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Magazine of Palacký University Olomouc, 2018/1

interview

Josef Jařab: America will survive Trump



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Dear colleagues, students, and friends of Palacký University,

I think you will agree with me when I say that one cannot have enough good news. Therefore, I'd like to share one item of great news from Palacký University.

Our university has managed to get to host one of the Times Higher Education (THE) global summits – THE is the most prestigious global university rankings company, providing professional coverage in the areas of education, academics, science and research.

In April we will host a unique meeting of professionals, whose usual participants include Nobel laureates and personalities recognised in their academic fields, management of the top universities in the world, statesmen and women, and business and industrial leaders. It will be the first such event ever held in Central Europe. Palacký University will be visited by two hundred personalities from all over the world, and I am truly proud that we in Olomouc were able to join cities such as Melbourne, San Francisco, and London, where the summit has taken place in past years.

It might seem that by taking charge of the organisation of this event, and thus increasing the visibility of our school, our goal has been fulfilled. But far from it. We want more: we want to come into direct contact with the process of evaluating universities, we want to learn the strategies of how to best succeed amongst global competition, we want to strengthen the role of a university open to the world. This is why we have strived so much for the organisation of this summit, at which the research, academic, and scientific potential of Central Europe will also be discussed. And you will see for yourselves that this is something Palacký simply cannot afford to miss.

Jaroslav Miller
Rector, Palacký University Olomouc



UP Faculty of Law fights for consumers

That tin of “luncheon meat” looks the same on the shop shelf, has the same name and is made by the same firm. It all depends, however, on which country you chose to buy it in when putting it into your basket. The “German version” is made out of pork, while the Czech version contains poultry by-products. How is that possible? The differing quality of goods intended for different markets is a theme being talked about more and more recently, and not just in Czechia. This fight on behalf of the consumer, which has again divided Europe into East and West, was taken to Brussels. And Palacký University has also entered into the fray – more specifically, its Faculty of Law.

Can current legislative amendments enforce the same quality and content of goods in all countries of the European Union? And what about the gradual reduction of the quality of an already established prod-

uct, without changing the appearance of its packaging? Can these manufacturers’ practices be penalised by law? The answers to these questions were sought by experts from the Faculty of Law.

“Current Czech laws do not explicitly address the problem of dual quality and composition of products.”

Blanka Vítová

Blanka Vítová (b. 1977)

Vice-Dean for Science and Research at the UP Faculty of Law, she works in the Department of Private Law and Civil Procedure. She is a member of the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in EU Law. She specialises in consumer law. She was an active member of the Recodification Committee of the Czech Ministry of Justice for preparation of the new Civil Code. She regularly publishes in Czech and foreign professional journals, she is a researcher in international academic project activities, and lectures at international conferences. She is also the Secretary of the Czech Association of European Studies. Her project "Mediation in Consumer Disputes", on which she is working now, was supported by the Czech Science Foundation.

Michal Černý (b. 1973)

Assistant professor at the UP Faculty of Law, he works in the Department of Private Law and Civil Procedure. He specialises in intellectual property law, corporate law, and competition law. He is the author or co-author of several expert books and several dozen expert articles or contributions to journals in Czechia and abroad; he is a European ETMA (European Trademark Attorney) representative and EDA (European Design Attorney) representative, as well as a patent representative (M+D). He was the principal investigator of a postdoctoral Czech Science Foundation grant – "Creation of Wills for Legal Entities Using Electronic Means of Communication."



Michal Černý and Blanka Vítová

"Current Czech laws do not explicitly address the problem of dual quality and composition of products. We have investigated whether any of the legal norms in the existing legal system can be applied to the given situation, and how the legal regulations should look in the case of a direct banning of such practices," explained Blanka Vítová of the Department of Private Law and Civil Procedure, who is also Vice-Dean of Science and Research at the UP Faculty of Law and a member of the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in EU Law. She worked on this unique study during the first half of 2017 with her colleague Michal Černý from the same department. The study examines the possibilities of the application of consumer protection law (especially unfair commercial practices), competition law (especially unfair competitions) and industrial property rights.

Deceptive business practice?

While consumers are crying for protection, manufacturers do not see a problem. In the case of products with different compositions, manufacturers argue that they indicate the correct amounts and name the individual ingredients on the label, and furthermore that different tastes, preferences, consumer buying power and manufacturing procedures exist in individual markets.

According to the findings of Blanka Vítová, these manufacturers' practices could relate to several provisions of the consumer protection law; however, no explicit prohibition exists on deceiving the consumer by dual composition of prod-

ucts with the same appearance. Therefore, the study recommends changes to the legal regulations. "One possibility would be to add another type of deceptive business practice onto the amendment to the Directive on Unfair Commercial Practices, which would be the severest solution. Another option would be to make a change to the article in the Directive on Unfair Commercial Practices in the sense of adding another criterion for assessing misleading business practises in the form of the activity," Vítová believes.

She considers the quickest method of pushing changes through would be via interpretation of the existing provisions of deceptive business practices in the Directive, and the national legal systems of EU member states. The European Commission partly came to the same conclusion at the end of September, when it presented guidelines on the application of European law in the area of food and consumer protection in relation to the problem of dual quality. "Cooperation from government authorities will be necessary, however, in order to advocate this interpretation and to enforce it for businesses," the author added.

The last possibility, in her opinion, would be amending existing legal norms solely on the level of EU member states. This option is not entirely realistic, because the Directive on Unfair Commercial Practices ought to be implemented and applied in all EU member states in the same way, and differing national legislation would be perceived as incorrect implementation of the directive. →



“There is more and more evidence to show the existence of dual quality, and I am glad that greater attention is being devoted to the theme than ever before. The study which I commissioned is an attempt to move the topic to the level of specific proposals for solutions. Consumers are being misled when buying products which are sold under the same brand name but in different quality. In addition to supervisory authorities taking a more active role, the most effective means would appear to be a change in existing EU legislation.”

*Member of the European Parliament
Olga Sehnalová*



Studies by Olomouc lawyers were provided to the European Parliament.

Common European certification

At the same time, the study explored the possibility of applying competition law, especially regarding unfair competitions, and industrial property rights. The authors arrived at the opinion that limiting the practice of “dual quality products” in a single internal market, using the legal tools of competition protection, cannot be expected. “These tools are designed to protect competitions as such,” Michal Černý is convinced.

In his research, Černý also looked at the system of protected trademarks of origin and geographic labelling, as well as guaranteed traditional specialities. “Protected trademarks, while effectively suppressing the practise of dual quality, are however reserved for products with

special qualities tied to their geographic origin. Such products are basically in the minority on the market,” said Černý.

Same Europe, same food

According to the Olomouc academics, one of the possible solutions would therefore be introducing a common European certification. Its guarantor would of course have to be the European Commission itself. “Labelling with a common mark would guarantee consumers the same quality, regardless of the state in which the product is bought. It would be related to quality control,” Černý explained.

The legal study was created as contractual research, with the financial support of MEP Olga Sehnalová. It will serve as

a basis for a possible change of views and as a source of expert opinions for European Parliament work and other bodies dealing with this issue.

The Czech professional community already knows the main findings of the research. The authors presented their findings in June, when a special round table was convened on this theme at the Olomouc Faculty of Law. At the end of September the study also went to the European Parliament. Vice-Dean Blanka Vítová presented it at the conference “Different quality of products in the Single Market”, which took place in Brussels.

Any consumer can familiarise herself or himself with it. It is freely accessible on the internet.

Palacký University to be guided once again by Jaroslav Miller

Jaroslav Miller will remain in his position of Rector of Palacký University for the next four years. In October, the UP Academic Senate voted him in to lead the university from 2018–2022. Miller was the only candidate to run for the post.

According to the re-elected rector, Palacký University should continue to aspire to further development. “In the last four years, the university has moved significantly forward in all areas. It made great advances in the area of science and research, its percentage of academic and scientific articles in foreign journals increased, and the quality of the work being done has improved. We continued

improving the internationalisation of the school, and the university also has a high profile in the public sphere. I want to continue in these trends,” he said. He would also like to place an emphasis on the quality of instruction in the next four years, because the university is also expecting institutional accreditation in the near future. “Once we get it, we will then have to autonomously decide on the form of our study programmes. We will also have an overview on the quality of teaching,” he stated.

One of the goals which he considers important for the school is to get funding from other sources than the state budget.

“The state is not so interested in universities. So we have to stop counting on the state,” he emphasised, adding that the university must make itself capable of attaching itself to more international research projects. He also wants to continue to expand UP’s successful alumni programme in the future. “I consider such a programme for a university of our type as practically a necessity.” The university, under Jaroslav Miller’s leadership in the next years, should also invest into its infrastructure, including beginning reconstruction of the UP Sports Hall and erecting a new university archives building.

“I never for one second let myself forget that as rector, I represent Palacký University, and that performing my duty is a service.”

Jaroslav Miller



8 faculties
1 university



Experts shared experiences with non-judicial methods of dispute resolution

One hundred ten participants were attracted to Olomouc by the international academic conference MEDIATION 2017, which was organised by the Faculty of Law. The fourth annual conference on mediation and other methods of non-judicial dispute resolution was held under the auspices of the Czech Minister of Justice, Robert Pelikán, and the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Zdenka Papoušková.

The Faculty of Law holds this conference regularly, every two years. “Our goal this time was a multidisciplinary reflection on mediation in the Czech Republic and abroad and to analyse the conditions of its performance with recommendations for further theoretical research and use in practice. The main themes were the form of the law on mediation and experiences with its application, the gradual institutionalisation of mediation, and creating conditions for citizens’ access to amenable methods of dispute resolution, to which the Czech Republic is bound by

the European Union,” summarised Lenka Holá from the Department of Political Science and Social Science of the Faculty of Law, the organiser of the two-day symposium. The Law on Mediation came into force five years ago. “Now comes the time when we are justified to look back in retrospect and assess what is working and what its limits are. The conference raised many questions and named many problems, and now it is necessary to work further on their resolution,” added Lenka Holá.

The conference was opened by a plenary session where selected speakers presented their contributions. Among them were Marina Tamm, a recognised mediation expert from Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences; Andrea Matoušková, director of the Probation and Mediation Service of the Czech Republic; and Jana Pružinská, a psychologist from the Faculty of Education at Comenius University in Bratislava, who was there at

the start of mediation in Slovakia. A moderated panel discussion was held for the first time. In addition to Czech experts, leading experts in mediation from Austria, Germany, Hungary, and Slovakia beat a path to Olomouc. Joining academics in the Law Faculty’s halls were judges, barristers, psychologists, sociologists, social workers, registered and unregistered mediators, and mediation supporters.

The conference will result in a peer-reviewed collection of selected contributions for publication. “After publishing it, we’d like to send it for evaluation and possible inclusion in the prestigious Web of Science platform, on the Conference Proceedings Citation Index database,” added Lenka Holá.

The conference on the theme of mediation took place for the first time at the UP Faculty of Law in 2011, and the organisers are planning the next one for Autumn 2019. (eha)

Palacký University has an EU student ambassador to the labour market



Jan Šmíd, a student in European Studies and International Relations at the Faculty of Arts, became an EU Careers Student Ambassador. He was successful in the selection process at the European Personnel Selection Office and is now helping students who are interested in an internship or work at EU institutions.

“My task is to create a network of contacts through which I can promote job offers. I should also run seminars and workshops on the possibilities of internships and work in the EU. I’m prepared to provide any information and support to students interested in working at several European insti-

tutions,” Jan Šmíd said. The EU Careers Student Ambassador learned about the existence of the programme several years ago, and now one of his teachers recommended the programme to him again.

