

Prague Centre for Jewish Studies: Annual Report for 2015

During the four years of its existence, the Prague Centre for Jewish Studies (PCJS) has organized a number of conferences, seminars, lectures, and workshops with the participation of distinguished domestic and foreign experts. The most significant achievements of the Centre include the accreditation of the MA programme in Jewish Studies, which is available at Charles University for the first time. The Prague Centre for Jewish Studies also publishes and promotes both Czech and foreign language monographs. The collective monograph entitled *The Disintegration of Jewish Life: 167 Days of the Second Republic*, which shall be published by the Academia publishing house, is currently in print.

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS



- In cooperation with the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University, the Prague Centre for Jewish Studies organized its **4th annual international conference**, which took place on 13 – 15 October and was entitled *Being Jewish in Central Europe Today*. The conference was notable for its high international participation, with two-thirds of the

participating lecturers being from Europe and Israel. The main subjects included representation of Jews and Judaism in contemporary European culture, literature, and media; the question of identities/identity; remembrance and commemoration of the Holocaust; current anti-Semitism; and the interaction of minorities and religious groups.

- The second year of **The Prague Hebrew Book Colloquium**, a two-day seminar on Jewish literary culture, took place on 11 – 12 November. This year, we had the pleasure of welcoming Professor Elhanan Reiner (Tel Aviv University), a leading historian of Early Modern Jewish history and culture, and Professor Jonathan Meir (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev), a leading expert on the history of Jews in Eastern Europe, Jewish mysticism, Hasidism, and contemporary Cabbala.



- 3rd annual **Israeli Week at Charles University** (27 April – 3 May) presented lectures by prominent academics, diplomats, journalists, and artists, discussions, and many other events. The Israeli week attempts to map the main topics of Israeli studies and at the same time connect the local public with Israeli and other international institutions. Participants included the prominent Israeli historian Yoav Gelber (IDC Herzeliya, Haifa University), as well as Professor Gabriel Noah Brahm of Northern Michigan University, who presented the publication *The Case Against Academic Boycotts of Israel*, which he co-authored. The debate *Current Prospects of European Jews:*

Aliyah, Assimilation, Anti-Semitism? attracted much attention. Students of Hebrew studies at the Faculty of Arts presented the results of their survey entitled: *What We Think We Know: Israel Through the Eyes of Contemporary Czech Society*.

INDIVIDUAL LECTURES BY LOCAL AND FOREIGN EXPERTS (selection)



- 10 March: Ariel Feldman (Texas Christian University): *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Insight into Early Judaism*
- 28 May: Dina Porat, (Yad Vashem and Tel Aviv University): *Holocaust Denial and the Image of the Jew in Recent Decades*
- 4 September: Aliza Lavie (Bar Ilan University): *Fanny Neuda of Lostic: A Pioneer of Women's Prayer*
- 30 October: J. H. (Yossi) Chajes (University of Haifa): *Diagramming Sabbateanism (Cabalistic Sabbatean Diagrams)*
- 12 November: Jonatan Meir (Ben Gurion University in the Negev): *The Image of Censorship and Book Burning in 19th Century Jewish Literature*
- 25 November: Joshua Faudem: *Mike's Place: From Film to Comics*
- 9 December: Petr Jan Vinš (Hussite Theological Faculty of Charles University): *Main Trends in Modern Yiddish Literature*

SELECTED EVENTS IN 2016



- 5th Annual Conference of the Prague Centre for Jewish Studies *Community and Exclusion. Collective Violence in the Multiethnic (East) Central European Societies before and after the Holocaust (1848-1948)* shall be held on 25 – 27 September in cooperation with the Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences.
- 4th Israeli Week at Charles University is planned final week of October.
- The third annual Prague Hebrew Book Colloquium is planned for the autumn.
- International workshops on the Holocaust in literature, film and theatre in Central Europe.

To read the full report, please visit the Prague Centre for Jewish Studies website.

The call for papers for the 5th annual conference is now open.