HIST 436/536
TENTH-CENTURY GERMANY: The Ottonians

This course focuses on politics and society in tenth-century Germany. This is the “Ottonian” age, so named after the dynasty of rulers who governed as kings of Germany and Roman Emperors (two Henrys and three Ottos). We will explore a variety of questions ranging from how this new dynasty emerged from the embers of the previous (the Carolingians); what the basis of their power was and whether it might properly be called a “state”; how religious institutions and ideology supported their rule; what role elite women played; and the nature of Ottonian hegemony over northern Italy and the Slavic peoples to their east.

Course Objectives:

To practice reading attentively and critically, whether of primary sources from the Middle Ages or the work of modern scholars.
To analyze primary sources texts and write logical, compelling essays that interpret them.
To gain an understanding of the tenth-century political, social, economic and religious order in Germany.

Undergraduate Course Requirements:

The readings in this course are substantial, and fairly challenging. All are either primary sources or scholarly books and articles. It is the chief requirement of this course that you do all the assigned readings before class and come prepared to discuss them in class. Students will sometimes be asked to lead discussion, to summarize an article, to bring notes on specific questions, or to write a short analytical response (in class or before class). These small assignments will be crucial to evaluating student participation. Moreover, active participation constitutes a significant portion of your final grade. I will not take attendance formally, but since you cannot participate if you are not present, regular attendance in class is expected.

Writing assignments encourage students to engage closely with primary source readings. Papers should answer the assigned question on the basis of the materials assigned. (No outside research is expected.)

The grade break-down is as follows:
Class Preparation & Participation  35%
Midterm paper           30%
Final paper             35%

**Graduate Course Requirements:**

Graduate students will be expected to do additional readings, to meet separately to discuss them, and to write a substantive research paper (in lieu of all undergraduate writing assignments). Accordingly, the grade distribution is: 35% participation, 65% research paper. More detailed arrangements will be decided amongst the graduate students and instructor at the first class meeting. Reading knowledge of German is expected for graduate students.

**Readings:**

Most of the readings for this course have been posted to Blackboard. Articles marked with an * are available as PDF files through the UO library. You MUST print these out and bring them to class for our discussions. Three books are available for purchase at the UO Bookstore (and on reserve at Knight Library):


**A Note on Terminology:**

Because the articles we’re reading in this class were originally intended for scholars and specialists, they sometimes contain terminology in Latin or German unfamiliar to educated non-specialists (like you!). For German words, I encourage you to use the following translation website: [http://www.dict.cc/](http://www.dict.cc/) A variety of Latin dictionaries are also available on-line; these are unfortunately less useful for technical terms and medieval (rather than classical) usages. Feel free to email me if a term is seriously impeding your comprehension of the reading; I’ll post my answers to the whole class, because chances are you’re not the only one confused. Do remember to use the web for any English words new to you.

**SCHEDULE**

Jan 6  Introduction to the Course, its Geography, and Issues in Ottonian History

Jan 8  The Late Carolingian Collapse: The Nature of the End? And of the Beginning?
Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, trans. Stuart Airlie, pp. 182-228 (esp. pp. 198-228)
Adalbert of Magdeburg, *Continuation of Regino* (pp. 228-41)

Jan 13  Henry I (919-36)
Widukind, Bk I (3-59); cf. Thietmar, Bk I (66-88)

Jan 15  Otto I (936-73)
Thietmar, Bk II (pp. 89-125)

Jan 20  **Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**

Jan 22  Otto I (cont.)
Widukind Bk II & III (61-152)

Jan 27  Creating the Ottonian State?

Jan 29  Ottonian Women

Feb 3  The Frauenfrage (Woman question)

Feb 5  Ottonian Monasteries

Feb 10  Ottonian Bishops

Feb 12  Otto II (973-83)
Thietmar, Bk III (pp. 126-48)
MIDTERM PAPER DUE

Feb 17  Otto III (983-1002)
Thietmar, Bk IV (149-204)

Feb 19  Otto III (cont.)
Gerd Althoff, Otto III, Ch. 1-2 (pp. 1-71)

Feb 24  Adalbert of Prague, Missionary Christianity, and the Slavs
John Canaparius, Life of Adalbert

Feb 26  Otto III (cont.)
Althoff, Ch. 3-5 (pp. 72-131)

Mar 2  Renovatio imperii and Political Ideology
Henry Mayr-Harting, Ottonian Book Illumination, pp. 156-78 OR 179-201.

Mar 4  Henry II (1002-24)
Thietmar, Book V (pp. 205-234)

Mar 9  Henry II (cont.)
Thietmar, Book VI (pp. 235-305)

Mar 11  Ottonian Society
Thietmar, Book VII (pp. 306-360)

Wednesday, Mar 18, 10:15 am  Final Paper due