“EU institutions offer a number of possibilities for translators, lawyers, political scientists as well as economists. I’m glad that I can be helpful in providing students with experience. The work of an ambassador for me means above all the possibility of gaining new experience. The ambassadorship combines the advantages of a practical internship with real work,” added Šmíd. (map)

The Faculty of Physical Culture embraces international research cooperation

The Faculty of Physical Culture welcomed a distinguished guest. Its representatives met with Associate Professor Gregory J. Welk of Iowa State University regarding participation in an emerging worldwide network of workplaces focussing on research into the physical activity of children and youth. Welk also gave two lectures during his visit in which he presented his research topics.

“A Memorandum on Cooperation is being drawn up, and Assoc Prof Welk is quite willing in this respect. We spoke especially about research cooperation in connection with localisation and calibration of the Youth Activity Profile questionnaire, of which Welk is the author, into the Czech context. The talks led to broader themes, for instance the possibility of exchange placements for doctoral students or possible joint research projects. The discussions

were beneficial and very promising for our faculty,” summarised František Chmelík, Vice-Dean for Science and Research, regarding the talks.

It was Karel Frömel, head of the Active Lifestyle Institute, who made contact with Assoc Prof Welk, one of the most recognised experts in the area of monitoring physical activity. At Iowa State University, he is the head of his own laboratory, where he dedicates himself to the use of various types of devices for monitoring and evaluating physical activity and devising preventative movement interventions. He also works as the research director of the programme FitnessGram for children and youth at the Cooper Institute in Dallas, where physical fitness is tested and evaluated.

His work attracted more than a hundred listeners to his lectures, which capped the Faculty of Physical Culture’s International



Teaching Week. “I was intrigued, among other things, by the idea of instruments for monitoring physical activity. All the manufacturers use their own equations for calculating the extent of activity performed, and their measured values are quite different. If we were to introduce a common unit, we could arrive at a point where the volume of physical activity carried out would become one of the health level indicators, similar for instance to measuring blood pressure during a medical check-up,” said Lukáš Jakubec, from the Active Lifestyle Institute. (vim)

Honorary doctorate granted to Heinrich Pompey

One of the most significant European representatives of the theology of charity, Heinrich Pompey, was given an honorary doctorate, writing himself into the annals of UP history. After the ceremonies in Olomouc’s Archbishop’s Palace, he received the title of Doctor honoris causa for his contributions to the field of Christian social work and building a professional workplace of Christian social work at UP’s Sts Cyril and Methodius Faculty of Theology.

Heinrich Pompey, Director Emeritus of the Institute for Charity Studies and Christian Social Work at the University of Freiburg, is engaged in the development of social work in Europe and its theological-religious convergence. He was there at the founding of the UP Department of Christian Social Work in 2005, and he helmed the department for six years. “Prof Heinrich Pompey is one of the most important advocates in the world in the

theology of charity – Caritaswissenschaft – and his work in this sector has an international reach. The honorary doctorate reflects our appreciation for his willingness to join us in improving and inspiring our shared Christian social culture, in which he has been active in a number of other places in Europe,” said CMFT Dean Peter Tavel.

According to Vice-Rector Vít Zouhar, Heinrich Pompey was instrumental in establishing a new dialogue between theology and social science, which he brought back into the European academic environment. “He also brought new research themes to Palacký University, integrating them into the international community as well as other ecumenical opportunities for expanding social work across faiths.”

Pompey accepted his honorary doctorate as a tribute to his academic partnership with UP. “It is an expression of living academic cooperation in the service of charity theology and European humanism, but at the same time a spiritual and practical alliance of our cultural and social environments. I am delighted that my engagement here in Olomouc could contribute to the innovation of the ancient and venerable charity culture of the Czech lands,” Pompey emphasised. (mav)



8 faculties
1 university



The Faculty of Education welcomed its graduates

An all-day programme full of talks, lectures, commented tours of workplaces, and two silver graduations. That is how the historic first Alumni Day looked, organised in Autumn by the Faculty of Education. Dozens of former students, their families, and friends took part.

During the silver graduation, graduates renewed their university oaths after a quarter-century. “The ceremony was perfect. I was looking forward to meet-

ing fellow students whom I hadn’t seen for years. I was pleased with how rich the programme the faculty prepared for us was,” said Markéta Caklová of Kroměříž, a graduate in Primary School Education combined with Art Education.

Alumni who attended the silver graduation completed their studies in the period of societal transformations after the Velvet Revolution. “The events of November 1989 impacted our personal lives and our

studies. We were lucky to experience the gradual transformation of the university into a truly free academic environment,” added Jana Huvarová, Director of the Olga Havel School in Ostrava-Poruba.

During the day, silver alumni visited all places at Palacký University where classes are taught today. Presentations, tours, and an accompanying programme were prepared at fifteen faculty workplaces for alumni. (map)

Jan Olšr receives the Josefína Napravitlová stipend

An extraordinary stipend from the legacy of the patroness Josefína Napravitlová, connected with a reward of twenty thousand Czech crowns, was received by Jan Olšr, a first-year student of General Medicine. He won the award thanks to his per-

fect grade point average of 1.0.

“It was difficult, especially the transition from high school to university, and also the time investment which is necessary to devote to the study of medicine. But I’m happy, and I hope that I’ll be able to continue to

get the same marks in the years to come,” said Jan Olšr.

He accepted the stipend from Dean Milan Kolář of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, who wished him further success in his studies. “Good luck, and here’s hoping you continue to excel. It’s quite possible that in six years’ time you might even get the prize for Best Graduate,” the dean said to the top first-year student.

The faculty has been awarding the stipend since 2009, a gift from the patroness Josefína Napravitlová, who donated her money to four medical faculties some years ago. Thanks to the gift, the Olomouc medical faculty also awards the best graduate a prize of thirty thousand Czech crowns. This year it was given to Zdenka Trlová at her graduation ceremony.

Since 2015, the faculty has also been awarding the best students in its English-language study programmes. Special diplomas were given to students Tsu-ching Pu and Hao-hsien Wang for the best grades in General Medicine and Dentistry. (map)



Czech and foreign anthropologists met in Olomouc

Six dozen experts from Czechia, Poland, and Slovakia met in Olomouc for the international conference 2017 Anthropological Days. It was organised by the Czech Anthropological Society in cooperation with the UP Faculty of Health Sciences and the UP Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

The conference themes, divided into several sections, covered a whole complex of anthropological disciplines – from biological, cultural, and social anthropology to kinanthropology, anthropology of philosophy, and applied anthropology. One component of the two-day programme was the student section, in which Master's and

Doctoral students presented the results of their research activities.

“Most of the expert talks were of a research nature, introducing the partial findings of specific projects, including those which are being applied in practice. Other contributions were dedicated to select problems from the philosophical-anthropological perspective,” explained the head of the conference organisational committee and head of the Department of Specialised Subjects and Practical Skills at the UP Faculty of Health Sciences, Miroslav Kopecký.

In his own opening lecture, he acquainted audience members with experiences in the research of child obesity in first-year elementary school pupils in Olomouc; two major talks by Polish and Prague colleagues were focussed on similar subjects. “Of course it was not a congress on obesity, but the fact remains that one-quarter of the contributions dealt with lifestyle and the question of obesity in both the child and adult population,” added Miroslav Kopecký. (mav)



The Faculty of Science has its first diamond alumni

The Faculty of Science held its first historic diamond graduation ceremony. At the end of November, it welcomed 23 graduates who finished studies in 1957. “The diamond graduation was initiated by our golden alumni. They asked whether it would be possible to meet again on the faculty's grounds. So we decided to prepare a ceremony to recognise 60 years since their graduation. We also wanted to show our eldest graduates that we value them and we're glad that they still think about the faculty,” said Vice-Dean for External Cooperation Josef Molnár.

The former students repeated their graduation oaths and received diplomas. They met with former classmates and faculty leadership and toured the modern faculty building. In 1957, 84 students graduated from the Faculty of Science.

One of the diamond graduates was Svatopluk Mareček, aged eighty-three. Most of his professional career was associated with the high school in Rychnov nad Kněžnou, but for two years he made his home in Guinea, on the west coast of Africa. “I taught physics and chemistry in

a school for boys. Although I took French in high school, I had to really study it there,” he said.

At the diamond graduation he also met with his former student Lukáš Richterek, who now works at the Department of Experimental Physics. “Mr Mareček was the face of physics at the high school in Rychnov, and he significantly influenced my life. When I first entered high school,

I had no idea that I would dedicate my life to physics. Under his influence I ended up as a physics teacher myself,” said Richterek, upon showing his former teacher the department laboratories.

Together with the diamond graduation, a golden graduation also took place with a meeting of graduates after 50 years. And 60 former students attended their 10th university reunion. (srd)





science

Carbon quantum dots under UV light.

Scientists from Olomouc and Hong Kong have developed new nanomaterials for medicine and industry

Carbon nanoparticles which are used as thermometers and are thus able to indicate diseased cells in living organisms... A new technology for making "red-emitting carbon dots" which could mean a breakthrough in imaging methods in medical diagnoses... Extraordinarily sensitive nanosensors able to reveal highly explosive TNT or the development of new nanocrystals used in solar cells or light-emitting diodes... These are just a few of the successful results of cooperation between the Regional Centre of Advanced Technologies and Materials (RCPTM) and the City University of Hong Kong, which have been recently found on the pages of prestigious professional journals such as *ACS Nano* and *Nature Communications*.

text: Martina Šaradínová
photos: Viktor Čáp | Martin Pykal

The common denominator of mutual cooperation is the study of small objects of matter on the order of thousandths of micrometres which emit various colours, depending on their size and chemical structures. These are carbon quantum dots, copper nanoparticles, or organic-inorganic perovskite materials.

“We began research on carbon quantum dots about ten years ago, with colleagues from Athens and Cornell University in the USA. A few years back, with Andrey Rogach from Hong Kong, we extended the research to other types of phosphorescent nanoparticles and we also brought ourselves much closer to their applications. This past year several of our projects arrived at success,” said the head of the Czech team, and RCPTM director, Radek Zbořil.

Nanoparticles as thermometers in living cells

Two joint articles published in the American Chemical Society’s journal *ACS Nano* showed the huge application potential of carbon nanoparticles in medical diagnoses. From changes in the period of photoluminescence of these quantum dots, one can determine the temperature inside living cells. Simply put, carbon dots work like optical probes which can indicate diseased cells with higher temperature. Another new technology, making possible the preparation of various colour fractions including red-emitting carbon dots, is a huge shift in understanding the optical qualities of these luminescent and

completely non-toxic carbon structures. “Red light is the one that best traverses human tissues. This is why these particles can be used optically for in vivo imaging in medical diagnoses. This breakthrough in managing the optical properties of carbon dots is something we achieved via introducing nitrogen into their graphite structure,” explains Kateřina Holá, who won the Jean-Marie Lehn Prize for young scientists, among others, for her research in the area of carbon dots.

