

Adapted from: M. Balfour, *The Kaiser and His Times*, published in 1975.

Passage B

Although historians have rarely accorded Kaiser Wilhelm II the same status as men such as Bismarck or Hitler, he made an important impact upon the course of German politics in the two decades before the outbreak of the First World War. His accession to the throne in 1888 signalled a significant change in the exercise of state power within the Reich. Where his grandfather, Wilhelm I, had largely entrusted Bismarck with his executive authority, and allowed his Chancellor a wide freedom of action, the young Kaiser insisted upon direct, personal control. Distinct differences were therefore discernible between the priorities of Bismarckian and Wilhelmine Germany. Between 1897 and the crisis of the Daily Telegraph interview, Wilhelm dictated policy to an amazing extent. All appointments, all bills, all diplomatic moves were made on his orders. This emphasis upon the personal authority of the Kaiser was widely accepted by contemporaries. In 1918, the Army's Junker commanders believed that they could convince enemy politicians that fundamental change had taken place in the political structure of Germany simply by forcing the abdication of the Kaiser.

Adapted from: T. Morris & D. Murphy, *Europe 1870–1991*, published in 2000.

SECTION B

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2*** To what extent did the aims of German nationalism change in the period from 1789 to 1919? **[25]**
- 3*** 'The accession of Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1888 was the most important turning point in the development of German nationalism during the period from 1789 to 1919.' How far do you agree with this view? **[25]**
- 4*** Germany was never united in the period from 1789 to 1919. How far do you agree with this view? **[25]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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