

Olomouc, 23 December 2016

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

The academic year 2015/2016 was another busy and productive year for the Centre. We have re-accredited our academic programs, hosted international conferences, worked on a number of research projects, expanded international cooperation and continued offering a wide spectrum of courses in Jewish and Israeli studies. In subsequent report, you will learn more about these activities. We would like to thank you for your commitment and support. Needless to add, you are very welcome to turn to us with questions, comments and suggestions.

Teaching:

- The end of academic year 2015/16 saw graduation of the first four B.A. students in Jewish and Israel Studies. Altogether there were 35 students signed up in all three of our programs: B.A. in Jewish and Israel Studies, M.A. in Jewish Studies (one field program), M.A. in Jewish Studies (two-field program, i.e. combination with any other field in the humanities)
- The academic year 2015/16 was especially rich in foreign lectures. In October 2015 the students and faculty had a chance to meet an outstanding Israeli professor, expert in Central and Eastern European Jewish history, Motti Zalkin (Ben Gurion University of the Negev) and hear his lecture *Me and "My" Community: To Be a Clergyman in 19th Century Eastern Europe*. The Centre took advantage of Zalkin's presence in the area and agreed on another lecture titled *Religious rhetoric and Social Justice: The Recruitment of Jews to the army in 19th century Europe* in February 2016.
At least a brief mention should be also made of a few other fascinating lectures: rabbi Daniel Mayer (Haifa, Israel), David Lawson (London Kingston Synagogue, UK), Florence Luxenberg-Eisenberg (Zefat Academic College, Israel).
- Throughout the year the Centre continued organisation of field trips for B.A. and M.A students to Jewish sites and monuments in the Czech Republic, including an extraordinary excursion to the Jewish Museum in Prague and Terezin ghetto and concentration camp.
- In the Prague Jewish Museum students of both BA and MA programs participated in internships.
- The Centre built upon its cooperation with Israeli universities and successfully applied for academic and students exchange programs within the framework of Erasmus+ (Hebrew University, Bar-Ilan University, David Yellin Colledge in Jerusalem).

- The Centre's applications for re-accreditation of BA and MA programs were approved by the Ministry of Education.

Research:

- In January 2016 the Centre hosted a festive conference that reflected the spirit and method of the academic work of Kurt and Ursula Schubert, patrons of the Centre. The program included public lectures by Prof. Kathrin Appel and Dr. Bernhard Dolna. The conference was co-organized by a number of institutions, including Austrian Academy of Sciences and Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

- In May 2016 the Centre co-organized an international conference *Remnants of the Past or Laboratories of Modernity? The Political Jewish Communities in Moravia after 1848 and their Archival Sources* in cooperation with the Jewish Museum in Prague and the Masaryk Institute and Archive of the Academy of Sciences, Prague. Among its many distinguished guests were Peter Urbanitsch (Austrian Academy of Sciences), Michael Miller (Central European University, Budapest), and Hillel Kieval (Washington University in St. Louis).

- Members of the Centre continued their research projects supported both the foreign and Czech institutions, including the Palacký University:

“BA. Study Program Jewish and Israeli Studies” (Rothschild Foundation Europe)

“Life and work of Berekhiah ben Natronay ha-Nakdan” (Czech Grant Agency)

“Language behaviour of Moravian Jewry in the 18th century” (Rothschild Foundation Europe)

“Easter Ritual and its Influence on Anti-Jewish Violence in the Late Medieval Czech Lands” (Rothschild Foundation Europe)

“Short Texts about Šoa – an Antology” (Palacký University)

- The Centre's peer reviewed English language academic online journal *Judaica Olomucensia* published a new issue - Volume III, Number 2 / 2015 – which includes articles connected to Moravia Jewish topics.

(website: http://www.jud.upol.cz/judaica_olomucensia.html)

Cultural events:

- On 30th September, 2015, an official opening of the Winter Semester 2015/2016 was organized traditionally together with a Sukkot celebration at the University Botanic Garden in Olomouc.

- More than a thousand people visited the 9th edition of the festival Days of Jewish Culture in Olomouc in September 2016. The Centre prepared its film section devoted to the topic of women in the contemporary Israeli society, and organized two lectures within the framework of the Festival: one given by political scientist and Member of the Israeli Parliament Aliza Lavie

and another delivered by a renowned Germanist of the Palacký University, Professor Ingeborg Fialová-Fürst.

- The Centre's library, as always, served throughout the academic year as a venue for regular celebrations of Jewish festivals. The Chanukah, Purim, Pesah and Lag ba-omer celebrations were open to all university students and the public and met with great interest.

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

Mgr. Marie Crhová, Ph.D., M.A.

Mgr. Ivana Cahová