

Course descriptions

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Academic year: 2026/2027	
University: Comenius University Bratislava	
Faculty: Faculty of Arts	
Course ID: FiF.KSD/A-boHI-526/26	Course title: Culture and Society in Pre-Modern Central Europe
Educational activities: Type of activities: seminar Number of hours: per week: 2 per level/semester: 28 Form of the course: on-site learning	
Number of credits: 4	
Recommended semester: 15.	
Educational level: I.	
Prerequisites:	
Course requirements: Preliminary assessment: regular and active participation in seminars, completion of written and reading assignments, contributing to discussions during the analysis of the texts in class. Each student will also prepare a presentation on a selected topic lasting approximately 20 minutes. The list of topics and their schedule will be presented at the beginning of the semester. Final assessment: a written paper that consists of a written analysis of a topic presented during the semester; the paper should be 7 pages in length, follow a standard structure (introduction, main body, conclusion), and include a list of references. The paper is due during the exam period of the semester. Grading scale: A = 100% – 92% B = 91% – 84% C = 83% – 76% D = 75% – 68% E = 67% – 60% Fx = 59% – 0% A maximum of 2 absences are allowed during the semester. Violation of academic ethics will be punished, and the student will lose all the received points in the relevant assessment. Scale of assessment (preliminary/final): 60/40	
Learning outcomes: Students have a basic understanding of the specific characteristics of social and cultural development in Central Europe during the premodern era (with an emphasis on the early modern period). They are able to work with historical sources from the period (in translation) as well as basic historiographical literature. By focusing on social and cultural phenomena from the premodern period (such as aristocratic society, urban life, the developments in the Church, forms of education, and so on), students are able to identify both general European trends and local characteristics in the development of Central Europe during the premodern period. This gives them an understanding of the region's development over the long term and enables them to identify the historical roots of	

later phenomena. At the same time, it provides them with a historically grounded perspective on parallel trends in literature and the arts.

Class syllabus:

1. Introductory Meeting. Basic Characteristics of Pre-Modern Social and Cultural Phenomena
2. The “Waning of the Middle Ages” in Central Europe: European Trends and Local Particularities
3. The Society of Orders: The World of the Nobility - the Aristocracy and Regional Nobility
4. The Society of Orders: Urban Communities - Regional Metropolises and “Small Towns”
5. Renaissance Humanism: Ideas and Patronage Networks
6. The Reformation and Church Reforms: Cultural Influences and Vernacular Languages
7. Recatholicization and the Counter-Reformation: Religion in Politics and Identity Formation
8. The Discovery of New Worlds: The Natural Sciences in the Region and European Intellectual Networks
9. The Discovery of New Worlds: Perspectives Beyond the Region’s Borders and Travel Literature
10. Economic Life: Global Networks and Local Development
11. Center and Periphery: Court Culture, Aristocracy versus Professional Bureaucracy
12. The Enlightenment and Efforts to Reform Society

Recommended literature:

EVANS, Robert John Weston. Making of the Habsburg monarchy 1550 - 1700: An interpretation. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.

FROST, Robert I. The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania, vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

LOUTHAN, Howard - MURDOCK, Graeme (eds.). A Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015.

WANDYCZ, Piotr S. The price of freedom: A history of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the present. London: Routledge, 2001.

Languages necessary to complete the course:

English

Notes:

Past grade distribution

Total number of evaluated students: 0

A	B	C	D	E	FX
0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0

Lecturers: Mgr. Peter Benka, PhD.

Last change: 09.05.2026

Approved by:

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Academic year: 2026/2027	
University: Comenius University Bratislava	
Faculty: Faculty of Arts	
Course ID: FiF.KSD/A-moHI-747/25	Course title: Irredentism in Europe: origin, characteristics and consequences of the phenomenon
Educational activities: Type of activities: lecture / seminar Number of hours: per week: 1 / 1 per level/semester: 14 / 14 Form of the course: on-site learning	
Number of credits: 3	
Recommended semester: 2., 4., 16.	
Educational level: II.	
Prerequisites:	
Course requirements: Regular and active participation in classes, as well as the preparation of a seminar paper on a topic chosen at the beginning of the semester (up to 7 pages). Grading scale: A = 100% – 92% B = 91% – 84% C = 83% – 76% D = 75% – 68% E = 67% – 60% Fx = 59% – 0% Accepted are 2 absences during the semester. Violation of academic ethics will be punished, and the student will lose all the received points in the relevant assessment. Scale of assessment (preliminary/final): 50/50	
Learning outcomes: Students will encounter an issue that is still relevant in current times: the problem of the definition of States based on nationality and the definition of their borders, as well as the territories that belong to them. Through the process of nation building and unification in the 19th century, and then with the re-shaping of Europe after the First World War, the territories and people considered to be „left out“ came under the claim of irredentism. During the lessons we will examine the origin of this ideological current, as well as its features and its influence to the present day in the political discourse, focusing on Italy (birthplace of the term) and on the confrontation that the first Czechoslovak Republic had to establish with its neighbours.	
Class syllabus: -Introduction to the topic: etymology and meaning of the word “irredentism”. Irredentism as a global and international relations issue. -Nationalism and nation-state: the process of nation building, national identity and the definition of borders	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Secession, Revanchism, Irredentism: concepts and examples -Various types of irredentism -Unified Italy and the Austro-Hungarian empire: irredentism as an internal politics as well as diplomatic issue (1870-1918) -Irredentism in the First World War -Italy and its territorial claims (1918-1938) with focus on the Austrian and the Yugoslav border -Hungary and its territorial claims (1918-1938) with focus on the Czechoslovak border -The Sudetenland question (1918-1938) -Political use of irredentism 						
Recommended literature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BIANCHINI, Stefano. Liquid nationalism and state partitions in Europe. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2017, 349 p. ISBN 978-1-78643-660-3 -SMITH, Leonard V. Sovereignty at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018, 277 p. ISBN 978-0-19-967717-7 Additional literature will be presented at the beginning of the semester.						
Languages necessary to complete the course: English						
Notes:						
Past grade distribution Total number of evaluated students: 0						
A	ABS	B	C	D	E	FX
0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Lecturers: Mgr. Cristina Golinelliová						
Last change: 08.05.2025						
Approved by:						