Applications in security research and optical technologies

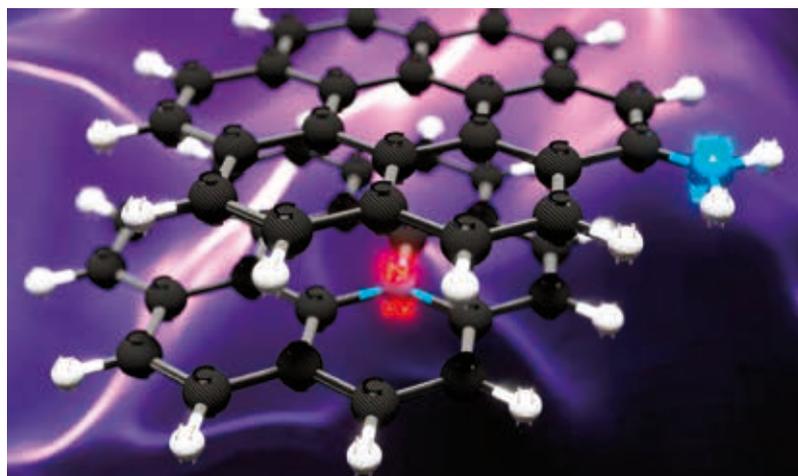
The Czech–Hong Kong team studies other photoluminescent metal-based materials. For example copper nanoparticles anchored in a structure of metal–organic frameworks can work as extraordinarily sensitive nanosensors of trinitrotoluene (TNT). On the basis of changes in the optical properties of nanoparticles, one can detect the presence of this highly explosive substance in trace amounts. This project has had a significant response in the scientific community, and John Wiley & Sons (Wiley) publishers have highlighted this research on their webpages in the section *Advanced Science News*.

In the most recent joint article published in the journal *Nature Communications*, the team again developed an elegant method of preparing strongly photoluminescent organic-inorganic perovskites. “This is a quite small class of optically active nanocrystals, which have within them

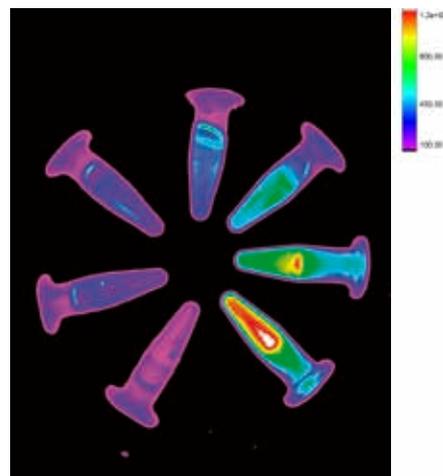
heavy metals, primarily lead. They are not biocompatible like carbon dots, but on the other hand they have a huge photoluminescent output, reaching up to 100 percent. The portfolio of applications of these nanocrystals thus is shifting from biomedicine into the direction of developing solar cells or LED diodes. In these technologies, it is very important to optimise the synthetic path in order to control the optical and electronic qualities through the choice of reaction components and parameters. We have succeeded in doing just that,” added Zbořil.

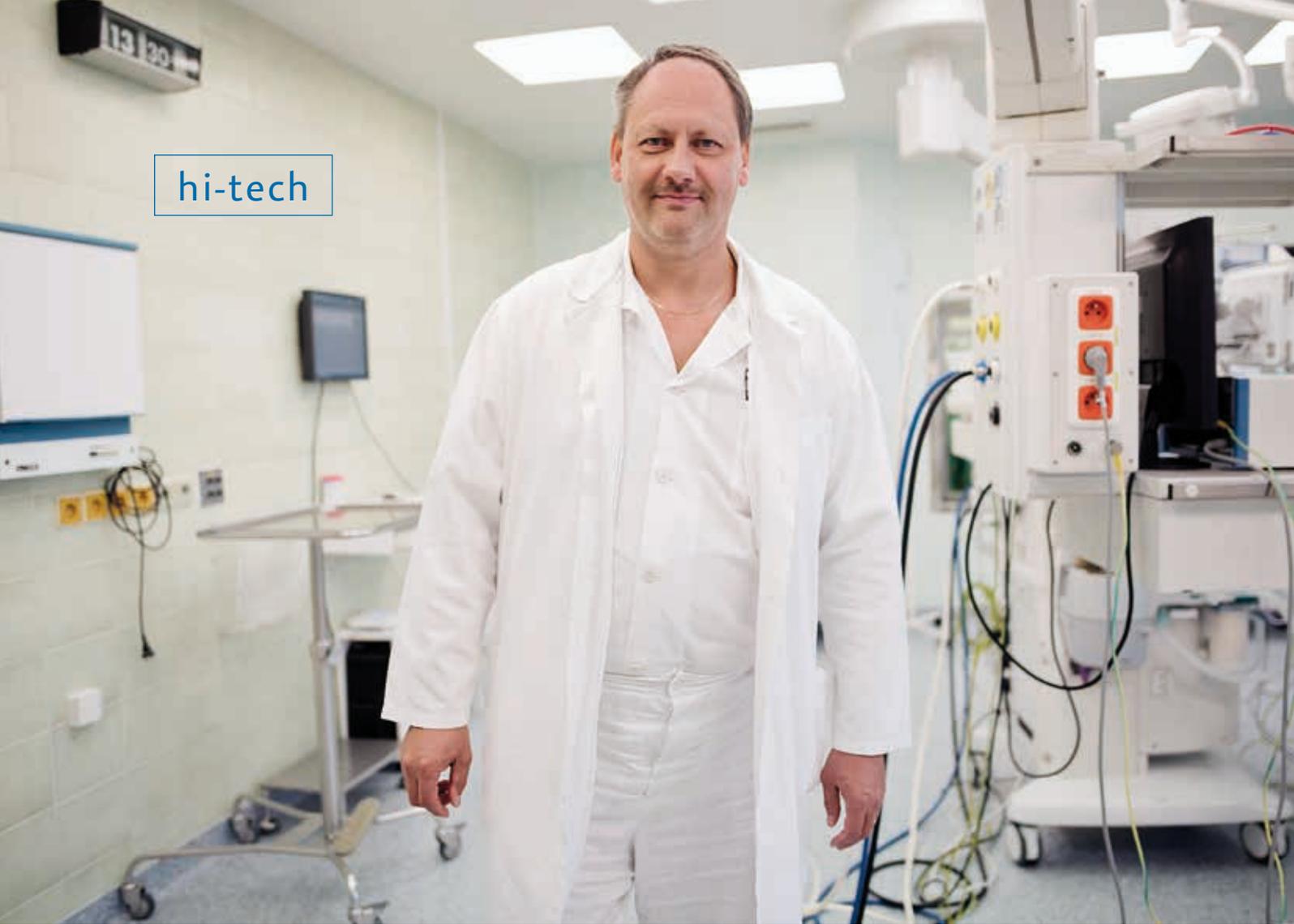
Both teams however want to delve even deeper into medicine for their next projects. In cooperation with the team headed by Luděk Šefc of the Center for Advanced Preclinical Imaging at the First Faculty of Medicine at Charles University in Prague, they have already been working for some months on the use of red carbon dots in diagnosis. “The majority of nanoparticles for in vivo applications aggregate in the liver, spleen, or bone marrow, i.e. in the organs of the immune system. This is associated with high toxicological risk. Carbon quantum dots are, thanks primarily to their small dimensions, passed out of the body in the urine. The test particles could then be used in diagnostic imaging, but also for example in photothermal cancer therapy on model organisms,” concludes Kateřina Poláková, another one of the young generation of female scientists at RCPTM, who studies the biomedical use of nanomaterials.

The structure of carbon dots.



Carbon quantum dots of differing concentrations through an optical imaging camera.



A man in a white lab coat stands in a hospital room. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The room is filled with medical equipment, including a monitor on a stand to his left and a large piece of equipment with various cables to his right. The walls are light-colored, and there are ceiling lights.

hi-tech

Olomouc neurosurgeon developed a unique intervertebral implant

A gentler procedure for implanting intervertebral disc replacements, quicker relief from pain, and more reliable bone healing – these are the main advantages of a unique implant which was developed by Lumír Hrabálek, a docent at the UP Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, and the head of the Department of Neurosurgery at University Hospital Olomouc. The world premiere of the first operation on the spine using the original technique took place last September.

The surgical advance mainly helps patients with the diagnosis of discopathy – a disease of the intervertebral discs, which degenerate with advancing age, resulting in

the instability of the spine. Those suffering from the disease feel intense back pain, sometimes shooting into the lower extremities. Patients should feel the analgesic ef-

text: Velena Mazochová
photos: Gabriela Knýblová,
Růžena Valentová,
and Lumír Hrabálek Archives

fect right after surgery. “Pain relief should be almost instantaneous, and more pronounced with the new implant. I also believe that definitive healing will be more reliable than before. At the same time, the introduction of the implant will be easier and gentler,” Lumír Hrabálek averred.

Proven material

The uniqueness of the expandable titanium implant with integrated splint, named LUMIR XLIF CAGE after its inventor, relies primarily on the functional parameters and material from which it is made. Neurosurgeons to date have been replacing discs with implants made from PEEK thermoplastic material. The Olomouc neurosurgeon chose an amalgam of titanium, aluminium and vanadium, which the human body is well able to tolerate.

The material of the implant is itself one of its main advantages. Lumír Hrabálek has had good experience with it in other surgical procedures. “It exhibits what is called ‘primary stability’ – it ‘bites’ better, and holds on, right from the instant of implantation,” he explained.

Original construction

The unique qualities of the implant also include improvement to its functional parameters. It is the first type of replacement which is capable of adjusting to the specific size of the intervertebral interval. “Under the influence of the degenerative disease, the interspace for the disc often decreases, and then it is displaced. Its return to the original height is possible due to the expandability of the implant, capable of distraction – in other words, stretching. Reduced interspace can be expanded to its original dimension. The

extent of this distraction can be varied, depending on need, from one to four millimetres. The implant thus wedges in better, getting closer into the position of the original physiological state,” Hrabálek described.

And the implant comes in twelve basic sizes; as opposed to ordinary implants, one of its components is an integrated splint. “It screws in, which basically increases the stability of the implant,” Hrabálek added. Fixing the vertebrae, i.e. fusion, occurs by the bone mass growing into the inner space of the implant, which subsequently spreads and connects to the bone tissue of the spine.

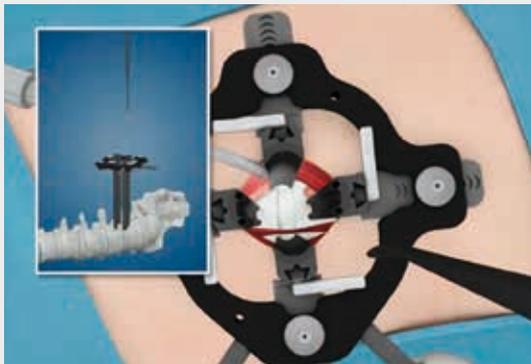
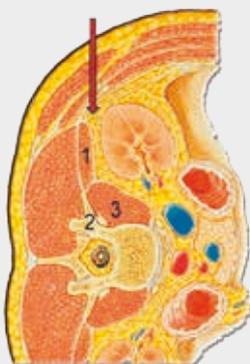
Development of this original idea is connected with the modern XLIF operating method, which Olomouc neurosurgeons began to use during operations on the spine in 2009 – the first in the country to do so. The advance takes place through the help of side access to the spine, which allows them to avoid the organs in the abdominal cavity and the major blood vessels and operate without a large surgical incision. The replacement operation on one disc lasts roughly 75 minutes.

Cooperation with Chinese partners

A suitable partner able to cope with such a difficult and unique project was found by the Olomouc Neurosurgical Clinic, in cooperation with the Czech firm BoneCare s.r.o., as far away as China. The Beijing Fule Science & Technology Development Co., Ltd, one of the largest producers of spinal implants in China, was able to develop the plans within two years. After the patent procedure is complete, the implants can be made available anywhere in the world.



The impeccable advantages of the implant were proven in two September operations, which took place without complications. In both cases there were indications of discopathy and segment instability, i.e. vertebral displacement. “In the first case, we replaced one disc; in the second, two. The post-operative effect was immediate. Both patients were well enough to go home within two or three days after the procedure. We expect further benefits, especially in load tolerance, in the period of convalescence,” said Hrabálek.



