

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y314/01 Summer 2022 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper Y314/01 series overview

Y314 is one of twenty one components for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This component tests an extended period of History of at least one hundred years through an interpretation option on a named in depth topic and two essays. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates are required to use contextual knowledge to test the views of two historians about one of the three named in depth topics or an aspect of one. The question does not require them to comment on the style of writing or the provenance of the interpretation. In Section B candidates are required to answer two essay questions from a choice of three.

To do well on Section A, candidates need to explain the view of each interpretation in relation to the question and then evaluate the interpretation by the application of contextual knowledge. Responses should show an understanding of the wider debate connected to the issue.

To do well on Section B, candidates need to make connections and links across the whole period, explaining similarities and differences between the events they are discussing in order to show an awareness of continuity and change across the whole period unless instructed otherwise. The comparisons made may be either between periods within the topic or between regions. The strongest responses will test a hypothesis and reach a supported judgement.

| Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following: | Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following: |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showed a clear understanding of the views of the two interpretations in relation to the question • used contextual knowledge to test the interpretations, linking that knowledge directly to the interpretation through evaluative words • considered both the strengths and limitations of both interpretations using contextual knowledge • in answering the essay questions, covered the whole period in a balanced way • adopted a thematic approach • made links and comparisons between aspects of the topic • explained the links and comparisons • supported their arguments with precise and relevant examples • reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question • demonstrated an understanding and familiarity with the different command verbs, e.g. identify, describe, explain and discuss. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showed a limited understanding of one or both of the interpretations • did not go beyond a basic explanation of part of the interpretation • did not link any contextual knowledge directly to the interpretation and therefore did not evaluate the interpretation • in answering the essay adopted a chronological rather than thematic approach • did not make links or comparisons even if events from different parts of the period were discussed in the same paragraph • did not cover the whole period • did not focus on the precise wording of the question • made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions. |

Section A

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 reasons why Wilhelmine Germany followed a policy of Weltpolitik (world politics or policy).

[30]

Almost all candidates appreciated that Passage A argues that Weltpolitik was driven by internal concerns and Passage B by economic and geo political motives. The mention of Bismarck in Passage A took some candidates back to unification which was of little obvious relevance and the mention of the SPD drove many to offer the view that they were automatically not patriotic before 1914.

Most candidates were able to provide some own knowledge to corroborate or challenge the views in the passages with stronger responses reaching a judgement as to which was the more convincing and why. Weaker responses often claimed that one passage was limited because it did not include a point made in the other and vice versa although this was the case in a small minority of responses.

Exemplar 1 is a strong response that was marked in Level 6.

Exemplar 1

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | | <p>Interpretation A places emphasis on domestic affairs in Germany as the reason for the development of <i>Weltpolitik</i>, and in doing so supports Wichtel's structuralist view of German policy. This was that <i>Weltpolitik</i> was a reactionary policy implemented by the elite in response to growing demands for democracy which would challenge their status. More convincing is source B interpretation B, which attributes the development of <i>Weltpolitik</i> to not just domestic economic demands, but also Germany's direct challenge to Britain's naval power and other European powers' empires, which more accurately describes the 'multi-faceted' aims of the policy.</p> <p>Interpretation A identifies that Wichtel's character played a significant role in the development of <i>Weltpolitik</i>. Wilhelm had a strong hatred of Britain due to his poor relationship with his niece, Queen Victoria's daughter, which led him to believe that 'the British must be brought low some day'. This was reflected in the aims of <i>Weltpolitik</i> in challenging Britain's power, for example colonially by acquiring Kiautschow lease and Shantung port in 1898 and some Pacific</p> |
|---|--|---|

and Samoan islands in 1899. He was also a power hungry individual who held a strong belief in German racial superiority. He supported and publicly praised Chamberlain's book, 'Foundations of the 19th century' which argued for anti-Semitism and German race world domination.

Wohlsch also pursued *Stammespolitik*, which was domestic policy of 'bringing together' political groups against the SPD. This is reflected in the source as it describes the 'uniting of national opinion' that resulted from *Wohlsch* in order to oppose socialism. Around the time *Wohlsch* was implemented in 1898 the SPD had just ~~lost~~ gained 27% of the popular vote, meaning the threat of socialism would be a prevalent concern for Wohlsch, due to the threat it posed to monarchial rule. The source also mentions that *Wohlsch* was necessary due to the failure of Bismarck and Caprivi's *Nizam* programmes, in reference to State Socialism, which necessitated a different policy to combat the SPD.*

However, where this interpretation is weakened is that the threat of the

SDP, although prevalent, was not a real threat to monarchical or nobility power, especially prior to world war one. There was no major domestic crisis in Germany at the time *Weltpolitik* was implemented and Wilhelm still held the support of the National Conservatives and Liberals in the Reichstag to pass legislation. The power of the nobility prevailed in the political and military systems, with Junkers having 17 seats in the Bundesrat giving them the ability to veto legislation. Also, over half of senior ranked army officials were aristocrats, showing upper classes still had considerable power in Germany. Therefore, this suggests the reason for the implementation of *Weltpolitik* was not ~~not~~ majorly due to German internal developments or a policy to distract the working class from social and political issues.

