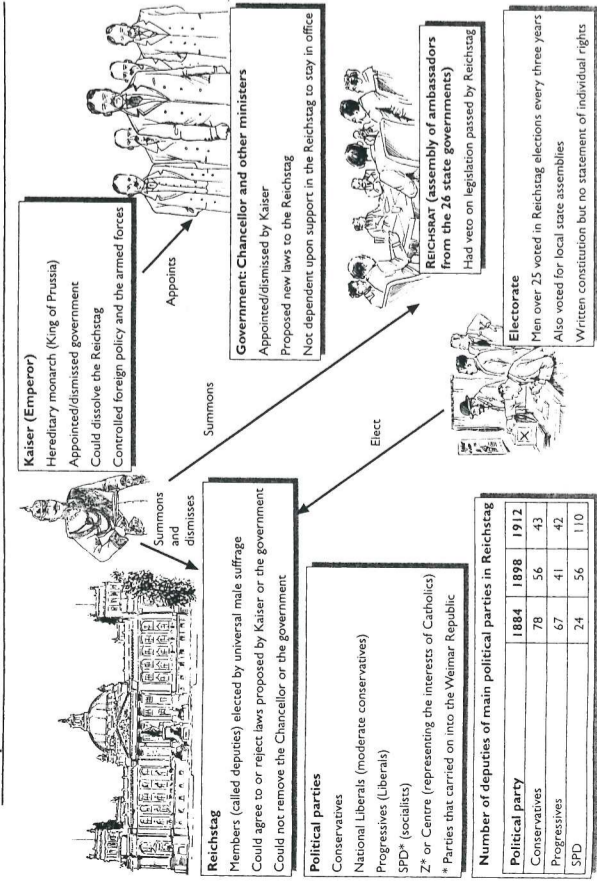


Germany before 1890

How was Germany governed?

The political structure of the Second Reich 1871-1918

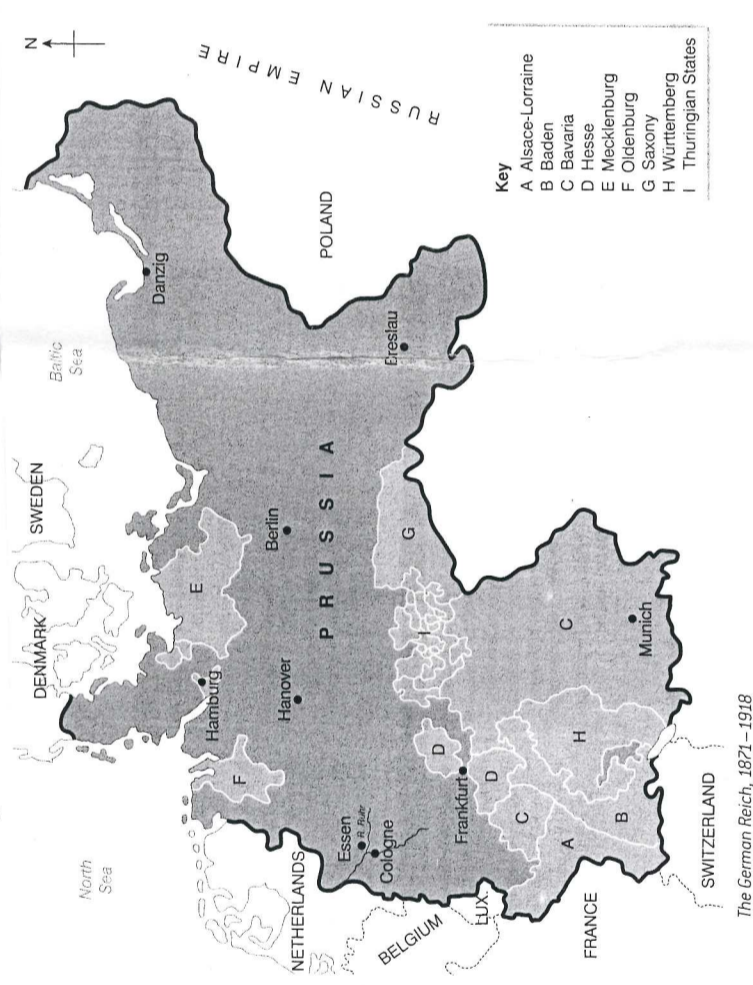


The Social Situation

The economic and industrial development

Key Events before 1890

- 1848 – Attempts by revolutionaries to unite the German states failed.
- 1864-71 – Prussia, under the leadership of Otto von Bismark, unifies Germany by defeating Denmark, Austria and France in a series of wars.
- 1871 – The German Empire (Second Reich) is established with a new constitution. The key elements of the constitution were:
 - The King of Prussia (Wilhelm I) was to be the German Kaiser
 - The Minister-President of Prussia (Otto von Bismark) was to become German Chancellor
 - A Reichstag (parliament) was to be elected by universal male suffrage.
 - Imperial ministers were appointed and dismissed by the Kaiser and were not to be accountable to the Reichstag.
 - Legislation was to be initiated by the Chancellor but it had to be passed by the Reichstag.



The problems facing Germany by 1890

- 1875 – A common currency was introduced backed by a new central bank, the Reichsbank
- 1888 – Kaiser Wilhelm I dies. He is succeeded by Frederick who dies three months later.
- 1888 – Kaiser Wilhelm II becomes the leader of Germany
- 1890 – March. Bismark resigns as Chancellor and is replaced by General Leo von Caprivi