

# CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES- IRE214

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**Session 3: Germany**

# Germany

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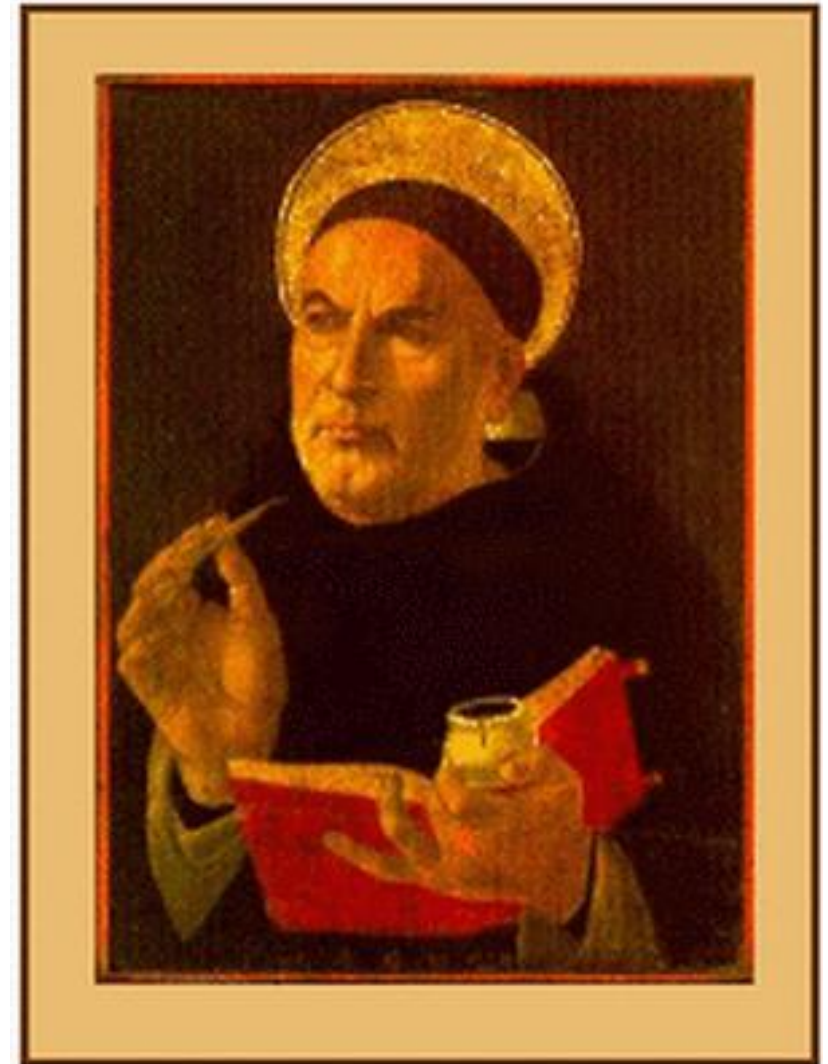
- Martin Luther's protestant reformation
- Germans' classical philosophers
  - Hegel's
  - Kant
- The German Dialects



# Pre- Reformation state

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- Weariness of dependence on the Church and the constraints it enforced
- Growing human confidence vs. “original sin”
- Better educated, urban populace was more critical of the Church than rural peasantry
- Renaissance monarchs were growing impatient with the power of the Church



