

German History auf Deutsch 1

Instructors: Bill Holstein Mary Shenvi

Timing: Fall Semester, 2024 (Thursday 10:45-12:00)

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

Overview

This is the first semester of a planned four-semester series of OLLI-Delaware online courses covering German History from the age of Charlemagne (about 750 AD) through Gustav Stresemann and the Weimar Republic (1929). The first course will cover four leaders of Europe and the early Holy Roman Empire – from the unification of much of Europe under Charlemagne through Friedrich Barbarossa – and one remarkable woman (Hildegard of Bingen).

The courses are built around a series of German language docudramas produced by ZDF, a German television network. The videos were first broadcast nationally in 2008 and 2010. Since then, they have been used in German schools in support of the teaching of German History. The videos are tied together with read-along short lectures in German, in which English translations of difficult words and phrases are provided.

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, particularly 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. In addition, there will be ample opportunity to ask questions and discuss the course content and German language in either German or English.

German-language videos will be played at a slightly reduced speed (85%) to help with listening comprehension. They will be accompanied by “word-for-word” German subtitles. The videos will be intermixed with power point presentations in German, which will include English translations of difficult German words and phrases to make them easier to follow for those with a beginning knowledge of German.

There will not be any required homework or course preparation. For many topics, a short, written handout in German will be provided ahead of time, for which reading will be optional. Participants are not required to speak German in class, and all oral participation is strictly voluntary.

A second objective of the course is to convey information to all – from beginning-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, those with ties to countries where German is spoken or knowledge of German history, and those who have travelled to Europe and visited the historical locations where events occurred are encouraged to provide their additional insights and thoughts (in German or English) on the subject matter covered throughout the course.

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

Note: This series of four courses was first taught as in-person courses at OLLI-Wilmington in 2018-2019. Since then, the courses have been updated and modified. This is the first time that they will be taught as online courses.