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Academic year: 2026/2027						
University: Comenius University Bratislava						
Faculty: Faculty of Arts						
Course ID: FiF.KSD/A-moHI-748/25		Course title: National minorities in Europe between the two world wars: state minority policies, the League of Nations and international minority protection				
Educational activities: Type of activities: lecture / seminar Number of hours: per week: 1 / 1 per level/semester: 14 / 14 Form of the course: on-site learning						
Number of credits: 3						
Recommended semester: 1., 3., 15.						
Educational level: II.						
Prerequisites:						
Course requirements:						
Learning outcomes:						
Class syllabus:						
Recommended literature:						
Languages necessary to complete the course:						
Notes:						
Past grade distribution Total number of evaluated students: 9						
A	ABS	B	C	D	E	FX
44,44	0,0	44,44	11,11	0,0	0,0	0,0
Lecturers: Mgr. Cristina Golinelliová						
Last change:						
Approved by:						

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Academic year: 2026/2027	
University: Comenius University Bratislava	
Faculty: Faculty of Arts	
Course ID: FiF.KSD/A-boHI-527/26	Course title: Theory and Practice of Politics in Pre-Modern Central Europe
Educational activities: Type of activities: seminar Number of hours: per week: 2 per level/semester: 28 Form of the course: on-site learning	
Number of credits: 4	
Recommended semester: 16.	
Educational level: I.	
Prerequisites:	
Course requirements: Preliminary assessment: regular and active participation in seminars, completion of written and reading assignments, contributing to discussions during the analysis of the texts in class. Each student will also prepare a presentation on a selected topic lasting approximately 20 minutes. The list of topics and their schedule will be presented at the beginning of the semester. Final assessment: a written paper that consists of a written analysis of a topic presented during the semester; the paper should be 7 pages in length, follow a standard structure (introduction, main body, conclusion), and include a list of references. The paper is due during the exam period of the semester. Grading scale: A = 100% – 92% B = 91% – 84% C = 83% – 76% D = 75% – 68% E = 67% – 60% Fx = 59% – 0% A maximum of 2 absences are allowed during the semester. Violation of academic ethics will be punished, and the student will lose all the received points in the relevant assessment. Scale of assessment (preliminary/final): 60/40	
Learning outcomes: Students have a basic understanding of trends in political thought and their reflection in political practice in Central Europe from the late Middle Ages to the end of the 18th century. Thanks to an overview of various thematic areas and intellectual influences, they are able to identify Central European regional specificities as well as the deeper historical roots of modern trends in political developments. They are able to interpret texts from the period (in translation) and analyse the use of intellectual constructs in the actual political practice.	
Class syllabus: 1. Introductory Meeting: Basic Categories of Premodern Political Theory and Practice	

2. Starting Points: The King and the Estates in the Late Middle Ages 3. The Good Ruler and Humanist Virtues 4. The Good Ruler and Reformation Piety 5. Interest in the Past and the (Republican) Ideals of the Estates 6. The Military and the Ideals of the “Bulwark of Christianity” 7. The Search for Internal Stability: Origins of Absolutism 8. The Search for Legitimacy and Resistance of the Estates 9. Building Ideological Loyalty and Confessional Absolutism 10. Identity Formation and Pre-Modern Patriotism 11. The Search for the Public Interest and Enlightenment Absolutism 12. Final Lesson: On the Path to the Modern Era					
Recommended literature: TRENCSÉNYI, Balázs - ZÁSZKALICZKY, Márton (eds.). Whose Love of Which Country? Composite States, National Histories and Patriotic Discourses in Early Modern East Central Europe. Leiden: Brill, 2010. LUKOWSKI, Jerzy. Disorderly Liberty: The Political Culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Eighteenth Century. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012. FRIEDRICH, Karin - PENDZICH, Barbara (eds.). Citizenship and Identity in a Multinational Commonwealth Poland-Lithuania in Context, 1550-1772. Leiden: Brill, 2009. EVANS, Robert John Weston. Austria, Hungary, and the Habsburgs. Essays on Central Europe, c.1683-1867. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.					
Languages necessary to complete the course: English					
Notes:					
Past grade distribution Total number of evaluated students: 0					
A	B	C	D	E	FX
0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Lecturers: Mgr. Peter Benka, PhD.					
Last change: 09.05.2026					
Approved by:					