

The Kaiserreich, 1871-1914, booklet 1



Overview the Kaiserreich fostered an attitude that German culture and morals were superior to all others. Discipline and unquestioning obedience being a part of this. Therefore understanding this era is essential to understanding the events leading to the first world war and the German attitude toward democracy afterwards. The areas under study in this booklet are:

1. Political authority
2. Government and opposition 1871-1888

3. Government and opposition, 1888-1914
4. Economic developments
5. Social developments and
6. The condition of Germany by 1914

How this booklet works

The booklet is divided into the four topic areas as listed above. For each section there is an essential reading of the topic area containing the important information. Always refer to this section when you are confused or need clarification. This is to support your textbook which will give you the information in greater detail. There will be one or two key questions relating to the information that form the focus for the week's work in class and home. Make sure that you complete the pre-work so that you can come to the lessons prepared to progress more analytical thinking of these issues. There are some initial tasks that involve knowledge acquisition followed by more analytical questioning, culminating with an exam focus.

Use the visual scaffolds to organise your thoughts and ideas on the key questions posed at the beginning of the section. These are then to contribute to the assessment for learning questions and the write up of the weekly key question summary task. For the class activities I suggest that you use treasury tags or a ring binder so that everything can be kept in order. Make sure you follow the instructions in googleclassroom to know what needs to be done and when it needs to be done by plus any other extra information to help with your understanding.

Name _____

Instructions for Introductory work for Route B - Germany/Britain

Welcome all!

We begin with the Germany course and what you need to do in preparation for the first lesson is complete the pre-work tasks for the first section of the course - political authority in Germany in 1871. So can you please complete the following and bring to your first history lesson of the week.

1. Read the essential reading section in the booklet on p. 2.
2. Read carefully the scanned copy of the textbook chapter 1. You will find it useful to take notes from here to help you remember the details in future. Here is a link to the scanned copy of the text <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PBHcEn6yDil6xwhKX0Wx2r-XHdroO9CH>
3. Complete the tasks from the booklet from p. 3-6.

Can I please request that you purchase the course texts

**Oxford AQA History for A Level: The Quest for Political Stability: Germany 1871-1991
(Oxford A Level History for AQA)**

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Oxford-AQA-History-Level-Political/dp/0198354681/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=oxford+a+level+history+quest+for+stability&qid=1593426645&s=books&sr=1-3

And this text will be needed after half term

Oxford AQA History for A Level: The Making of Modern Britain 1951-2007 (Oxford A Level History for AQA)

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Oxford-AQA-History-Level-1951-2007/dp/0198354649/ref=sr_1_4?dchild=1&keywords=oxford+a+level+history+quest+for+stability&qid=1593426645&s=books&sr=1-4

1. Essential (re) reading political authority: the extent and make-up of the German Empire in 1871; the 1871 constitution; the role of Emperor and Chancellor; political groupings and parties and their ideologies

- Key questions*
1. How was Germany governed after 1871?
 2. How important were Wilhelm I and von Bismarck in newly unified Germany?



Germany did not become a **unified country until 1871**. Prior to this the area was a loose amalgam of over 300 different states as part of the Holy Roman Empire. This was however destroyed by the Napoleonic Wars and the subsequent Treaty of Vienna in 1815 reduced this to 39 states. The largest of these states was Prussia and they sought to have the greatest influence on the region. They were led by the very ambitious **King Wilhelm I and his Minister-President Otto von Bismarck**. He presided over a confederation of 26 states with this new Reich allowing for self government and in some cases even retaining their own monarchy. Opposition at this time largely came from liberals who believed in a constitution and the right to vote for their representation in Parliament. This constitution did come in 1871 but would not be one that matched the liberals outlook.

Considerable power was given to the Prussian King who was able to control all appointments to the executive - including the Chancellor (Prime Minister) and other ministers- and the civil service. He also had the power to call and dissolve the Reichstag (parliament) and had command of the army. The **chancellor was a key figure** as he would work with the Kaiser in the key decisions and co-ordinating the machinery of government. The chancellor could only be moved from office by the Kaiser rather than, as similar to many other countries, a vote of no confidence by the parliament. Therefore the government in Germany was very reliant on a successful partnership between Kaiser and Chancellor and this was largely the case with that between Kaiser Wilhelm I and Chancellor von Bismarck. Their outlook was very similar, both being staunch Prussians , conservative, authoritarian with great pride in the military traditions of Prussia. He expected full support from the Reichstag and anything else was viewed as being detrimental to the state. This was largely the case for his time in office to 1890 but in the later years this support was challenged.