Access diagram to the lumbar spine and side access to the retroperitoneal space across the psoas muscle using a retractor which protects surrounding tissues.

Side access to the intervertebral lumbar spinal disc and the method of its removal.

Fuzzy logic is more than just an abstract concept

True or false? Such simple assertions we evaluate according to “classical” logic. Fuzzy logic however refutes this black and white vision of the world. It states that expressions which relate to practical life for the most part are true only to a certain degree. It is fuzzy logic which Radim Bělohávek, head of the Department of Informatics at the UP Faculty of Science, deals with, along with his colleagues. His reputation in the field is confirmed by the publication at Oxford University Press of the book *Fuzzy Logic and Mathematics: A Historical Perspective*, of which he is a co-author.

The founder of fuzzy logic was the American mathematician and electrical engineer Lotfi Zadeh, who considered classical logical to be inadequate. According to him, a person uses different logic, in which there is space for inaccuracy.

“Let’s imagine it’s summer and it’s 26 degrees Celsius out, and I say, ‘It’s quite hot outside.’ With classical logic, this statement if true will have the value 1, or if false will have the value 0. With fuzzy logic, it might be something in between, so the statement may have a truth value of 0.8. And if the temperature outside were high-

er, say 28 degrees, than it would be more true, perhaps with a value of 0.9. Fuzzy logic, therefore, allows more values of truth,” Bělohávek explains.

According to him, fuzzy logic offers solutions in situations where classical logic fails. It is able to work with difficult-to-define concepts such as “old age” and “high temperature” which classical logic rejects.

If someone were to state, however, that fuzzy logic is simply an abstract theoretical game, he or she would be mistaken. The first practical applications of fuzzy logic started in the early 1980s. The leader was, and is, Japan – where for example a fully automated system based on fuzzy logic replaced train engineers on the underground, and where fuzzy regulators were placed in consumer electronics. Fuzzy logic drivers are found in washing machines, vacuum cleaners, cameras, dishwashers and a number of other products. Fuzzy logic is also used in the automobile industry.

“These examples illustrate the fact that fuzzy logic represents a new paradigm in the fundamentals of exact sciences. It makes possible the creation of mathematical models close to natural human reason-

ing. And there lies its importance. On the other hand, this understandably does not mean that everything founded on classical logic is bad, nor does it mean that fuzzy logic provides a solution to every problem,” explains Bělohávek. During his stay in the USA he took part in the development of a system for modelling the sedimentation in the mouth of the Mississippi River. With Milan Adamus of University Hospital Olomouc, he developed a system for automatic dosage of anaesthesia during general anaesthesia, which is controlled by fuzzy logic.

The focus of Olomouc information scientists in the area of fuzzy logic lies in theory. Among other things, they have invented several new methods for data analysis. When writing the above-mentioned book, Bělohávek cooperated with other important personalities in the field: George J. Klir at the State University of New York, and Joseph W. Dauben at the City University of New York. The book describes the development of fuzzy logic from its inception to the present, acquainting readers with both the theoretical bases of the field and its applications. It is intended for both experts in the field and lay people.

“Fuzzy logic makes possible the creation of mathematical models close to natural human reasoning. And there lies its importance. But that, understandably, does not mean that everything founded on classical logic is bad, nor does it mean that fuzzy logic provides a solution to every problem.”

Radim Bělohávek



portrait

text: Milada Hronová
photos: Gabriela Knýblová,
Jan D. Bláha

Martin Soukup

Docent at the Department
of Sociology, Andragogy and Cultural
Anthropology, UP Faculty of Arts

To have a remarkable talent, be in good physical shape and, moreover, to be empathetic. Also a talent for survival may come in handy. In short, to know how to take care of oneself in an awkward position and have the dogged will to finish what one has started. These are not preconditions for working as a secret agent, but rather recommended equipment for a "serious scientist" doing fieldwork in cultural anthropology. UP's Martin Soukup has all of the above. And his work has been awarded by the Neuron Foundation with their prestigious prize for young scientists.

As a boy, he thought he would become an actor. His childhood dreams took on water and he made use of his acting talents teaching at the university. He also reminisces about scouting, which he considers one of the best methods of preparing for field work in the conditions into which he goes.

"I first encountered anthropology in high school. I studied electrical engineering, aimed at digital and control technology. Then I went to a lecture by Josef Wolf and afterwards I made up my mind about what I wanted to do with my life. It was amazing, the way he was able to lecture about anthropology," the young scientist reminisces. Later, he attended lectures by the superb anthropologist, ethnologist, and above all great educator, at the university.

"He would examine by posing the first question, and then the student would pose the next. He was really great and also physically fit, and he kept himself in shape by thinking what students three generations younger than him think about. I think that's a great teaching trick, which I also plan to take up," Soukup says.

Research in Papua New Guinea

He studied cultural anthropology at Charles University in Prague, but today his home institution is the Faculty of Arts at Palacký University. Martin Soukup says that anthropology is the "study of diversity and otherness" and to be a good cultural anthropologist does not mean only sitting for long hours in the library, but also going out into the field.

"Prof Paul Rabinow of the University of California wrote that his alma mater always divided anthropology into two types. The first already has a body of anthropological work behind it, and the second does not – for nobody has ever considered it anthropology," says the young UP scientist.

He himself first went into the field in 2009. And it was not a minor experience – he set out for Papua New Guinea. "If I'd been offered then to go to Tanzania, Ecuador, Mexico, or anywhere else, I would have gone. Cultural anthropology ought to

be about getting to know a radically different cultural environment than the one you yourself came from," he emphasises.

Martin Soukup has returned to Papua New Guinea since that time. He later started cooperating with geographer Jan D. Bláha from the Faculty of Science at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University, with whom he researched the spatial behaviour of people in conjunction with family ties and kinship systems. They are mapping the Nungon ethnic group, which is made up of about 1500 people, living in six villages.

Both scientists make use of the essential methodologies of their fields. The geographer makes maps, the anthropologist collects data on people. The most essential method for him is the genealogical method. "My colleague made a map of the village, we gave each house a number, and assigned each person into their specific dwelling. Then we began to look at their family ties and also which religious denomination they assign themselves to, which clan they belong to, and whether or not they are literate. Gradually we began to create a sociodemographic map of the community where it was evident how historical events were projected into the arrangement of the settlement," describes Soukup. His work involves constant data collection. And so he is never without a pencil and paper. And though he is a defender of traditional ways, he also makes use of the advantages of technological achievements, such as a hand scanner. "Where I go, there is no electricity. So I always have to remember to take batteries with me, and not to forget and leave my solar charger and powerbank at home."

One-day attraction

Since 2009, Martin Soukup has visited Papua New Guinea several times. "You're of interest to the local people for about the first two days. They have quite enough work of their own in order to survive and they are certainly not going to stop for a cultural anthropologist. They go to work in their field. And furthermore: Papua is near the equa-

Martin Soukup (b. 1977)

He is interested in the history, theory, and methodologies of social and cultural anthropology. He devotes special attention to visual anthropology and the cultural area of Melanesia. In Papua New Guinea he has conducted research stays in which he worked in several villages. The results of many years of his work were published in the book *Anthropology and Melanesia*, which was given an award for the best scholarly monograph published at Charles University in Prague. At present, he is focussing on researching spatial connections of social and cultural phenomena. He is the author of nine books and many articles.



tor. You have 12 hours for work, and then it gets dark. And it gets dark fast as hell,” describes Soukup. At first glance his work might appear attractive, but quite a lot of it is routine. “Whatever you don’t take out of the terrain, you simply won’t have,” he says, explaining the feverish diligence with which he works in the field.

In addition, the work of a cultural anthropologist is one that entails a good deal of risk. “In a book called *Surviving Fieldwork*, you can read that the most common causes of death for anthropologists are hepatitis, malaria, and automobile accidents,” he says, enumerating the pitfalls.

He loses a few kilos during each mission. “In Papua you are always on the move, in quite rugged terrain. The local cuisine is not so hearty. When you want to socialise with locals, you have to chew betel nuts (areca) with them. I always visit my dentist before and after my trips there. The nuts make your teeth black and can cause cavities. And never forget: it’s always good to have a little tobacco with you when talking

to them over a fire. You will constantly be inhaling smoke. The fieldwork will get under your skin once and for all,” he laughs. By the way, frustration from hunger in Papua New Guinea led Soukup and Bláha to write a book, *Our Village Cookbook*, which will contain Papuan recipes.

Experiences from Papua suit Europe and university students

Not only the recipes for Papuan food will go down well in Europe. “The benefit of any kind of research comes when your results become accepted and applicable. The methods which I and Jan Bláha used can be used elsewhere in order to learn about people’s spatial behaviour. For example in Europe at the moment we are facing a massive movement of people, but we know very little about the cultural backgrounds of the spatial behaviour of people. Once I finish my work in Papua, I must try my methodology elsewhere. I’d like to try it out in a pastoral community, which is why I’m going to go to the Altai Mountains in the future,” he plans.

Martin Soukup received the Neuron prize in the field of social sciences. The independent scientific board acknowledges extraordinary individuals who are younger than forty and who at the same time have made a contribution to the level of knowledge in their fields. And this is precisely what Martin Soukup has been doing. This is shown by his books, teaching materials, and especially the style of his lectures which he gives at Palacký University Olomouc. He loves teaching.

“I often hear it said that the younger generation does not read. That’s simply not true. They just read differently, because they grew up on the Internet, which has different demands and expects different competencies. Personally, I think students are lacking something else: the ability to lead a productive dialogue. And I think the problem lies in the style of teaching at primary and secondary schools, where often the desire for learning is not supported. I also don’t support the myth that a teacher is always all-knowing and infallible,” he adds.

“You’re interesting to the local people for about the first two days. They have quite enough work of their own in order to survive without having to stop for a cultural anthropologist.”



Martin Rychlík

Ethnologist and science journalist, at present for the Czech daily *Lidové noviny*

It’s not customary for a scientist to read poetry, lecture dramatically, nor have an enormous humanitarian outlook on subjects from philosophy to art history, especially coming from a secondary school background in “electrical engineering, aimed at digital and control technology”. For Martin it’s typical. And he put all that to good use mainly in 2009, when he was chosen by entomologist Vojtěch Novotný to be the cultural anthropologist on a scientific mission of biologists to Papua New Guinea. He literally found himself there. He returns among “his” Nungons, he writes about them – and so well that one of his books was voted the best monograph published in the whole of Charles University!



Jan D. Bláha

Associate professor in the Department of Geography at the Faculty of Science, Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem

A creative scientist with artistic inclinations, the owner of personal opinions, an expert on poetry and literature, the owner of sparkly eyes, a collector of New Guinean artefacts, hunter of students’ hearts, a lover of good wine, a passionate reader, a cyclist and mountain climber, an adventurer, and last but not least an expert at non-specialisation. That’s how I could define Martin Soukup. Our fields crossed doing fieldwork, among other things. Anyone who has experienced it knows that finding a good partner in the field is almost a superhuman feat. I’m glad to have found such a compatriot in the person of Martin.

success



Olomouc medical students succeeded in scientific work amid strong competition

Olomouc medical students achieved great success in the national round of the Student Scientific and Academic Activities competition, taking two second and one third place against thirty entries from twelve Czech and Slovak faculties.