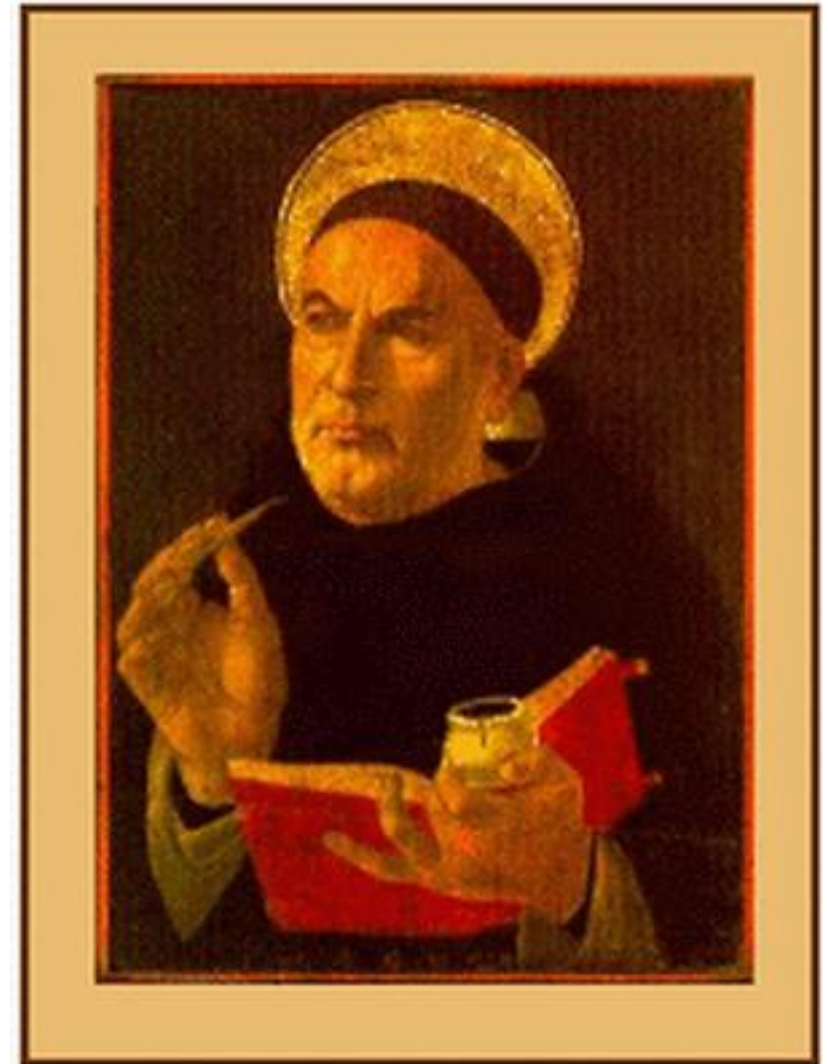
# Pre- Reformation state

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- Society was more humanistic and secular
- Growing individualism

Late Renaissance => complaints:

- Clergy and pop had become too political
  - Corruption
- 
- These unpopular practices weakened the church, and people began calling for reform



# Critic on the Catholic Church

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- Corruption- The Church raised money through practices such as simony and selling indulgences/pardons
  - An indulgence provided a relaxation of penalties for sins people had committed
  - Advantages of Buying Indulgences => Go Directly to Heaven, avoid Purgatory/shorter time there



# Calls for Reform

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- John Wycliffe (1330-1384)
  - Questioned the authority of the pope
- Jan Hus (1370-1415)
  - Criticized the vast wealth of the Church
- Desiderius Erasmus (1469-1536)
  - Disputed corruption in the Church
- Calls on the church to make changes led to a reform movement of western Christianity => the **Reformation**



# Martin Luther

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- Born in Germany (1483)
- Attended University at Erfurt
- After surviving a violent storm, vowed to become a monk
- Doctorate in theology (1512)
- Professor of Biblical studies, sermons and commentaries in Wittenberg (1513-1518)



# Martin Luther

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- Credited with starting the reformation but he never wanted to leave the Catholic church
- After excommunication he departed further from the church's teachings (marries Katharina von Bora in 1527)
- Died in 1546

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# Ninety five Theses

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- Luther criticized Church practices (selling indulgences) and urged an inner church debate concerning the true path to salvation
- October 31, 1517 => Luther nailed a list of 'complaints' to the church door in Wittenberg (a public act). These became known as the **Ninety-Five Theses**



