Polish Culture and Thought

A. CEBULA

30 hours / 4 ECTS

Introductory description

The aim of the course is to give students an overview of the history of Poland as reflected in Warsaw's monuments as well as art and history museums. The visits to places of interest will be intertwined with class discussions and presentations of video material (documentaries and fiction) related to particular topics. An attempt will be made to demonstrate the specificity of Poland's historical experience as well as to facilitate the recognition of Polish unique contribution to the universal legacy of European culture. Confronted with the essential turning points shaping Poland's contemporary cultural identity, the students will be encouraged to perceive and adequately interpret social, political and cultural developments in Poland against the general background of its history and cultural heritage.

Course content

- From the beginnings to the challenge of 1410 – visit to the National Museum.
- Video material + discussion.
- The legacy of Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth – visit to the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.
- Video material + discussion.
- The struggle for survival – visit to the Royal Castle and Warsaw's Old Town
- Video material + discussion.
- The Revival and the Disaster – visit to the Warsaw Uprising Museum
- Video material + discussion.
- Solidarity and Perseverance - visit to the Museum of the History of Poland
- Video material + discussion.

Requirements of credits – Assessment criteria

Assessment will be based on participation in classes and submitting one essay (1500 words) on one of the topics covered.

References / Literature / Reading list

1. Norman Davies, *God's playground, A History of Poland*, Vol. 1: *The Origins to 1795*, Vol. 2: *1795 to the Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

2. Timothy D. Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, Basic Books, 2010

3. Andrzej Nowak, *History and Geopolitics. A Contest for Eastern Europe*, Polish Institute of International Affairs, 2008.