Winners of the faculty rounds presented their scientific research work in four competition categories. All the nominated students from Olomouc were successful. The authors of the third-place winner in the Clinical section, Nelly Suchomelová and Anežka Fellerová, were awarded for dealing with methods for the timely diagnosis of the risk of metastasis after thyroid gland tumour removal. Klára Kamínková, Martina Lizáková, and Lucie Škamradová

were awarded second place by the committee of experts in the Dentistry section for their study on treating muscle pain in the area of the oral cavity and face using acupuncture. Also taking home a silver, in the heavily represented Preclinical section, was Adam Chudoba with his work entitled “Cardioprotective properties of polyphenols”. “In layman’s terms, the title refers to a substance which is capable of influencing the metabolism of the cardiac muscle in a way that it would reduce the damage which arises with ischaemic tissue. I worked on the paper in the Department of Biochemistry, where we conducted experiments and reviewed the data. It is definitely a great experience, one which

has incredibly broadened my horizons,” said Adam Chudoba.

This year’s competition, with its motto “There’s no time to lose time”, was expanded for the first time with a pilot project in Emergency Medicine, made up of three disciplines. “It included the provision of basic steps in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, with blind assessment used to measure its success rate, then expanded resuscitation using a state-of-the-art simulator, and one randomly-selected scenario of an emergency condition. The jury gave points for teamwork, correct diagnosis, and the choice of a suitable therapy,” explained Vice-Dean Eliška Sovová. The faculty decided to hold the competition this year as well. (mav)

International HELP project receives European Quality Mark

The international project Healthcare English Language Programme (HELP), in which the UP Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) takes part as a member of a seven-country consortium, won the prestigious European Commission award European Language Label (ELL). The modern, interactive on-line platform for teaching healthcare English won in the category of projects awarded for creativity which increase the level of language studies.

“The expert panel is always looking for projects which have significant added value. When evaluating the HELP project, the jury appreciated its innovative webpages and their structure. It contains an on-line platform and mobile phone application including audio and video recordings, as well as PDF versions for printing as a textbook,” said Lukáš Merz of the FHS Department of

Humanities and Social Sciences, who together with the principal investigator at FHS, Jan Galuszka, is one of the members of the international team.

The European Language Label competition is coordinated by the European Commission and can be organised by national agencies of individual EU countries. Last year’s laureates, who accepted their prizes during the winners’ ceremony in Dublin, were chosen by the Irish national Léargas agency for the Erasmus+ programme. “Within the framework of European projects at the same time we got the opportunity to use the prestigious ELL mark as proof of the quality of the content as well as the form of language learning,” added Merz.

The HELP project, on which FHS worked with partners from Slovakia, Spain, Lithuania, Germany, Poland, and Ireland, represents a complex teaching tool

for teachers, students, healthcare personnel, and the broader professional public. It contains fourteen teaching modules in the area of healthcare and another six on intercultural competencies. It can be used in a standard teaching environment or as self-study. The platform is available for free on the project’s webpages. (mav)



The Miroslav Liberda Prize has its first laureates

The Faculty of Law awarded the Miroslav Liberda Prize for the first time in its history. Employees who are responsible for spreading the good reputation of the faculty are eligible. Its first laureates were Ondrej Hamulák and Martin Faix, who work in the Department of International and European Law. Dean Zdenka Papoušková awarded the prizes at the meeting of the Law Faculty's Academic Board meeting, laying the basis of a new tradition.

The award is named after the first dean of the faculty after its reinstatement. "By introducing this award I have fulfilled another point of my election platform. However, I have revised its basis. Originally, I thought the faculty should recognise academic contributions. But these activities already have some form of remuneration. What we were missing was the opportunity to award the non-academic achievements of employees who contribute to spreading the good name of the faculty," Papoušková explained.

Ondrej Hamulák successfully contributed as an expert guarantor on an investment project which led to the completion of a new wing of the faculty with a library and study room. In addition, his above-

average activity in the fields of publication, grant activity, and academics contributed to increasing the faculty's prestige. "For me, the award has a great symbolic value, especially due to its connection with the 'founding father' of our faculty. I perceive it as recognition of long, honest work on behalf of the faculty," Hamulák said.

Martin Faix, Vice-Dean for Foreign Affairs, received his prize for organising extraordinary training in the field of international humanitarian law. Summer Camp Peira, which has no peer in Europe, simulates a detention and refugee camp in a domestic armed conflict. He "shares" his prize with Lieutenant Colonel Otakar Foltýn, who co-organised the camp from the side of the Czech Armed Forces. "To be one of the first laureates is a great honour for me. I see the award as proof that the faculty recognises the importance of such activities. They contribute to the good name and respect of the faculty at home and abroad, and make it unique. The award belongs to the entire organisational team," Faix emphasised.

The Miroslav Liberda Award can be won annually by up to three employees. It is combined with a monetary reward. (eha)



Europol makes use of research by experts from the Faculty of Education

The European Police Office (Europol) has published a strategic brochure aimed at the risk associated with sexual coercion and on-line extortion of children on the Internet. In the brochure entitled "Online sexual coercion and extortion as a form of crime affecting children", it details the causes of these forms of attacks, ways of resolving them, and also preventive procedures. It makes use of and quotes the research findings of the Centre for the Prevention of Risky Virtual Communication at the UP Faculty of Education.

"We have been dedicating ourselves to research aimed at risky behaviour on the Internet for a number of years now. Our results form part of strategic materials at key ministries and methodological recommendations and guidelines for prevention and intervention in this area. In recent years, we have gradually been able to become noticed on the European level; our data is being used by the European Commission and

now it is being used by Europol," Centre leader Kamil Kopecký said.

Europol's strategic materials have an impact on all EU member states in which attacks on children occur. In addition to information on the phenomenon, it offers a whole slew of recommendations on how children should act pre-emptively and how to ensure their safety. This is the reason why Europol started a European-wide

campaign against child abuse called "Say No!".

In recent years, experts have investigated the problem of cyber-bullying of children and teachers, risky behaviour in the on-line gaming environment, and the risks associated with social networks and password safety. Last year their work resulted in research on the phenomenon of sexting and risky chatting. (map)



success



Chemist Pavel Štarha wins prestigious Alfred Bader Award

The prestigious Alfred Bader Award for young Czech bioorganic and bioinorganic chemists, awarded annually by the Czech Chemistry Society, was won last year by Pavel Štarha from the Department of Inorganic Chemistry at the UP Faculty of Science (on the right in the photo). Together with his colleagues from the research team under Prof Zdeněk Trávníček, he dedicates himself especially to the study of complexes of selected transition metals and their possible use in anticancer therapies.

The prestigious Czech award goes to chemists aged 35 and under for work done to date in the fields of bioorganic and inorganic chemistry. He accepted the award at

the beginning of November at the conference Liblice 2017 – Advances in Organic, Bioorganic and Pharmaceutical Chemistry, where he gave a plenary speech.

“I consider the award as recognition not only of my work but primarily as recognition of the results of the entire research team under Prof Trávníček. After the feeling of joy also came immediately a great responsibility – I am aware that I mustn’t rest on my laurels, for it is necessary to look at awards as a commitment to the rest of my professional career,” Štarha said.

Along with the other members of his research team, he is dedicating himself to the development of biologically active

substances – a complex of selected transition metals containing elements such as platinum, ruthenium, tantalum, etc., and their possible use in anticancer therapies. “We’re looking at these complexes as potential chemotherapy agents. Of course in the same breath it is necessary to state that primarily we are dedicated to basic research, from which clinical use is a long way away,” Štarha added.

The award is given upon the initiative and financial altruism of Alfred Bader, who became one of the most successful and well-known chemists in the commercial field, the founder of the world-famous Aldrich Company. (srd)

UP rises in American rankings

Palacký University was successful in another international university ranking. In the recent U.S. News & World Report Best Global Universities Rankings, Palacký University placed 479th, improving its position by 15 places over the previous year. In comparison to Czech universities, it placed third, after Charles University in Prague (196th place) and Czech Technical University in Prague (410th place). The total number of universities tracked increased from

750 to 1250; Czechia has six schools in the top 1000.

“The position of Palacký University can be seen as stable, even despite the increased number of universities listed, and it continues to rise. The ranking used data from Clarivate Analytics, which differs from other prestigious global rankings. This means that even though the data and methods used differ, Palacký University was capable of succeeding in rankings by

various companies,” said the UP Director of Support Strategy, Zuzana Polanská.

UP moved closer towards the world’s top schools in some categories. In Botany and Zoology it took 139th place in the world. UP also placed in the top 300 schools in Chemistry, at the 286th position. In Physics, it took 301st place; and it also placed in the top 400 in Biology and Biochemistry, at 396th place.

Schools are evaluated according to 13 indicators that measure universities’ academic and scientific research performance and international collaboration. The universities’ reputations in the international context are also taken into account. The top place, just as in the previous year, went to Harvard University, followed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University. (srd)

U. S. NEWS RANKING

UNIVERSITY	2014	2015	2016	2017
Charles University in Prague	179.	204.	201.	196.
Czech Technical University in Prague	371.	399.	535.	410.
Palacký University Olomouc	488.	473.	494.	479.
Masaryk University Brno	–	622.	598.	543.

Literary theorist Tomáš Jirsa wins prestigious prize

The prestigious Franco-Czech CEFRES (Centre français de recherche en sciences sociales) Platform Award went to Tomáš Jirsa, a literary theorist and comparative literature researcher at the Faculty of Arts. He accepted it at the French Embassy in Prague from Nobel Prize in Chemistry winner Jean-Marie Lehn for his article titled “Reading Kafka Visually: Gothic Ornament and the Motion of Writing in Kafka’s *Der Proceß*”, published in the impact journal *Central Europe*.

The prize, which is part of the Jacques Derrida Award and is given to the best academic article, was given to Jirsa in the category of Social Sciences and Humanities. “It means a number of things to me. The fact that an established sociologist was awarded with me for her work on postcolonial urban studies as well as a doctoral student in anthropology for a historical paper on the theme of Czech displays of physical otherness is clear proof that the jury, made up of renowned experts, gives research on literature the same chance as more empirical

and today basically more progressive fields such as sociology and anthropology,” Jirsa said.

The award-winning study comes from a key chapter of his doctoral dissertation entitled “The Physiognomy of Writing: In the Folds of Literary Ornament” (2012) which deals with texts by Franz Kafka, Rainer Maria Rilke, Samuel Beckett, and others. It shows that ornament works as a theoretical concept, which makes it possible to understand a literary text from the perspective of its visuality, performativity, and movement. “I attempt to prove that despite the obsolete – however to date prevailing – definition, ornament is something more than mere decoration in cultural history. It is not additional adornment nor external decoration, but a creative trope whose importance does not lie on what it depicts, but rather in the way it moves, how provocative is the concept, and how it produces its sensory and affective effects,” adds the literary theorist from Palacký University. (map)



Michal Vorlíček captivated in a contest of young academics via his poster and squats



Michal Vorlíček, a doctoral student at the Faculty of Physical Culture, was victorious in a competition of young Physical Education academics and teachers at the 12th European Congress of the International Federation of Physical Education (FIEP).

He presented the progress, the current state, and the goals of his SONIAA (Social Norms Intervention for Active Adolescents) study, which is aimed at verifying the feasibility and effect of personalised electronic feedback based on the theory of social norms in the area of physical activity and sedentary behaviour. It is being investigated by a team from the Active Lifestyle Institute under Ferdinand Salonna. “My poster caught their attention through its content, because this type of study in the area of physical activity is original and very topical in terms of today’s science, and also due to its graphic form – from the studio of Barbora Nemethová – and according to the jury these qualities were well-un-

derlined during my oral presentation. And despite being the final presenter, I caught the attention of the jury and public by doing a few squats during refreshments,” Vorlíček said.