# Excommunication

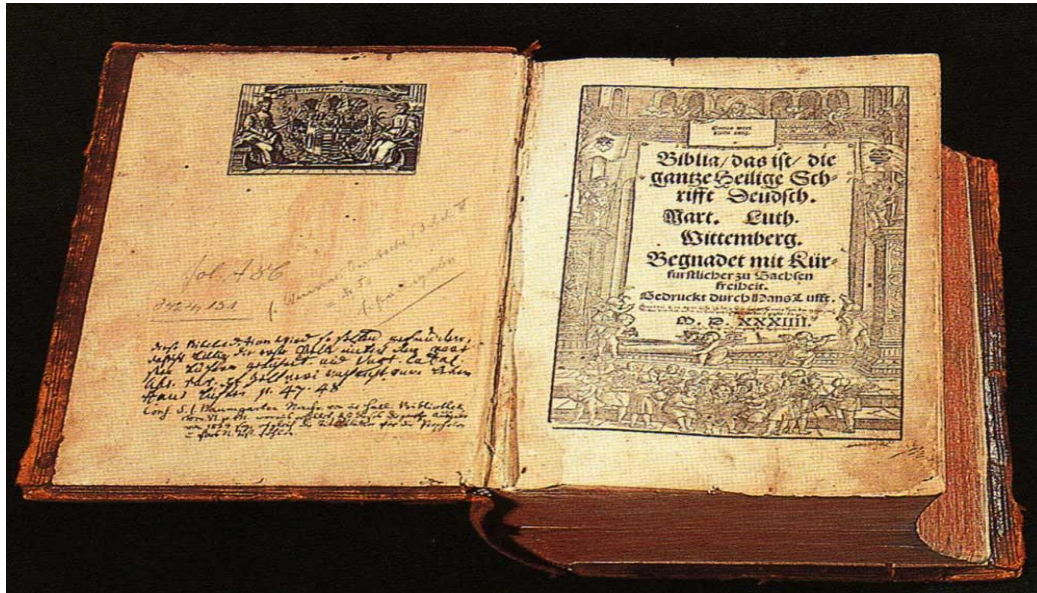
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- Pope Leo X demanded that Luther recant 41 of his *Ninety-Five Theses*
- Charles V (Holy Roman Emperor) ordered Luther to recant his writings => was brought before the Diet of Worms (assembly) to answer charges of heresy
- January 1521 => Luther was expelled from the Catholic Church



# Lutheranism

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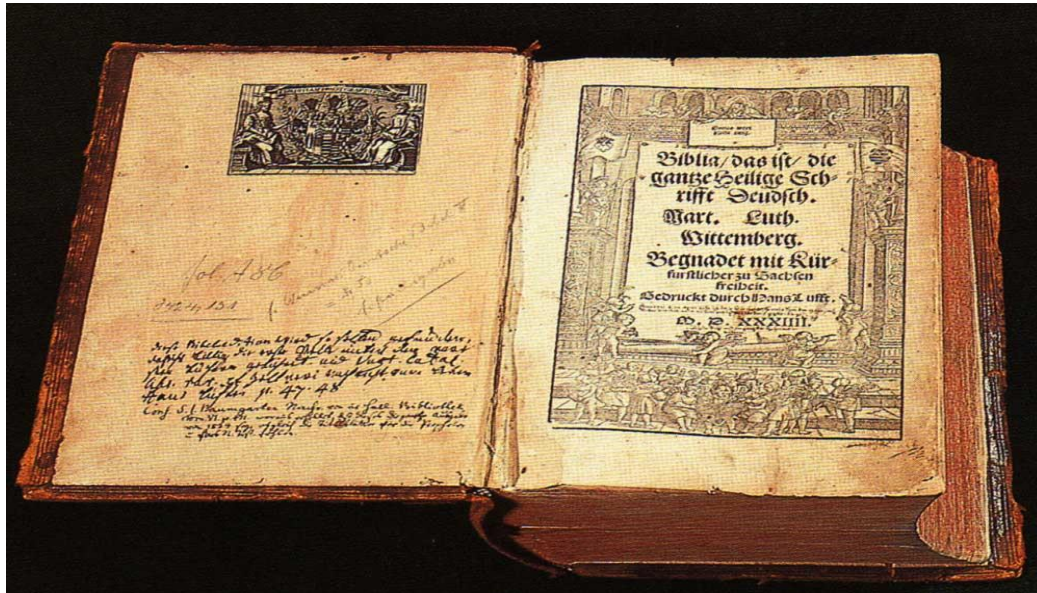


Luther translated the Bible into German so that Europeans could read it for the first time

- Rejected the authority of Church councils and the pope
- Anyone can have a direct relationship with God (not necessarily via priests)
- Salvation comes only through faith in Christ

# Lutheranism

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Luther translated the Bible into German so that Europeans could read it for the first time