Political parties in Germany acted more like pressure groups as they could not form government and therefore did not produce manifestos as parties in other countries would. The main political parties in Germany were the

- Social Democratic Party (SDP) - a socialist group who advocated greater welfare reforms;
- the National Liberals (NL) - supported unification and represented the protestant middle class
- The Centre Party (Z) - a conservative party representing Catholics
- The German Conservative Party - (DKP) - a right wing party representing the junker/Prussian landowners



References chapter 1

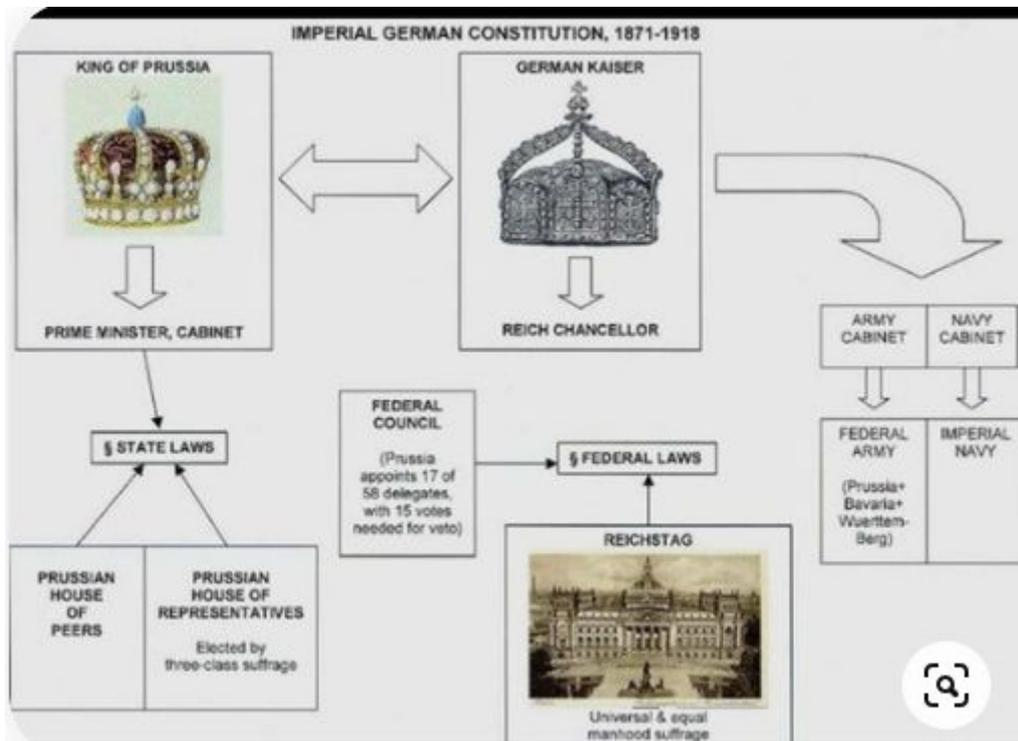
Exam questions you need an understanding of the conditions in Germany leading to the creation of the Kaiserreich. You also need to understand the geography of Germany and the states that were the most dominant, most especially, Prussia. Make sure you understand the make up of the constitution and the relationship between the Kaiser and the Chancellor.

1. Initial tasks, knowledge acquisition a) know your geography of Germany - identify the states and the most important cities. Also research what existed before 1871, including the Holy Roman Empire.



'Knowing is not enough, we must apply. Willing is not enough, we must do.' Bruce Lee

b) understanding the German constitution - with the use of p.4 in your textbook outline the role of each part of the constitution:



Is William Carr's assessment correct? If so, what evidence can you use from above?

The structure of the Reich was permeated with the autocratic spirit of victorious Prussia. The Empire did not emanate from the will of the people. In theory all the princes were equal; in practice no one denied that the Prussian ruler was more equal than the remainder. The Reich was, however, rather more than a simple extension Prussian power over the southern states. It was an uneasy compromise between the forces of conservative federalism, the liberal unitary principle, and the military might of Prussia. Significantly, imperial ministers were not accountable to the Reichstag; normally they were members of the Bundesrat. Undoubtedly Liebknecht's description of the Reichstag as a 'fig leaf covering the nakedness of absolutism' contains a good deal of truth. But, limited though its powers were, the Reichstag was able to exert an influence - particularly after 1890. On the eve of the First World War (1914), there were some faint signs that Germany might be moving towards a more flexible form of government.

To help highlight with two different colours the fact and the opinion - can you distinguish between them?

'Knowing is not enough. we must apply. Willing is not enough. we must do.' Bruce Lee

c) research task into the most important people ruling Germany from 1871: Kaiser Wilhelm I and Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. Find out as much as you can on their background, role in government, achievements and criticisms:

| What was their role in the newly established Germany from 1871? | |
|--|--|
|  <p data-bbox="108 987 446 1021">Kaiser Wilhelm I, 1797-1888</p> | |
|  <p data-bbox="108 1783 606 1816">Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, 1815-1898</p> | |

d) research the main political parties in Germany and place them on the spectrum with a brief explanation of their policies and why they are a left, centre or right wing party. Use p. 8 in your textbook to help you:

Left *Right*

National Liberals

Centre Party

Social Democratic Party

German Conservative Party

Free Conservatives

Progressives