Victory in the competition for him also means an invitation to the FIEP World Congress, which will take place this year in Istanbul. “It’s a great feeling. I’m very glad that I was nominated by Docent Jana Vašíčková to the FIEP New Leaders group in 2015, and now I can represent our faculty on the international field. I perceive it as a thank-you to the faculty for all the opportunities which I was able to have during my studies,” he added.

He is one of the few who has taken part in all three years of the competition, which was introduced in 2015 at the congress in Morocco as a programme to acquaint young people with international conferences in the area of physical activity and physical education. (vim)

Pavel Hobza accepts the prestigious Schrödinger Medal



One of the world’s most highly cited chemists, Pavel Hobza, who works at both the UP Faculty of Science and its Regional Centre of Advanced Technologies and Materials, accepted the prestigious 2017 Schrödinger Medal last August in Munich. The World Association of Theoretical and Computational Chemists (WATOC) awarded it to him for his outstanding work on noncovalent interactions. He is the second Czech scientist, after Josef Michl, to receive the medal. “This is a very prestigious award, and I appreciate it enormously,” said Prof Hobza.

He also mentioned how it was a great honour to conduct the plenary session at the association’s congress, which takes place every three years. His speech, in front of roughly 1500 colleagues in the Munich Philharmonic Hall, also concerned noncovalent interactions. “I introduced our current and future research. I truly enjoyed giving the lecture. And the best part was the very rewarding discussion we had afterwards,” Hobza added. (srd)

High school students arrived for a unique Summer School of Diplomacy

The first annual Summer School of Diplomacy, a wholly unique project for high school students prepared by the Department of Politics and European Studies at the UP Faculty of Arts in cooperation with the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with huge acclaim. The five-day programme of lectures, workshops, and discussions with renowned experts ended with awarding of certificates to forty participants from across the country.



“I hope that your participation at the summer school has enriched you and awakened in you a greater interest in international affairs. The goal was to understand that it is necessary to deal with problems critically, to discuss them, and seek solutions. And you were truly unique. I wish all my students were like you,” Tomáš Lebeda, Head of the Department of Politics and European Studies, told the students. (mav)

The Czech Academy of Sciences and UP expand cooperation



UP and the Czech Academy of Sciences concluded an Agreement on Cooperation last year for implementing doctoral study programmes. It was the first agreement with the University according to the revised Czech Act on Universities having to do with doctoral studies, and it will have a significant impact for further rapprochement of the academic and university sectors. The general agreement established a preliminary agreement between the Institute of Art History, Czech Academy of Sciences and the UP Faculty of Arts, connecting doctoral students from both institutions in the field of Art History.

“It is absolutely a ground-breaking agreement, which should be reflected in higher quality doctoral work. What is important for us is that we can now better motivate the best doctoral candidates to remain in the field,” said Eva Zažímalová, President of the Czech Academy of Sciences. (ipu)

UP students and employees donated more litres of blood

The successful spring term of the university-wide event “Give Blood with the Rector” was supplemented for the first time last year with an “Autumn round”, organised in cooperation with the Transfusion Department of the University Hospital Olomouc and the 470 ml (Pint of Blood) initiative. And it met again with great success: more than 240 donors came to give a few millilitres of that most precious fluid, 93 of them first-time donors, made up of UP students and employees. Members of the University Shields Olomouc hockey team also took part. (mav)



Conference of biotechnologists with an all-star cast



Participants at last year's international conference at the Faculty of Science – “Biotechnology of Plant Products – Green for Good IV” – spoke on the topics of new trends in plant technologies, genomes of economically important crops, the possibilities of how to use biologically active plant substances in medicine, and more. Invitations from the organisers, the Centre of the Region Haná for Biotechnology and Agricultural Re-

search (CRH), were accepted by leading experts from more than 20 countries around the world. Even the lay public could take a look at their research at mobile labs set up in the town centre.

“The conference had an all-star cast, and the lectures were first-rate. It will be a tough one to beat this year,” said Ivo Frébort, CRH Director and Dean of the Faculty of Science, about the four-day scientific meeting. Two of its most important guests were Clint Chapple of Purdue University and Patrick S. Schnable of Iowa State University in the USA.

Another highlight of the conference was Jeff Cole, Vice-President of the European Federation of Biotechnology, which co-organised the conference. “Thanks for the huge turnout, for which the conference was prepared. This is the most important event in the plant biotechnology section in the European Federation of Biotechnology’s calendar,” Cole said. The organising pair of institutions was supplemented for the first time last year by the European Phytochemical Society. (srd)

kaleidoscope

Palacký University has a unique souvenir



UP has its own tourism badge. Depicted on one side of the wooden token is the entrance gate to the Rectorate, and on the other is the university logo. A component of the badge is a collectible sticker, which depicts the former Jesuit Convictorium, currently the UP Arts Centre. The souvenir token is for sale at UPoint, the UP information centre and shop. (ipu)

Experts debate rights in the EU



The multidisciplinary conference “The EU in time of multicrisis and its greatest challenges: up-to-date solutions, future visions and prospects” took place last year in the luxurious spaces of the Czernin Palace in Prague. The two-day symposium, which in terms of its focus, scope, and content was a unique event of international impact, attracted more than one hundred and twenty experts on the question of rights in the EU. The main organiser was the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence at the UP Faculty of Law. (eha)

University Shields Olomouc fight on ice

Palacký University has its own ice hockey team. Under the name University Shields Olomouc, the team has been playing since October in the European University Hockey League (EUHL), where selected Czech, Slovak, Polish, and Hungarian university teams meet on the ice. “We have 40 players on the roster, with twelve on the management team. Students from nearly all of UP’s faculties have joined in, with the largest proportion coming from the Faculty of Physical Culture,” said the team founder and manager, Dominik Pudelka.

“Finding the right game plan and make-up of the team will take a while. The goal of our first season is to make it into the play-offs and fight for the title,” added coach Radim Zbránek.

During the regular season the Shields will have 12 matches – including against Charles University’s UK Praha team, several times league champions. (vim)



Havel's Place installed at UP Armoury

“Democratic Debate” is what architect Bořek Šípek called his memorial to Václav Havel. It takes the form of two chairs with “Havel hearts” (he used this symbol with his signature) set beside a round table in whose centre is a growing linden, an emblem of the Czech nation. “Scottish philosopher David Hume in his essays demonstrated that science and art can grow and thrive only when they exist under a free and liberal government. Václav Havel was a symbol of those values,” said Rector Jaroslav Miller during the bench’s unveiling. He also added that the bench was a gift on the occasion of Professor Emeritus Josef Jařab’s eightieth

birthday – Prof Jařab contributed to the development of the university as its first post-1989 rector and he was also a friend of Václav Havel’s.

It was thanks to this rector emeritus that Havel received an honorary doctorate in Olomouc in 1990. Palacký University was the first school in what was then Czechoslovakia to award him such an honour.

The benches called Havel’s Place are a worldwide project, initiated by then Czech Ambassador to the USA Petr Gandalovič, together with architect and designer Bořek Šípek. The aim of the project, coordinated under the auspices of the Václav Havel Library, is to create a network

of places in public spaces which can contribute to meeting and dialogue, and at the same time places where it will be possible to discuss and think in the spirit of Havel’s ideals and attitudes.

The first Havel’s Place was ceremoniously unveiled in October 2013 on the Georgetown University campus in Washington, D.C.; Havel’s Place in Olomouc is number 22.

The project Havel’s Place was created with the kind permission of the Dagmar and Václav Havel Foundation. The Olomouc installation took place under the auspices of the City of Olomouc and the Olomouc Region.



The June unveiling of Havel's Place attracted dozens of people.

text: Ivana Pustějovská
photo: Gabriela Knýblová

interview

Josef Jařab: America will survive Trump

When Professor Josef Jařab celebrated his 80th birthday last year, he provided journalists with countless interviews. He spoke about his childhood in Silesia, how he got to university, and how as the first post-1989 freely-elected university rector he helped remove the Soviet army from Olomouc, how he found a secret safe in the Rector's office containing a pistol, how he flew to the USA with Václav Havel, how he became Central European University Rector, how he became a Czech senator.... And he also finished his memoirs. Memories, memories, memories. It's no surprise that before I could even ask the first question, he outpaced me: "But you're not going to ask me what I was like when I was a little boy, are you? Because I'm starting to think that I never was a little boy." No, I won't ask about childhood, I'm much more interested in how a recognized American Studies expert comes to terms with Trump's America and how an intellectual whose philosophy is close to that of Václav Havel sees the world today.

— A year ago, a new president set foot into the White House. The election of Donald Trump came as a big surprise to lots of people, all over the world. Did you expect it?

I did not expect it, and I think that not even half of America expected it, because we know that three million more people voted for Mrs. Clinton. Despite the numbers, however, the American election system allowed Trump to be chosen. I was convinced up to the very last minute that it couldn't happen, although now I have lots of reasons to think about why it did happen. Even America has lots of reasons to think about it, and because it is still a superpower, the rest of the world also has a lot of reasons to ponder over it. Long story short – Donald Trump as the American president is a shock. The *New York Times Book Review* even published an article saying that the first tabloid president in the USA is born.

— Why "tabloid"?

Tabloid because of the way the man talks, and above all – which is worse – because of the way he thinks. But the truth is he had to find millions of people who would give him their vote. Trump's election to the White House has divided America in a way that hasn't happened since its Civil War, back in the 19th century. The contemporary polarization of the country was not expected, because after the terrorist attacks of 11

September 2001, Americans unified. They felt that somebody had attacked the whole of the USA – as a symbol of Western civilization – from without, and that consciousness united them.

— Who are the supporters of the current American president?

I think we'll find the answer if we ask how the process called globalization has ended up. The goal of economic globalization was to level the huge differences between the countries of the "rich" Northern hemisphere – those with a more or less prosperous economy, political freedoms and stability – with those of the "poor" Southern hemisphere – i.e. the states which are unstable, impoverished, but often also with a rapidly growing population. To put it simply, to level the differences between the haves and the have-nots. On the political level, globalization should have made it possible for people to have the opportunity to renounce some parts of their identity – nationality, ethnicity – and become global citizens on a democratic basis, if possible.

Both these directions of globalization should have mutually supported and complemented each other. But that didn't happen. I think that the British economist Stephen D. King aptly depicted it in his most recent book, the title of which is *Grave New World: The End of Globalization, The Return of History*. He muses on what we can return to these days, and writes that we are returning to nation states, to nationalistic tendencies which replace the unfulfilled belief in globalization which should have been a panacea to all the world's problems.

— So did this frustration give birth to Donald Trump's voters?

Globalization created masses of people – and there are millions in the United States – who feel neglected. They did not believe that Hillary Clinton was speaking for them, they're fed up with the Washington elite – those who rule and who have got not only power, but a monopoly on thought. People were angry, because not only did they not take part in the decision-making process, but they also had the feeling that nobody asked them how they see the future of the country, or what's bothering them. These masses of people felt ignored and were angry, considering themselves the victims of globalization. And these are the ones, I dare to say, who voted 80% for Donald Trump. From these grudges against the ruling elite, from the belief that the rest of the world lives at their expense, that they're

getting a raw deal, that foreigners are taking their jobs, it's only one step away from nationalism. And Donald Trump knows very well how to work on these feelings of millions of Americans. We saw it in his campaign mottoes: America First! – or, Make America Great Again.

— But to what is it possible to return? America has undergone huge multicultural development, the attitude to minorities has changed, and gender politics has been transformed. Would all these empowered people want to go back to a world in which they were second-class citizens? Can one go back to the "White man's America"?

Of course not, and nobody who is not a white man would allow it to do that, and there are plenty of them: Latinos, African Americans, but also white Americans (including white American women) who think democratically. What is interesting is that the behavior of Donald Trump, after just a few months, was able to open up new wounds that had already been closed. Or more precisely, which America and the world thought had already been closed.

