

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Semester II, 1990-91

HISTORY 431 (History of Scandinavia to 1815)

MR. HAMALAINEN

History 431 explores the major social, political and economic trends in the Scandinavian countries (Norden) from the "Viking Age" to the dissolution of Sweden-Finland and Denmark-Norway. Whenever possible various aspects of the historical institutions, structures and developments in the Nordic countries will be treated within a comparative framework. Thus an effort will be made to clarify features which are common to Scandinavian history as a whole as well as to point out the more unique aspects of the evolution of the different northern societies. The relationship of significant characteristics of the Scandinavian experience to general European history will also be treated.

LECTURES

Lectures two times per week

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

The undergraduates are expected to write one book review and the graduate students four book reviews based on optional reading. Both the mid-term and final examinations will consist of essay questions--the mid-term examination is optional but if a student chooses to take it the examination counts toward the course grade.

GRADING SYSTEM

The course grade is largely decided by the results of the examinations --if the student chooses to take the mid-term examination it will count for about 30% of the course grade. The book reviews can swing the course grade in borderline cases.

REQUIRED READINGS

The works mentioned below will be required reading for all students in the class. In addition there will be optional reading, which the students can choose from a book list furnished by the instructor.

- T. Derry, A HISTORY OF SCANDINAVIA.
- J. Brondsted, THE VIKINGS.
- J. Lisk, THE STRUGGLE FOR SUPREMACY IN THE BALTIC: 1600-1725.

The following topics will be discussed in the lectures:

Introduction to the area

Pre-history

Sources of the past

Viking Age--society and its institutions; the expeditions and their causes

Coming of Christianity and resulting changes in society

The Tings

Nature of kingship

Slavery

Emergence of a nobility

Feudalism and Scandinavia

Eastward expansion

Quest for unity--the Union of Kalmar and its break-up

The Reformation period

Sweden's rise to great power status

Swedish society in the 18th century--changes in administrative and social structures

Denmark--changes in administrative and social structures

Drive for uniformity and developments in Finland and Norway

Age of Liberty and the new political order in Sweden after the Great Northern War

Class privileges and social mobility in 18th century Scandinavia

Norwegian and Finnish particularism

The Gustavian Era

Political realignments