

German History - The Middle Ages

Instructors: Bill Holstein and Jim Weiher

Timing: Fall Semester, 2018 (Wednesday 10:15-11:15)

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Website: <http://www1.udel.edu/LLL/language/deutsch/handouts/history/>

Week	Topic
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1	Background: The Stone Age, the Romans, and the Barbarian Invasions
2-3	Charlemagne and the Saxons
4-5	Otto and the Reich
6-7	Henry and the Pope
8-9	Frederick Barbarossa and the Lion
10-11	Hildegard of Bingen and the Power of Women
12-13	Frederick II and the Crusade

Overview

This is the first semester of a planned three-semester series of courses at OLLI-Wilmington covering German History from the age of Charlemagne (about 750 AD) through Gustav Stresemann and the Weimar Republic (1929). The first course (Fall 2018) will cover five leaders of the Holy Roman Empire – from the unification of much of Europe under Charlemagne through Friedrich II and the Crusades – and one remarkable woman (Hildegard of Bingen).

The courses are built around a series of German language videos and associated German language "Learning Material" produced by ZDF, a German television network. The videos were first broadcast nationally in 2008 and 2010. Since then they have been used, together with the Learning Material, in German high schools in support of the teaching of German History.

Course Objectives

These courses are first and foremost German Language courses directed towards participants with an intermediate to advanced understanding of German who wish to improve their understanding of the German language, in particular their listening comprehension. The topical information will be presented primarily in German, while any important information on

the course structure will be conveyed in English. Videos will be played at a slightly reduced speed (85%) to help with listening comprehension. Complementary power point presentations will provide English translations of difficult German words. In addition, to help participants improve their reading and listening skills, an extensive compilation of German vocabulary (with English translations) has been compiled for each topic and is available online. Participants are not required to speak German in class. All oral participation is strictly voluntary.

A second objective of the course is to convey information to all – from intermediate-level students of German to those fluent in the language – concerning the long and fascinating history that led to modern-day Germany. Native-born speakers and others with ties to countries where German is spoken or knowledge of German history are encouraged to provide their additional insights and thoughts (preferentially in German) on the subject matter covered throughout the course.

The third and final objective is to have fun and to learn at your own pace in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.

Available Online Course Content (Videos and Supporting Documentation)

The first week will be based on selected parts of a German-language video that is part of a recent ZDF series on German culture (The Saga of Germany) and will give a historical overview of the area of Europe that is today Germany prior to about 750 AD. During the next 12 weeks, a different historical figure will be covered every two weeks (6 topics). For each of the seven topics, the following information is available online at the website shown at the top of this document:

- A webaddress link to the YouTube site for the ZDF video used in class which contains German-language subtitles that can be turned on or off. (If desired, YouTube videos can be played at home at normal speed or slowed down to 75% speed).
- A copy of the German-language Learning Material provided by ZDF. It is recommended that participants read the first two sections (typically about 10 pages) during the two weeks that the topic is covered. The first section provides a brief description of the video, while the second section provides additional historical information. [For the first week, a short 3-page overview of Germany history prior to Charlemagne, taken mostly from the book *Aus deutscher Vergangenheit* by Klaus Schulz (1976), is provided in place of ZDF-published documentation.]
- An English translation of many of the German words and phrases that appear both in the video and the accompanying written documentation [ordered as they appear for all except Week 1 documentation.]
- A text file of the German language subtitles and the timing for their appearance in the video.