— Such as racism?

I would rather say racist sentiments. While everyone knows that a complete transformation of all Americans' sentiments did not take place, at the same time they know that in that country racism and other forms of discrimination had been resolved institutionally. That means that the clear, existing decisions by the Supreme Court, the U.S. Congress, and presidential decrees such as those by Obama prohibit discrimination. But it is true that transforming people's thinking is very difficult and takes a long time. Despite that, I'm convinced that those who are not willing to go back to what represented racist America, let's say in the time of the U.S. Civil War, are in the majority.

— You spoke of globalization, whether it has been successful or not. In that context, isn't it more important to follow what China or India are doing than what the American president is writing on Twitter?

Prof. King, whom I mentioned above, writes on that precise subject. And he's not alone – a number of American journalists are warning that attention is shifting to China, to a certain extent to Japan, India, and Latin America – they usually mention

Brazil. Previously one spoke of the phenomenon “The Rise of the West” and now it’s starting to be “The Rise of the Rest” (Fareed Zakaria). King is looking for example at Africa, saying one should watch Nigeria. Today it is home to roughly 190 million inhabitants – it’s the most populous country in the continent, and according to projections, by 2050 there might be half a billion Nigerians, which would make it the most populous country in the world after China and India. However not all will be able to support themselves at home, so they will go elsewhere. World demographics are forcing part of the population to migrate. But it has been like that for centuries.

— America has great experience with migration, while we in Europe have been getting used to the fact that in the last two years millions of people want to come here. Can we learn something from the American experience?

I think that the American experience can be used in two ways: first, to avoid making the same errors they did, which mostly had roots in racism; and second, to look at the positive things that migration can bring. Regarding the first: we have to admit that racism still exists to some extent in Europe – there is still intolerance toward those who look differently, act differently, and think differently. And here we ought to think in the longer and finally more rational perspective, in order to come to grips with it somehow, and in order to be able to help one another again and to accept otherness as something enriching.

The positive aspect which can inspire is the way in which Americanization took place at the beginning of the 20th century. America prepared itself for its influx of foreigners. Anyone who came had to learn the language, and schools – including universities – helped. It was combined with something not so positive, and that was the law that a person who did not learn English well enough to get citizenship within five years could be deported. And that did happen. But when Americans accepted the fact that they are a nation of immigrants, they profited from it. The numbers show that the stronger waves of immigration strengthened the economy significantly, that’s how America grew.

— You’re saying that we should think differently. We have quite a good place for thinking at the university now: Václav Havel’s Place.

You even invited the former president to UP, where he received an honorary doctorate. Do you think Czech society misses Václav Havel?

I think we miss him dearly. His sentiment was deeply humane, he thought about things and the world with a humanist perspective. If he were to evaluate today’s situation in the world and in Europe, I think he would be much more ideologically close to Mrs. Merkel than our politicians. And he would probably be shocked by what’s happening around us, and if he had enough power, he would certainly take an active role in things. And he would probably remind us all that we are human beings and we have a responsibility in the state of our world. That was Havel’s message: it is more important to empathize with one’s fellow human beings, to try to live with them, than to define oneself by swaggering gestures and words against the “hostile world”. Today, however, we are hearing another version of responsibility – some of our politicians are taking pictures of themselves with guns and trying to suggest to us that the best thing would be if everyone had their own tank in their garage at home.

— Most of your active life has been connected with the university. We were speaking of the complexity of the world, on monopolies of thought, on truth. Does the university have a chance to become an oasis of free spirit in the future?

It should. Actually, it must. Plurality of ideas, opinions, open confrontation of ideas – that’s more important than the content of individual lectures. The word university come from the Latin *universitas* – which means society, community, but also diversity integrated into a whole. And the whole for me means spirituality, humanist spirituality. That is the basic task of the university – the development of humanity, critical thinking, strengthening our responsibility toward ourselves and the wider society. Perhaps it sounds pathetic when a person in Olomouc says that he has a responsibility in the state of the world. But I am convinced that how we see our own role also has an impact on how we feel ourselves and how we are perceived by others. And we ought to keep all of that in mind, for example when we go to vote. And by the way: U.S. President Harry Truman in 1955 already warned that an American president needs political understanding to run the government, even though he can be elected without it. Enough about Trump.



Josef Jařab (b. 1937)
Professor of English and American Literature, literary critic, translator, UP alumnus. He was UP Rector from 1990 to 1997, and later Central European University Rector. He has been a visiting professor at many universities abroad, including Harvard. He has received honorary doctorates from one British and two American universities.



**OLOMOUC
IN PRAGUE**

UP Reunion party
12 August 2017

reportage

University on the Vltava River

Reunion. The desire to be together, again. To find out what's new. To meet friends. To have fun. These were the simple answers to the question why Palacký University alumni came one fine Saturday afternoon in August to the banks of the Vltava in Prague. In the end, some seven hundred turned up to fulfil the slogan of this year's alumni reunion: "Olomouc in Prague!"

text: Ivana Pustějovská
photos: Vojtěch Duda

Excellent summer weather, boats swaying on the water, relaxing music – these were the backdrops to the alumni party in Prague. “We prepared this non-traditional event here because so many of our alumni work in the capital and its surroundings. We wanted to meet and reminisce about our university. I’m glad that you accepted our invitation and came. And I’m pleased that alumni from other places came here, some of them from hundreds of kilometres away,” Rector Jaroslav Miller said, greeting students on board the good ship *Cargo Gallery*.

His words were confirmed for example by Olga Váhalová. This sympathetic lady, a graduate of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry in 1978, came with her husband to Prague from Hodslavice in Moravia, a distance of 350 km. “I came because I was so pleased with the last alumni reunion in Olomouc. I loved it so much that we decided to make a trip to Prague and combine it with the UP meeting. I’m always happy when I can support my university. And that’s why I contributed to the UP Endow-

ment Fund and now I’m doing it again,” the paediatrician added with a smile. Jana Němčíková, who studied English and German at the Faculty of Arts, came the same distance to Prague. She graduated in 2009. “I came from Ostrava – I had a blast at the last UP meeting. So today I’m with my classmates again and looking forward to some great music.”

Cutting quite a figure on the shore with his name tag and bag with the UP Faculty of Law logo was Prague lawyer Tomáš Nahodil. “I’m from Prague, but I studied in Olomouc, graduating from the Law Faculty in 2003. And when I have kids, I’m going to forbid them to study in Prague. They’re going to Olomouc,” he said, smiling. He remembers Olomouc fondly, and meets up with his former classmates regularly. “I have to say that Rector Miller has made great strides recently. The Faculty of Law is also improving, it’s graced with many docents, including my classmates who are getting tenure there. I’m happy the faculty is doing so well.” Being from Prague, a party on the Vltava is something he couldn’t

pass up. “I was at the reunion in Olomouc last year, and it was wonderful and very moving.”

At the opening, when the rector was making the rounds of alumni, welcoming them, he stopped at Marcela Karasová. She came to Prague from Hradec Králové. “I studied at the Faculty of Science, in Optics and Precision Mechanics. I graduated in 1964. We’ve already had our Golden Graduation! At the first alumni meeting in 2016, I was so happy that

I simply couldn’t miss today’s meeting. I brought a friend with me, and I’m looking forward to what’s in store for us,” she confided. And added that she’s very interested in what’s happening at UP. “I still have a classmate there, Professor Peřina!”

Alumni could enjoy themselves on two boats. The music was on the boat *Cargo Gallery*, and sports – beach volleyball, to be specific – was on the boat *Kayak Beach Bar*. They played, they talked, they toasted each other. Thrill-seekers paddled the

Vltava on kayaks. Deans and vice-deans presented alumni with news from their respective faculties, and Rector Emeritus Josef Jařab greeted all in his captain’s cap.

Olomouc let the surrounding area know what was going on via a special video projection on the river’s surface by the UP Audio-Visual Productions team. In addition to pictures of Olomouc and introducing individual faculties, the visual show also featured historian Frantiřek Palacký, the university’s namesake. Olomouc in Prague.





foundation

text: Ivana Pustějovská
photos: Gabriela Knýblová,
UP Endowment Fund archives

UP Endowment Fund – a community which helps

They're successful, and better than many others in their professions. They operate at prestigious clinics, they are in charge of top scientific teams, they resolve difficult judicial cases, they work in laboratories at famous universities, they move through diplomatic circles with ease, they are applauded at concerts throughout the continent. In order to prove themselves, in order to succeed amidst ruthless competition, in order to stay at the top of their fields, they have had to, and continue to, work hard. All of them have that in common. And one other thing. They have never forgotten from whence they came, and they want to give a chance to youths. Palacký University alumni, who have decided to support the UP Endowment Fund.

Talent + vision + support = UP Endowment Fund. That's how the UP Endowment Fund (EF), which is absolutely unique in the Czech university context, can be expressed in a nutshell. They support young scientists and talented students who want to try to do their own scientific research or artistic projects, travel to respected foreign workplaces, and learn how to popularise their sciences. If they are successful in their applications to the fund, convincing its Board of Directors, then they receive support up to a maximum of CZK 200 000 (€8000). And that's not all – in addition to money, the university also invests its trust in the students – students do not have to fill in a pile of forms and re-

ceipts for every Czech crown spent. They receive the money and a year later they must show what they have been able to do, what they researched, what they have discovered. Since 2015, 26 students have received support, among whom the EF has divided 2.4 million crowns (€100,000).

The major part of the money has been received by the university from its main partner for the last two years – Česká spořitelna (Czech Savings Bank). Donors from among UP students and alumni also contribute. Even a few hundred crowns (tens of euros) at a time. The denominations of the banknotes are not what is important. “Fundamentally, with each and every contribution a society grows which takes an active interest in the world, shares common values, and believes that investment in education, science, and talent can benefit the society as a whole. It is a society which is willing to give an opportunity to someone just starting out,” explains Dita Palaščíková from the UP EF (in the top photo). At the same time, the fund is connected to the university's alumni programme.

The UP Endowment Fund continues to connect with many successful and famous alumni, who contribute large sums. “By lending their names they want to give weight to sponsoring our fund. We're very happy that they have faith in their alma mater, and that they still consider themselves part of the large UP family,” Dita Palaščíková added.

UP ENDOWMENT FUND
The fund supports scientific and
academic research as well as the
artistic activities of UP students
www.fond.upol.cz



Palacký University Endowment Fund



MILOSLAV BEŠTA
Developer at Google, Faculty of
Science alumnus

"In the USA, it's normal for alumni to support the university which helped them build their successful careers. Personally, I appreciate the fact that Palacký University established a fund to support students, because I received similar support at an American university, without which I could have barely afforded it."



KAMIL ANDREE
Lawyer and insolvency practitioner,
Faculty of Law alumnus

"I like the UP Endowment Fund, because it supports a good thing – education. The way in which it works is excellent. The money from the donors goes directly for specific projects and to students. It also motivates me to have a personal relationship to the university of which I am an alumnus and where I received a good education."



PAVEL STODŮLKA
Eye surgeon, head of the Gemini
Clinic, Faculty of Medicine and
Dentistry alumnus

"The UP Endowment Fund set itself the goal of supporting gifted young students and scientists, and contributing to the solution of important problems. I'm glad to support its activities and I trust in the usefulness of the UP Endowment Fund. The energy and enthusiasm with which our rector is devoting to its promotion is commendable."



MARTIN ŠMAJSER
Head of Marketing, Olomouc
Region Corporate Centre, Česká
spořitelna, UP Faculty of Science
alumnus

"I loved the idea of the UP Endowment Fund from the very start. It was progressive – it created something new; it was regional – students and academics helping their region; and moreover, it was even beneficial to society."



