

Dear Sirs,

My name is Beata Kajcinska. I am a 4th year student of Warsaw School of Economics. In this year I have an opportunity to participate in the 3 week Summer Seminar prepared by the Phoenix Institute Europe in Gaming.

The courses, offered by the Institute, were on high academic level. I have participated in three chosen from five offered.

1st "The virtue of courage..." given by Dr. Paul Gabriner

This course was a cross-section of history, literature and philosophy concerning the subject of courage. We analyzed philosophical texts of Aristotle and Plato, biblical parables, medieval stories, XIX century poetry and contemporary literature searching the examples and definitions of courage in different epochs. Basing on these texts we tried to define what it means "courage" and also found it in our everyday life.

The course lasted three weeks and it was really hard work not only for students but also for Dr. Gabriner. We had to read about 30 pages, often difficult, written in old English texts, and write essays on the subject concerning the read materials. In the beginning it was hard to cope with so huge amount of materials and to prepare well to classes. However, we were not alone. Dr. Gabriner helped us when we had any problems with texts or English. He was not only our teacher but also our friend who created the wonderful atmosphere during his classes.

2nd "Personalism and European unification" given by Prof. Kinsky

Professor Kinsky explained us philosophical background of personalist thinking. He also showed why it is the best solution for the future European Union. Personalism as a philosophy combines two different attempts to human being: individualism and collectivism. Personalism connects these two extremes. It gives each human being his/ her identity but also underlies that each of us is a member of different communities. In Poland people often forget what it means their own identity and responsibility for themselves. They often forget what they could achieve if they only started to act. I hope that I will be able to help some of them to believe in their future.

3rd "The rise and fall of soviet atheism" given by Dr. M. Bourdaeux

During this course Doctor Bourdaeux presented us the history of soviet atheism: its origin, rise and fall. What struck me the most during this course was the long list of people's name that sacrificed their lives in order to defend faith. Among them were not only bishops that acted at national level but also priests, monks, nuns and lay people who acted in local communities. They were leaders that were not afraid to fight with terror and inhumane system. They were witnesses of hope and sowed grains of the truth among people.

How will the knowledge which I got during the seminar influence on my future?

As I have mentioned it was really hard work. However, having finished the courses I know that the knowledge I got in Gaming was worth my effort.

I have learned a lot. Now I know that courage is important not only in heroic battles but especially in our everyday. People need courage to be leader, to change themselves and the world. We need it to live our own life and also to change our neighbours. It is important in each aspect of our life. I think that I will be more courageous to change and improve my environment.

Being a part of such multinational group I have realized what is really important in history and culture of Poland. I had an opportunity to look at the history of my country from perspectives of different nations.

Moreover, I understand better the fundamentals of the West. Poland will be a member of the EU in one year and I think Poles should be conscious of the whole heritage of the West to which my country and its culture will be soon included. I think that I will use this knowledge in my future education and work.

The second pillar of the Institute is friendship. I have met a lot of wonderful people in Gaming. They came to that beautiful place from different parts of the world and brought their experience and knowledge with. We discussed during our meals, breaks, and mountain trips about life, philosophy, religion, God. We also exchanged our opinions and taught each other. We discussed everything what is important for us young people of the XXI century. We tried to find solutions to problems we brought with us. We helped each other when somebody had any problems. During these three weeks we built community in which everybody had her/his unique place. I believe that friendship I have formed in Gaming will last for long time.

Karthause Gaming is a very beautiful place located among mountains. The abbey and natural environment create a unique space to deepen your knowledge and to discuss. But Karthause Gaming would not be the same place without all these people I have met there. Everybody was important. Everybody has influence on the atmosphere of the Phoenix Seminar.

I would like to thank The Phoenix Institute Europe for preparing the Summer Seminar in Gaming. It was really a successful event and I believe that new students will have an opportunity to experience the Phoenix atmosphere in Karthause Gaming in one year.

I would like to thank the Institute and sponsors for granting me a scholarship. Without it I would not spend these three wonderful weeks and meet all these wonderful people.

Yours faithfully
Beata Kajcinska