

Summer School Central Europe: History & Culture – Architecture & Society

Course syllabus

54 contact hours (class-room hours + field trips by lecturers), 6 ECTS

The course focuses on the historical development of Central Europe as represented in the political, cultural, societal and artistic (especially architectural) matters. The first week focuses mostly on the early developments of European society and its transformations in Central Europe, during the second week the developments of modern society are discussed – from the nineteenth century to present-day political systems. The course is based on theoretical backgrounds that are presented in the lectures and practical applications that are discussed during the afternoon sessions that happen either in class, or as field trips in the city of Olomouc or the vicinity.

An integral part of the course are field trips to Bratislava, Prague and Vienna. The Bratislava trip happens within one of the sessions, as during the coach trip a lecture is held and then discussed at the castle of Devín and in the city of Bratislava. Prague and Vienna are one day trips with lectures during the city tour. All these trips are incorporated in the course itself and lectures are held to help students to understand the context of the city development.

All the lectures, seminars and field trips are an integral part of the course and lead to one goal of understanding the central-European society, its growth as well as the development of local architecture. The course is closed with a test that seeks to find out how students understand and are able to use the knowledge they gathered in all the parts of the course. In addition, students have the possibility to write an essay. Successful completion of the test results in 5 ECTS credits, and successful completion of the essay results in 1 ECTS credits. Therefore, in total, students have the possibility to earn up to 6 ECTS credits.

Sessions normally take 180 minutes and include a lecture and a discussion part. The afternoon sessions take roughly the same amount of time.

Session 1: Christianity and Formation of the European East and West (*Jan Stejskal*) – 6 hrs

- topics: geographical divisions of Europe; coming of Christianity, missionaries, Christianity and early states; specifics of Western and Eastern Europe; specifics of the middle region of Central Europe; early Christian architecture; Romanesque and Gothic churches
- field: Romanesque and Gothic Art (Archdiocesan Museum Olomouc), Cathedral of Olomouc

Session 2: Greek and Roman Legacy; Renaissance in European intellectual tradition (*Jan Stejskal & Antonín Kalous*) – 6 hrs

- topics: Greek and Roman Antiquity; tradition and transmission of knowledge of the Antiquity; medieval traditions; Renaissance and the re-birth of the Antiquity; Italian Renaissance; spreading of Renaissance and Humanism from Italy to Central Europe; Renaissance architecture; development of cities
- field: Gothic and Renaissance Art (city of Olomouc)

Session 3: Hungarians in Central Europe: a phenomenon (*Antonín Kalous*) – 6 hrs

- topics: coming of Hungarians to Central Europe and their settlement; special linguistic conditions; special religious conditions; acceptance of Christianity; creation of the medieval state; contacts with neighbours; medieval castles of Hungary (reasons and conditions) – Devín; medieval cities of Hungary – Bratislava; modern development of Hungary and Slovakia
- field: Devín (castle); Bratislava (city, cathedral, castle)

Session 4: Crusades: Uses and Abuses of the Christian Pilgrimage (*Jan Stejskal*) – 6 hrs

- topics: what is a crusade; who are crusaders; religious warfare, holy war, just war; influence of crusades on European society; crusading ideology in and outside of Europe; military religious orders and their castles
- field: Bouzov (castle of Teutonic Knights)

Session 5: Baroque culture and spirituality (*Martin Elbel*) – 6 hrs

- topics: The Reformation and religious developments of Central Europe in early modern period; Baroque religious culture; representations of different religious groups; Catholic revival and the Council of Trent, cult of saints, pilgrimage practice, magic and witchcraft
- field: Svatý Kopeček (baroque complex of church and convent)

Session 6: Birth of modern nations in Central Europe (*Jitka Kohoutová*) – 6 hrs

- topics: what are modern nations and how they were formed; Romanticism and nationalism; ethnicity in Central Europe; specifics of the formation of Czech, Slovak (and Czechoslovak) nations; Polish and Hungarian nations; Central European nationalism in the twentieth century
- field: Špilberk Castle in Brno (baroque fortress and Austro-Hungarian prison known as “dungeon of the nations”)

Session 7: Gender roles in modern history (incl. communist regime) (*Jitka Kohoutová*) – 6 hrs

- topics: family models and transformation of gender roles in modern society; phenomenon of private and public spheres; specifics of Czech women’s movement in the nineteenth century and women in the First Czechoslovak Republic; woman, family and gender roles under the communist regime

Session 8: Contemporary History of Central Europe (*Jiří Lach*) – 3 hrs

- topics: Changing role of Europe in a global area from 1900 to present. Massive shift occurred in this era from supremacy of European colonial powers prior to WWI and decline of it all in its aftermath. Whole set of processes led to decomposition of Old Continent’s dominant position in the world. It will be analysed how these processes developed from perspectives of different European political powers as well as how former exploited territories worked on dwindling Europe’s influence. European reflections of retreat from the World leader no. One to an almost peripheral player in confrontation to rising powers of the 20th and 21st centuries will be discussed too. Course focuses on four main periods: 1. Beginning of the 20th; 2. Two World Wars and their impact on Europe’s retreat from global dominance; 3. Europe in the shadow of bipolar supremacy; 4. Multipolar world of present.

Session 9: Dissident groups and opposition in CE under communist regimes (*Jiří Lach*) – 3 hrs

- topics: World War II and its impact on political, social, economic and ethnic development of Central Europe; Causes and consequences of Cold War in Europe; Europe divided: sovietisation of Central Europe and East European Politics under the influence of Soviet Union. Key moments in Central European politics under communism (1948, 1956, 1968). Downfall of communist rule in Central Europe and its roots. Main aspects of post-transition since 1989. Central Europe in 2019: Historical lessons learned or is Central European politics heading to authoritarian past?
- field: Idea of collective housing in the Post war times: Olomouc and its blocks of flats.

Session 10: Europe and the world since 1900: from global leadership to periphery? (Jiří Lach) – 6 hrs

- topics: Limited opposition in Central Europe at the beginning of communist regime. Reform communism and idea of opposition in communist Europe. Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the birth of human rights agenda in 1970s. Case studies: opposition during Prague Spring; “Heydays” of dissident movements in 1970s and 1980s: Committee for Defence of Workers (KOR) and Solidarity in Poland, Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, Aspects of dissidence in Hungary (protection of environment and a new social contract). Story of a dissident: Václav Havel.

STUDY LITERATURE

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- Evans, R J W. *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550–1700: an Interpretation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.
- Fuchs, Rachel G. and Victoria E. Thompson. *Women in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
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