- Primacy of the Bible as the sole religious authority (not interpreted by priests/the pope)
- People can read and understand the Bible themselves

# A New Church

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- Luther urged reform in the Catholic Church, but eventually broke away from the church
- Luther soon had many followers, including several German princes => Millions of people sided with Luther against the Roman Catholic Church
- Lutherans began to organize a new Christian denomination



# The Printing Press

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- Invention of movable type was invented in 1450 by Johann Gutenberg
- Manufacture of paper becomes easier and cheaper
- Luther's ideas spread quickly with the help of the printing press
- Copies of Luther's speeches and essays were widely distributed



# The Reformation spreads

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Following Luther's footsteps, other reformers broke away from the Catholic Church to form churches of their own:

- **William Tyndale (1494-1536)**
  - English professor
  - Believed that everyone should be able to read and interpret the Bible
  - Translate the Bible into English, had to flee England (he angered the clergy) but continued to send Bibles to his home country



# The Reformation spreads

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## ■ John Calvin

- French theologian, pastor and reformer in Geneva during the Protestant Reformation
- Believed in predestination (God knew who would be saved even before they were born and nothing that people did during their lives would change it)
- Yet, it was important to live a good life and obey God's laws





# The Reformation spreads

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## ■ Henry VIII

- Wanted to get remarried so he could have a son/heir
- The pope (Roman Catholic church) refused Henry's request so he left the Catholic Church and created his own church
- The Church of England/Anglican Church, was similar to the Catholic Church, but opened the door for other churches to form



# The Reformation spreads

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- Word “Protestant” is first used for dissenting German princes who met at the Diet of Speyer in 1529
- Protestant ideals appealed to the urban and the literate:
  - Family at the center of human life
  - Roles of wives + mothers sanctified



# The Catholic Reformation

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- Catholic reformers wanted to win back support for the Catholic Church from people who had turned away from it =>

## **Counter reformation**

- They responded to the specified criticism in different ways:
  - The formation of new orders
  - Missionaries
  - An effort to reform the Catholic Church from within

# The Catholic Reformation

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- The formation of new orders:
  - **The Society of Jesus/the Jesuits** => a religious order created by Ignatius of Loyola in Spain
    - Aimed to serve the pope and the church
  - Their activities included:
    - Combating Protestantism through education (Teaching Catholic education to boys)
    - Propagation of Catholic faith among non-Catholics
    - Fight Protestantism

# The Catholic Reformation

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- The formation of new orders:
  - **The Ursuline order =>**
    - Originated in 1535 in Italy, established by Angela Mercuri In 1635
    - Believed that Catholic education was the key to strengthening the Catholic Church and limited the impact of Protestant teachings
    - Taught girls
    - St. Ursula, a virgin from early Christianity chosen as patron



# The Catholic Reformation

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## ■ Missionaries

- Stop the spread of protest teaching
- Spread Catholic teachings around the world (Missionaries baptized millions of people in Africa and Asia)
- Win back Protestants



# The Catholic Reformation

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- An effort to reform the Catholic Church from within
  - The Catholic Reformation or Counter reformation
  - The **Council of Trent =>**
    - (1545-1563)
    - Meetings of Catholic leaders aimed to clarify church teachings that had been criticized



# The Council of Trent

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## The Council of Trent:

- The council restated the importance of the clergy interpreting the Bible
- The council ordered the bishops to live in the areas where their churches were located
- The council endorsed Catholic teaching and instituted reform of Catholic practice (the selling of indulgences was banned)





# The Council of Trent

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- The council played a key role in revitalizing the Catholic church in Europe
- A clear distinction was created between Catholic and Protestant beliefs and practices as the idea of Luther, Calvin and other reformation leaders are rejected



# Effects of the Reformation

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- The Reformation induced political, religious and cultural conflicts:



- **Religious conflicts spread** within Europe and the Americas as religious wars broke out between Protestants and Catholics
- Whereas in 1500s, nearly all of Europe was Catholic, by 1600 northern Europe (England, Scotland, Norway, Sweden) became mostly protestant

