

# German History – The First Reich

## (An OLLI German Language Course)

**Instructors:** Bill Holstein and Jim Weiher

**Timing:** Spring Semester, 2019 (Wednesday 10:15-11:15)

**Email Address for Bill:** holstein@UDel.edu

**URL (this semester):** <http://www1.udel.edu/LLL/language/deutsch/handouts/history/>

**Note:** The documents and video URLs for the Fall-2018 semester have been moved to:  
<http://www1.udel.edu/LLL/language/deutsch/handouts/history/fall-2018/>

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Week	Topic
1-2	Karl IV. und der Schwarze Tod
3-4	Martin Luther und die Reformation
5-6	Thomas Müntzer und der Bauernkrieg
7-8	Albrecht von Wallenstein und der Dreißigjährige Krieg
9	August der Starke und die Liebe
10-11	Preußens Friedrich II. und Maria Theresia
12-13	Napoleon und die Deutschen

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### Overview

This is the second 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). During Spring, 2019 we will cover the second half of the Holy Roman Empire (First Reich), encompassing the years 1300-1806. Significant events include the Black Death, the Protestant Reformation and the ensuing peasant revolts and Thirty Years War, the emergence of Prussia, and the downfall of the First Reich.

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**

The OLLI "German History" 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 German language power point presentations aim to provide context to the videos as well as to fill in gaps between the topics covered in the videos. In addition, to help participants improve their reading and listening skills, an extensive compilation of German vocabulary (with English translations) has been compiled for the main videos 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 those with 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)**

Seven topics (historical figures) will be covered during the course – 2 weeks for each of six topics and one week for the remaining topic. For each of the seven topics, the following information is available online at the website shown at the top of this document:

- A web 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, the first two sections of which are also provided as a handout in class. It is recommended that participants read the first two sections (typically about 4-8 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.
- A vocabulary document containing many of the German words and phrases that appear in the video. This is provided in both PDF and Word (docx) formats. (This semester, the second vocabulary document for the Learning Material is not being provided.)
- A text file of the German language subtitles and the timing for their appearance in the video.