* This interpretation could be further supported by the Sonderweg theory which suggests due to Germany's slow modernisation of their political and military systems, the nobility were able to create a

reactionary Nationalism that united the middle and upper classes against the working classes ~~in~~ as a way of maintaining power.

interpretation B attributes the reason for Germany pursuing ~~Westpolitik~~ as being a way of establishing economic power in Europe ~~through~~ the rapid industrialization of Germany from 1871 onwards had created a large internal market with large scale production, for example the development of Krupp's steelworks as an industrial power. This created demands from German firms to export more goods to new markets, especially with the growth of ~~eastern~~ from 8 in 1875 to 366 ~~in~~ in 1905, which had made German firms prices more competitive as they were able to ~~conclude~~ the ~~Westpolitik~~ ~~was~~ created new markets for German goods, for example they were able to export ~~guns~~ guns and alcohol to Africa in exchange for gold and ~~dark~~ oil, as well as rubber exports to the Congo. This was beneficial for the economic development of Germany and they

could increase control over ~~world~~ world trade. ~~The source~~ The interpretation also attributes pressure groups to the ~~the~~ ~~implementation~~ pursuit of Weltpolitik. The Pan-German League was formed for ~~was~~ German imperialism, which was at the core of Weltpolitik, due to their belief in racial struggle. Other pressure groups, for example the Agrarian League which was dominated by Prussian Junkers, put pressure on the government to meet economic demands of new markets for agricultural exports. The interpretation also describes the challenge to the British Empire and naval power which drove Weltpolitik. Tirpitz, the naval secretary in 1898, pursued a policy of Flottenpolitik for in the lead up to 1914. This included the 1898, 1900, 1906 and 1908 naval laws which looked to expand Germany's naval fleet by and improve their naval technology in response to Britain launching the HMS Dreadnought in 1906. Therefore, the source accurately describes the role which naval expansion had in the pursuit of Weltpolitik as it enabled Germany to challenge Britain colonially.

and military, and therefore aim for a German hegemony of Europe.

However, the interpretation is limited by the ~~anaphorises~~ ~~the~~ emphasis it places on pressure groups in pursuing *Weltpolitik*. It is possibly more accurate that the reason for the growth of pressure groups was due to the shift in attitude of the government once they pursued *Weltpolitik*. For example, the Naval League grew from 30,000 members in 1900 to 330,000 members at the eve of world war one. Also, Tirpitz persuaded key industrialists, such as Krupp, to support the naval league due to the economic benefits the increased production would bring them. Therefore this suggests the government were the driving force of the policy and this was assimilated into public opinion in the form of a militaristic nationalism that supported, but didn't necessarily initiate *Weltpolitik*. Also, the economic demands for *Weltpolitik* were limited to a narrow group of powerful Germans. In rural areas and some towns, the

impact of increased industrialization on the working class was that it increased inequality and caused a decline in living standards. For example, in rural areas agriculture declined from a 45% of employment to 31% of employment as workers moved to industrial areas to work. This left regional discrepancies in how beneficial industrialisation was in Germany, meaning the cause for *Weltpolitik* as a means of economic development was not widespread.

Overall, interpretation B, although limited by its failure to acknowledge the role of the government in popularising *Weltpolitik* as a policy, is more convincing due to its identification of the industrial demands from pressure groups and the nobility, as well as naval expansion and direct challenge of Britain's world power. Interpretation A does offer key points about the personal role Wilhelm played in the development of the policy, but it is too narrow in its structuralist view the *Weltpolitik* was driven by domestic factors, considering there were no major domestic issues in Germany that would necessitate the

level of military and naval spending that *Weltpolitik* required.

Section B

Question 2*

- 2* 'The 1848/9 revolutions were the most important turning point in the development of mass German nationalism.' How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1789 to 1919? [25]

This was the most popular question among the essays and many answered it well with good synthesis and ranging across the whole period. Most did not agree with the date of 1848 as a key turning point and the alternatives offered included the Napoleonic Wars and the battle of Leipzig, the appointment of Bismarck in 1862, the Wars of Unification, the accession of Wilhelm II, and World War I.

A few responses were too narrow in their range over the period and they tended to ignore either the earlier years or the later years or both with the emphasis on the years of 1848 to 1890. Weaker responses sometimes struggled with the concepts of turning point and mass nationalism and many confused the latter with the formation of a united country.

Question 3*

- 3* 'Warfare was more important than political developments in uniting Germany.' How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1789 to 1919? [25]

This was the least popular essay question and most responses considered wars and political developments in turn. Candidates had no trouble in identifying several wars or political developments from different parts of the period although some confined their responses to the Bismarck years. Better responses discussed how each factor linked to unity and many argued that warfare was more important not least because, in many instances, political developments were as a consequence of war. A number of candidates strayed from the question to consider the economic, social or cultural factors that helped unite Germany.

In most cases the information provided was discrete to that factor and not relevant to the question. In some responses the factor was linked to warfare or political developments, for example the creation of a rail network was linked to warfare and that could be credited.

Question 4*

4* 'Prussia did more to unite than divide Germany.' How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1789 to 1919? **[25]**

Some responses looked at the ways that Prussia united Germany and then looked at the ways that it divided it. Many of these adopted a thematic structure including political, military, economic, social and cultural aspects of the topic. Others discussed specific events or developments in turn assessing how it might be argued that Prussia was a force for unity and/or division in each case and this sometimes led to a chronological approach which was less successful in producing synthesis. In general, most supported the premise in the question although many then struggled with the question of the Kulturkampf under Bismarck. However, a significant number of responses were limited in range to the middle years of the period.

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