## Religions in Europe, 1600



# Effects of the Reformation

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- In the Holy Roman Empire, each prince chose the religion for his territory  
=> a patchwork of different kingdoms, some Protestant, some Catholic
- In the Americas, the areas settled by Catholics remained Catholic whereas the 13 additional colonies were mostly Protestant
  - Disagreements about religion and violence often went hand in hand
  - Sometimes the disagreements were political, but mostly religious



# Effects of the Reformation

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- Local protestant churches and towns began to govern themselves, and the national government had to share power
- The sharing of power between local governments and a strong central government is called **federalism**
- On an individual level, people began to think more for themselves and to investigate on their own

# Religious Wars in the Holy Roman Empire

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- Major violence began when several Protestants threw two Catholic officials out of a window in Prague
- The king decided to close all the Protestant churches => the **Thirty Years' War**- a series of wars that involved many of the European countries
- As the war grew, the king had to ask other countries to come to his aid



# Religious Wars in the Holy Roman Empire

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- After thirty years of fighting =>
- **The Treaty of Westphalia/Peace of Westphalia:** a series of peace treaties signed between May and October 1648 in the Westphalian cities of Osnabrück and Münster, largely ending the European wars of religion



# Religious Wars in the Holy Roman Empire

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- Allowed rulers to decide whether their countries would be Catholic/Protestant
- The states of Germany became independent with no single rule, ending the Holy Roman Empire





# In conclusion

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7.9.2

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- Unsatisfied with the Roman Catholic Church, religious reformers broke away to form their own churches.
- Luther urged reform with the Catholic Church, but was out casted
- Luther's intellectual stand triggered social and political unrest of 16<sup>th</sup> century
- The Spread of Luther's Ideas was eased by the reform in print + support of the upper class => opened the flood gates to religious/political turmoil
  - Zwingli in Switzerland
  - Anabaptists elsewhere in Germany
- End of Religious Unity and Universality in the West

# German Classical Philosophers

# German Classical Philosophers

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- German classical Philosophers (Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Feuerbach etc.) highly contributed to the development of philosophical thought in modern times-

## Features:

Systematic and coherent explanation of the world, based on the natural order and harmony of the world, but open for rational understanding

## Innovation:

- Humans don't live in the natural world but in the world of culture
- Rational-theoretical understanding of the phenomena of mind and reality

## Contribution:

Reformulation of philosophical issues that were not resolved by rationalism/empirism

“Classical philosophy”: the highest level of its representatives and importance of philosophical issues.

# Immanuel Kant

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- German philosopher (1724-1804)
- Considered the most influential thinker of the Enlightenment era and one of the greatest Western philosophers of all times
- His works, especially those on epistemology (theory of knowledge), aesthetics and ethics had a profound influence on later philosophers
- Made an important contribution to the rise of modern science
- Main contribution => liberation from theology



# Georg Wilhelm Friederich Hegel

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- 1770-1831, grew up in Stuttgart
- Studied theology (shared a dorm with Schelling: a German idealist philosopher)
- Taught at Jena and Berlin Universities
- Absolute idealist inspired by Christian insights
- Developed a dialectical scheme that emphasized the progress of history and of ideas from thesis to antithesis and thence to a synthesis
- Incorporated the logical, natural, human, and the divine in the scheme



# Hegel's Philosophy

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- Main idea of Hegel's ontology  $\Rightarrow$  **thinking is equivalent to being**
- The mind does not immediately grasp the objects of the world. Knowledge falls into 2 categories:
  - things that are unique to the individual
  - things that are needed for universal understanding
- The philosophical system is comprised of three parts:
  - Logic- the domain of "pure thought" (before subject and object). Reason as the substance
  - Nature
  - Spirit



# Hegel's Philosophy

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- The basis of the world is an idealistic start “absolute idea”, which is in the process of development and formation
- The development of ideas is a dialectical process (dialectical reasoning), based on the struggle of contradictions
- Dialectical reasoning is a 3 stages process:
  - Thesis => Antithesis => Synthesis



# Hegel's Philosophy

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- Art (thesis) - an individual project of the Absolute idea
- Religion (antithesis of art)- an absolute idea disclosed to humans by god in the form of revelation
- Philosophy (synthesis of art and religion)- higher knowledge, full disclosure of all truth.
- Through the activity of their consciousness, humans are able to understand the principles of the spirit and give higher meaning for natural and social progress





