Course Description. This readings course introduces graduate students to the early history of Central Europe (to 1378). It is the first of a two-part sequence of reading courses intended for medievalists and early modern Europeanists wishing to become better acquainted with the Holy Roman Empire and expand their geographic knowledge of the Middle Ages beyond Western Europe, and for students of modern Europe interested in a survey course of the history of pre-modern Germany and/or neighboring lands.

Format. The course will be conducted largely as a discussion. We will survey major developments in histories of the German territories, the Czech lands, Poland, and Hungary alongside that of the Holy Roman Empire from the Great Migrations to the Hussite Revolution through a careful, critical reading of classic textbooks, recent interpretative surveys and monograph studies. In addition, we will read works on the impact of modern events on twentieth-century historical scholarship and interpretations of the medieval past.

Requirements. There are no prerequisites for the course (linguistic or otherwise). Students are expected to prepare readings in advance of class sessions and actively participate in class discussions. Students will present a report on an outside reading dealing with one of the weekly session topics, and submit an historiographical essay on a topic of their choice (see separate guidelines for details and due dates).

Objectives. This course will provide students with a foundation in medieval German and Central European history. It will broaden students’ perspective of European history geographically and thematically by acquainting them with diverse processes that were involved in European historical development. Through critical exposure to different national histories and nationalist perspectives students will gain a heightened awareness of the problems of historiographical analysis.
Reading List (in alphabetical order; full citations)

Items marked with an asterix are available in the University Bookstore; others are on reserve in the Waldo Library or will be made available by the instructor --

- Timothy Garton Ash, “Mitteleuropa?,” *Daedaelus*, Special Issue: East Europe...Central Europe...Europe (Winter 1990): 1-21
- Geoffrey Barraclough, *The Origins of Modern Germany* (1963)*
- Geoffrey Barraclough, ed., *Eastern and Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (1970)
- James Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire* (1864)
The instructor will also provide students with a collection of maps and other useful materials. Students wishing a more advanced reference work in historical geography are referred to Paul Robert Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of East Central Europe* (1993)

**Course Schedule**

**Session #1 - Introductory Meeting – Central Europe: A Cultural Crossroads & Historiographical Battleground**

Reading:
Kiss, “Central European Writers about Central Europe: Introduction to a Non-Existent Book of Readings”; Ash, “Mitteleuropa?”; Magocsi, “East Central Europe: geographic zones”; Davies, 23-38; Sugar, 1-2; Barraclough, ed., *Eastern and Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, pp. 7-14; Sayer, “Bearings”; Sugar, xi-xiv; Davies, vii-xviii & 3-22

**Session #2 - Holiday**

**Session #3 - The Great Migration of the Peoples**

Reading: Barraclough, ed., *Eastern and Western Europe in the Middle Ages*; Bryce, 1-31; Davies, pp. 38-52; Sugar et al., pp. 8-14


**Session #4 - The Formation of the Holy Roman Empire**


TOPIC OF HISTORICAL ESSAY DUE

Session #5 - Carolingian Encounters


Report: Charles R. Bowlus, *Franks, Moravians and Magyars: The Struggle for the Middle Danube, 788-907*

Session #6 - Imperial Renewal under the Saxons & Salians


Session #7 - Consolidation & Early History of Central European States: National Perspectives

Reading: Sugar, pp. 15-33; Davies, pp. 61-105; Krofta, “Bohemia to the Extinction of the Premyslids”


Session #8 - Consolidation & Early History of Central European States: The Perspective of Encounter

Session #9 - The Investiture Conflict & Imperial Renewal under the Hohenstaufen

Reading: Barraclough, *The Origins of Modern Germany*, 101-246; Bryce, pp. 149-216


WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY DUE

Session #10 - “Medieval Germany”: The Search for a Definition and Interpretation

Reading: Benjamin Arnold, *Medieval Germany, 500-1300*

Session #11 - The Great Eastern Migration

Reading: H. Aubin, “Medieval Agrarian Society and its Prime: The lands east of the Elbe and German colonisation eastwards”; Thompson, pp. 451-528; 580-658


Session #12 - The Great Eastern Migration as a Bulwark of Nazi Scholarship and Revisited in the Post-Cold War Period

Reading: Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*


Session #13 - The Teutonic Order in the Baltic: Crusade or End of the Frontier?
Reading: Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades* (1998); Robert I. Burns, “The Significance of the Frontier in the Middle Ages”

Optional Additional Reading: Barraclough, *The Origins of Modern Germany*, pp. 258-281; Thompson, pp. 529-544


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**Session #14 - Imperial Renewal during the Age of Charles IV & the Angevin Realm**

Reading: Bryce, pp. 217-266; Barraclough, ed., *Eastern and Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, pp. 73-82; Barraclough, *The Origins of Medieval Germany*, pp. 282-319; Krofta, “Bohemia in the Fourteenth Century”; Davies, pp. 92-105; Sugar et al., pp. 34-53


**HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY DUE**

**Session #15 - Final Discussion**