

Dear ladies and gentlemen, friends and patrons of the Kurt-and-Ursula-Schubert Centre of Jewish Studies,

It has become a nice custom to inform you about our past activities at the beginning of a new academic year. Below please find an account of the most important events of the academic year 2013 – 2014 and you are welcome to turn to us should you have any questions, comments or suggestions.

Study:

- The academic year 2013 - 2014 saw the first cohort of bachelor students in the program Jewish and Israel Studies. During this period our activities were primarily dedicated to the success of the program's first year. In the first academic year of the BA program (2012- 2013) 12 students were admitted. In September 2014, 10 new BA-students enrolled. Even though there has been some drop out after the first year of study, our overall numbers indicate a significant increase: there are *36 students in our BA and MA programs*. We achieved this result despite the considerable general decline in students' numbers at the Philosophical Faculty and fared better than some of the well-established departments.
- Both MA and BA students were involved in our program of *internships* in the Czech Republic, Austria and Israel. This is a new part of the curriculum, which is to provide students with valuable experience and also put them in touch with potential future working places. So far, we have secured the cooperation of Jewish Museum in Prague, Centropa in Vienna, and Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv. We are in touch with other institutions that expressed great interest (the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem, National Library in Jerusalem and Yad Vashem) and will be included in our network in the future. Thanks to the growing number of students our connections with institutions that can provide internships for our students intensified. Additionally, we work on intensifying cooperation on various levels with the Institute for Jewish Studies at the University of Vienna.
- We organized an intensive *immersion course in Modern Hebrew for beginners*. This obligatory preparation class before start of the academic year not only raises the level of Hebrew, but also forges the first-year students into a group by the shared experience of intensive language study.
- In September 2014 we organized the *4th International Students Workshop: 'Judaism and Jewish Studies in the Modern World: The Students' Voice'*, where four advanced students of our Centre presented papers; BA-students were invited to discussions. Lenka Uličná received a grant of the Philosophical Faculty of Palacký University for the support of the workshop.

Research:

- The Centre published its fifth volume of the Judaica series: *Vybrané hebrejské a jidiš prameny k dějinám židů na Moravě: středověk a raný novověk* (Selected Hebrew and Yiddish Sources on the History of Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Moravia), edited by Tamás Visi, Alžběta Drexlerová and Marie Krappmann. The collection is bilingual (Hebrew and Czech/Yiddish and Czech). The historical texts were translated by alumni of our MA program and will be used for teaching purposes.
- Three of our members (Tamás Visi, Lenka Uličná and Daniel Soukup) represented the Centre at the *European Association for Jewish Studies Congress* in Paris in July 2014. Louise Hecht participated in the *Conference of the European Association for Israel Studies*, held at SOAS, University of London in September 2014.

- Tamás Visi has received a prestigious grant of the *Czech Grant Agency* (GA ČR) for research into the life and work of Berekhiah ben Natronay ha-Nakdan. This project involves three members of the department and will last for three years.
- Two members of the Centre (Marie Crhová and Jakub Ráliš) have been involved in the *INKULTUS grant project administered at Palacký University*. The project aim is to foster international interdisciplinary curriculum development and research in the area of cultural studies.
- Louise Hecht received an internal university grant (IGA) for her project *Jewish Printing Culture between Brno, Prague and Vienna in the Era of Modernization*. It involves 2 senior researchers (Austria and CZ) + 3 junior researchers (MA- and PhD-students of our Centre) for the years 2014/15
- Louise Hecht together with Simona Malá and Lenka Uličná received a *university grant* for innovation in teaching (FRUP) for the preparation of the on-line textbook *Modern Hebrew for Beginners for Czech Students*.
- Daniel Soukup received post-doctoral fellowship of the Rothschild Foundation Europe for his project *Victimae paschali: Easter Ritual and its Influence on Anti-Jewish Violence in the Late Medieval Czech Lands*.
- The Centre continues its ongoing project *BA. Study Program Jewish and Israeli Studies* (Rothschild Foundation Europe).
- Additionally we received further funding for augmentation of our library resources and renovation of the Centre's entrance from the *Melchet Donation*.
- The Centre's periodical *Judaica Olomucensia* has been successfully registered as a peer reviewed journal by the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic.

Cultural events:

- On 23rd September, 2013, an official *opening of the Winter Semester 2013 - 2014* was organized together with a Sukkot celebration at the University Botanic Garden in Olomouc.
- The sixth year of the festival *Days of Jewish Culture in Olomouc* was held in October 2013. The Centre organized the film section of the festival in cooperation with the Jewish Community of Olomouc and the Theatre of Music, Olomouc. The topic of the film section was Love and Death in contemporary Israeli cinema. The Centre's participation in the event greatly enhanced its position within both the academic community and the Olomouc public.
- The Centre's library again served throughout the academic year as a venue for regular *celebrations of Jewish festivals*. The events (such as the Chanukah and Purim celebrations), open to all university students and the public, were greatly attended and rewarded.

Let me thank you all for your support and we are looking forward to meeting you in Olomouc!

On behalf of the Kurt-and-Ursula-Schubert Centre of Jewish Studies,

Marie Crhová

(administrative head of the Centre of Jewish Studies during the maternity leave of Ivana Cahová)