# The German Dialects

# Dialect/Standard Dialect

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- More than just an accent- a particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group
- A complete system of verbal communication (oral/signed, but not necessarily written), with its own vocabulary and grammar
- A standard dialect is one that is supported by institutions (government recognition). For example Standard British English, Standard American English)

# German dialects

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- English dialects often differ from standard English mainly in terms of regional accents
- German dialects are much more sharply differentiated from standard German (in terms of vocabulary, grammar, phonology and pronunciation)
- Different words are used to describe dialects in German (die Mundart/der Dialekt)
- “Platt” is the colloquial term for Low and Middle German varieties

# German dialects

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- German is a pluricentric language:
  - Having several national varieties
  - The mother tongue of 94 million people in Germany, Austria & Liechtenstein
- 63.7% of Switzerland's 7.1 million inhabitants speak German as their first language
- It is an official language in Belgium and South Tyrol (Italy)

# German language continuum

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- In Germany and Austria, there are relatively fluid boundaries between three different types of speech:
  - 1) Standard German (Hochsprache)
  - 2) Colloquial German (Umgangssprache)
  - 3) Dialects
- Many dialect words have become part of the colloquial usage/written language (moin, servus (greetings), schnacken (to chat) zocken (gambling), malochen (hard work))

# Standard German

- Only in 1871 when Germany was unified steps were taken to impose uniformity of spelling and standardization of language (English 1755)
- Standard German is used in formal situations (in court of law), or when one speaker is in a position of authority over the other in a speech act
- It is the type of German which children were expected to produce at school and which is described in grammar books and dictionaries
- It is very often the form of German that carries the highest **prestige**

# Colloquial German (Umgangssprache)

- Colloquial German is midway on the continuum between standard German and dialect
- It ranges from forms close to the traditional dialect to forms which, in an English-speaking context, would be called informal standard
- It represents the everyday speech of a majority of German-speakers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (and not standard German!)

# Colloquial German (Umgangssprache)

## Examples:

- **Bock haben** (Lust haben)- ‘feel like’ ... => *Da habe ich überhaupt keinen Bock drauf* (I absolutely do not want to do that)
- **Die Nase voll haben**- discontent => *Ich habe die Nase voll von der lauten Musik* (I’m sick of the loud music)
- **“Chillen”**, to hang out => *Nach der Arbeit muss ich erstmal chillen.* (After work I will have to chill first.)

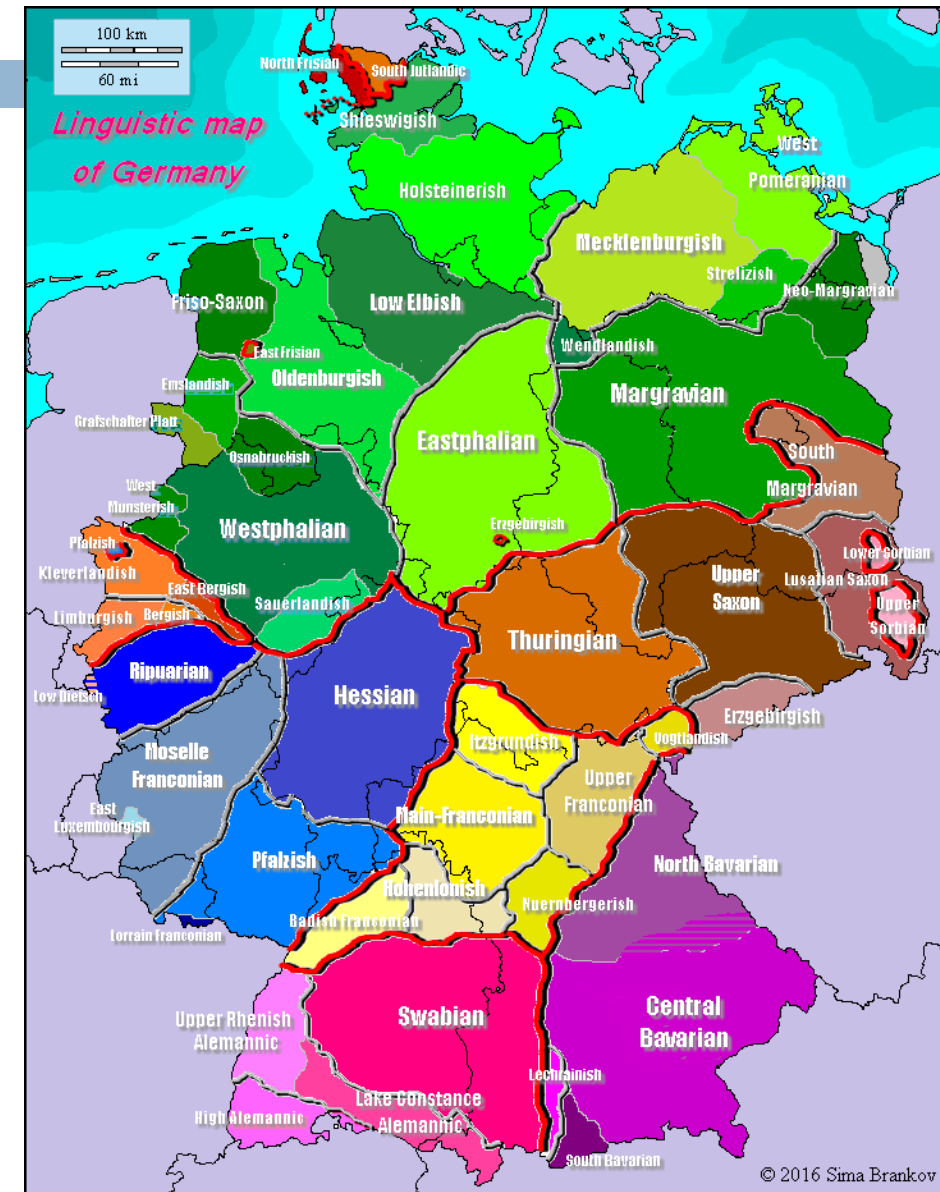


# The rise of colloquial German

- The rise of colloquial German has its origins in dialect speakers who did not follow the standard use by the educated middle classes
  - In order to linguistically identify with their social group, they used relaxed forms of the standard
- The rise of both standard and colloquial German put dialects under threat => dying out as standard German was adopted by schools & institutions
- The media spreads the usage of standard German, now also of colloquial German

# Dialect map of Germany

- The dialect map of the German-speaking countries can be split into three:
  - Low German (Niederdeutsch) spoken in the Lowlands in North Germany
  - Middle German (Mitteldeutsch)
  - Upper German (Oberdeutsch) spoken in south Germany, Austria and Switzerland
  
- All three dialect areas contributed to the formation of modern standard German



# Which dialects are the “purest”?

- The dialects that are nearest to Standard German from a written standpoint are those in the south and the centre of the country
- This is because the standardisation of German was hugely influenced by Martin Luther
  - For his translation of the Bible, he took the chancery language of Meißen (Saxony) as his basis
  - He chose a central dialect “dass mich beide Ober- und Niederländer verstehen mögen”
- Pronunciation wise, modern “standard” German is closest to the north German dialect (esp. Braunschweig, Hannover)

# 1970s – “Die Dialektwelle”

- In the 1970s, dialects enjoyed a new wave of popularity (*Dialektwelle*), particularly among authors and the middle-class
- As the Green movement grew, dialects were seen as representing local traditions and expressing regional identity: *Sprache der Nähe*
  - A language of human closeness underpinning a friendly community

# Dialect prestige – hot or not?

- Some dialects are more loved than others:
  - In a 1998 survey (Allensbach survey), the most popular dialect was found to be Bairisch (37%), North German *Plattdeutsch* was next (32%)
  - The Allensbach survey concluded that dialects were gaining a more positive image, having lost “viel von ihrem Image von provinzieller Enge und Unbildung”
- Only 12% of people never used their dialect

# Unpopular dialects: Saxon

- The 1998 Allensbach survey also concluded that Sächsisch was by far the most unpopular dialect (50% disliked)
  - Partly since the unpopular GDR leader Walter Ulbricht spoke with a strong Saxon accent
- Second most unpopular dialect was Berlinisch (24%), then Bairisch (19%)

# Next Session...

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- ◆ German history
- ◆ WWI
- ◆ WWII
- ◆ German split and unification
- ◆ ...



# Next Session...



**Thank You For Your Attention!**