LUMÍR KANTOR
Neonatologist, Head of the
Neonatal Department of
University Hospital Olomouc,
Senator in the Czech Parliament,
Faculty of Law alumnus

"My alma mater and its programme to support science and research are very dear to me. My contribution is just a tiny drop to help UP and all of us."



EVA ŠONKOVÁ
Supreme Administrative Court
justice, UP Faculty of Law
alumna

"I and my husband, an alumnus of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, are lifelong fans of Palacký University and Olomouc as an essential (for us) initialising environment, so we will be glad to invest together in activities which are beneficial to society."



A better attitude toward being different

Few people know it, but Czechia is one of the world's best when it comes to the number of Paralympic School Days held – educational programmes aimed at informing children about physical disabilities and Paralympic sports. A driving force in that direction are the Applied Physical Activities (APA) at the UP Faculty of Physical Culture Centre, which for the past ten years now has been trying to improve attitudes towards special needs individuals.

Olomouc experts were there at the start of the International Paralympic Committee educational programme in 2005, and since then have organised more than 200 days, with 33,000 youths participating. “And everything in relative silence, whereas in other states national Paralympic committees have taken over, famous personalities take part in the Games, and Paralympics are the themes of doctoral dissertations,” Ondřej Ješina, Head of the APA Centre, points out.

Stories, more than medals

Of course the impact on the participants is what is most important. During Paralympic School Day they can try games in

wheelchairs, physical activities for the vision impaired, and other activities like boccia or athletic disciplines for the physically impaired. Part of the event is a talk with sportspeople with disabilities, such as Eva Kacanu, who is in a wheelchair.

“We had a talk at a school with a guy who fell off a cliff when he was seventeen and ended up in a wheelchair, during a time when the morale for our programme was at a low. The students weren't very interested, until they asked what it was like to live life in a wheelchair. He said that he had been in wheelchair for only three years and before that he had been quite the rascal. Once they began to deal with an issue which fundamentally affected seventeen-year-olds, both the climate and the thinking of those taking part changed immediately. And that has a greater value than any number of medals,” remembers Ješina.

Games for pre-schoolers and expeditions

The Paralympic School Day focusses on students aged 8–18, whereas the APA Centre has a wider scope. A programme for pre-schoolers called pAPA Plays

arose from work done by student Veronika Chvojková for her Bachelor's thesis. The APA Centre with its partners also runs Monoski Days and takes part in educational expedition projects, where students arrange extraordinary travel and sport experiences for people with disabilities. They also run a rental service for sport-compensation aids, the largest in Czechia. And it will continue to grow, because the Centre's activities greatly support the current three-year programme “Support for Education of Children, Pupils and Students through Equal Access in the Area of Basic Physical Fitness”.



text: Martina Šaradínová
photo: Gabriela Knýblová

alumni

A portrait of Aleš Pečinka, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is standing in front of a background of large green plants, possibly banana leaves. His arms are crossed.

**Aleš Pečinka:
Working in Olomouc
is another turning point
in my career**

As a fresh graduate in Systematic Biology and Ecology at the UP Faculty of Science, he set forth into the world, only to return to Olomouc sixteen years later. In between, he was able to get his scientific spurs (among others) at the Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research, where he led a research group. He has been employed since last Autumn at the Institute of Experimental Botany at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, a component of the Centre of the Region Haná for Biotechnological and Agricultural Research. He'd like to remain here permanently, and to push Czech science a bit further. He likes to take walks in the great outdoors with eyes fixed to the ground, on plants, and sees Czechia as a country with enormous potential. He is a recognised authority on research into plant cell nuclei. Meet the alumnus of this issue of *Žurnál* – plant geneticist Aleš Pečinka.

“Our goal is to understand how DNA is organised in the cell nucleus, how it repairs itself when damaged, and finally how it controls the plant as a whole. DNA is in a certain sense the central operating system, but it can transform itself in various ways,” he explains.

Together with his colleagues, he continues in the research into plant genetic information which was started in Germany, and which can be divided into two main directions. The first is aimed at learning the organisation of plant nuclei, in which in addition to DNA, the carrier of genetic information, are proteins, which the DNA arranges and controls. A great help for researchers is the model organism thale cress (*Arabidopsis thaliana*) on which they

carry out experiments. Insights gained are then used in the study of cereal grains. He is focussing in particular on how the organisation of the cell nucleus influences the resistance of plants against stress factors, and how it is connected with plants' development, especially seeds. “We know with thale cress that when certain changes occur in the cell nucleus, seed development will fail. But we have no idea how it works with cereals. We believe that when we understand the control of the plant genome in developing cereal grains, we will then be able to influence this development in the direction of larger and more stable yields,” he expects.

The other research direction – DNA repair – may also have an impact in human medicine. Biologists are working with substances that are used to suppress growth of cancer cells. Their attention is also focussed on zebularine, which is a substance with significant anticancer effects also being used in clinical studies. However, nobody knows how it works. “Through plant research we have revealed that DNA is damaged in some way, and found the genes which are necessary to repair this damage. Because DNA damage and repair are similar to a great extent in both plants and animals, we believe that we are making a contribution to the understanding of the functioning of this substance in other organisms as well.”

The thirty-nine-year-old scientist has had a long path to understanding the cellular life of plants. He has always loved nature – moreover, he grew up in a village where it was within reach. As a child he wanted to be a hunter, like his great-grandfather; animals were closer to him than the plant

world. At secondary school he was already attracted to science, and then gradually oriented himself towards botany. And from plant determination in the field, he went on to plant genetics.

He sees his biggest success so far as getting the post of group leader at the Max Planck Institute. Although he was fortunate enough to have a colleague who brought the job interview to his attention at the last minute, he was mostly able to get the position thanks to his prior results at workplaces in Gatersleben and Vienna. “I very much appreciate the position I had in that institute. It was a major milestone in my career and a great experience. But I also consider my current job in Olomouc as a similar turning point. It offers me enormous possibilities, and at the same time, it is a huge challenge.”

He considers the Centre of the Region Haná a top quality workplace, not just in Czechia, but also on the international level. Here he has found everything he needs – the appropriate research direction, excellent technical facilities, and the possibility of working with an expert in the field, plant geneticist Jaroslav Doležel. A huge benefit for him is the connection between the scientific centre and the Faculty of Science, where he would like to teach in the future. While he is living with his family at present in Olomouc, he'd like to settle in the nearby town of Velký Týnec. He could get to work from there by bike, play badminton, and go with his children on nature hikes and geocaching. “Czechia has huge potential, but it is choked with excessive bureaucracy and unclear ideas about the direction of the country,” Aleš Pečinka concludes.

Aleš Pečinka (b. 1978)

He graduated from the UP Faculty of Science in 2001. Afterwards, he worked for 16 years in Germany and Austria, and led a research group at the prestigious Max Planck Institute in Cologne. He's now working in the Olomouc laboratory of the Institute of Experimental Botany at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. He has published in leading journals, including *Nature Communications* and *Plant Cell*. Last year he received a J.E. Purkyně Fellowship for scientific activity in the field of analysis of the structure and function of plant cell genomes.





experience

text: Milada Hronová
photos: Ocal Sophan and JG archives

Find the courage within you and take advantage of student stays

He has always had respect for travelling. He spent his childhood in Rapotín, then high school years in Šumperk. During the last few years he has gotten used to Olomouc, so he was not too eager to make a journey abroad. Despite that, he set out for a science-research stay for the first time. All the way to the other side of the world. Today Jan Gregar, a doctoral student in Education, says he cherishes the experience and different perspectives on the world he encountered in Indonesian Surabaya.

“Even though I studied English, I was never too confident in it. I am not too assertive a person and travelling has always made me oddly anxious. Also, I have always felt the need to be close to my family. These are the main reasons why I never considered such a study opportunity,” explains Jan Gregar, a postgraduate from the UP Faculty of Education. He went to Indonesia for a month – to collect data for his dissertation called “Reflections of pre-graduate preparation of students in Education”.

“Czech faculties of education train us how to teach, how to behave in class, what are the teacher’s duties. However what frequently happens is that the graduate comes to a school as a teacher and rapidly forgets his or her training and starts teaching in the same way they were educated at primary and secondary schools. I’d like to find out what could be improved in teachers’ education in order to prevent that,” he says. It came to him that he could compare the situation in several countries, and since the UP Faculty of Education collaborates with Universitas Trunojowo Madura, it became his destination.

“In Indonesia, I conducted eleven interviews with local university teachers and focussed on the data related to the training of future teachers,” adds Gregar. He plans to conduct similar interviews at Palacký University Olomouc, and in order to be more comparative, he intends to visit countries west of Czechia. →

“The teaching profession is perceived as a service to society. The government in Indonesia makes education free of charge, and although some of the teachers are employed at university, they go out in their free time and visit the indigenous, often illiterate population and try to pass on some knowledge to them.”



With part of the expedition and local students in Sidoarjo.

Jan Gregar (b. 1989)

Graduated from English in Education and Technical Education and Information Technology at the UP Faculty of Education, a doctoral student in the Education programme. A member of the UP Academic Senate and Faculty of Education Academic Senate.

Headlong into the world

The possibility of visiting Universitas Trunojowo Madura was introduced to him by his tutor, Dr Pavel Neumeister. When he looked at the map to see where the partner university is located, he found out he would have to really overcome himself and experience many firsts. Such as a long air journey.

“I spent roughly twenty-six hours on the plane. From developed Europe, where my farthest visit was to Belgium, I suddenly found myself in the most populous Muslim country in the world. For the period of an entire month, I traded my quiet Olomouc for Surabaya, the second largest city in Indonesia with 2.3 million inhabitants. It was kind of a shock,” says Gregar about his first feelings after landing. His destination was Madura Island, where the university is situated, connected to Surabaya with more than a 5-km long bridge to Suramadu.

Students are the same everywhere

“Universitas Trunojowo Madura comprises five faculties. And there I represented not only Palacký University, but also the Czech Republic,” reminisces the Šumperk native. He was accommodated in the campus where he also spent most of his leisure time – with activities such as jogging, his favourite hobby. He was transported by university to the primary schools in Surabaya and Sidoarjo.

“Students are the same everywhere in the world. Those in Indonesia differ only in wearing school uniforms. When I presented facts about my home country to them, it was fascinating to see how amazed they were to learn that Central Europe has not two, but four seasons. They could barely imagine what snow is like,” he adds.

In service to society

The primary school Gregar visited is divided into several buildings located around the city. It is attended altogether by 1500 pupils from various social classes and religious and ethnic groups. “Looking at them, I often wondered how it is possible that a much poorer community is peacefully co-inhabited by so many people of various religions. And why Europe is so different. Surabaya is a cosmopolitan place in all respects,” he says.

He also appreciated the Indonesian perspective on the teaching profession. “It is perceived as a service to society. The government in Indonesia makes education free of charge, and although some of the teachers are employed at university, they go out in their free time and visit the indigenous, often illiterate population and try to pass on some knowledge to them.”

Some things, however, were a rather unpleasant surprise. “I felt really helpless when I saw how millions of Indonesians carry out waste disposal. They simply bring their litter out of the house and burn it. In such moments, Europe with its clean environmental policies looked like a very tiny needle in a haystack,” he admits.

When Jan Gregar sits in a café on a November morning, looking over pictures from Indonesia, he certainly does not regret his journey. On the contrary. “My view of the world has expanded in many ways. I also obtained a good deal of information for my academic research. And most importantly: today I know that I should have undertaken study visits already during my Master studies. I would definitely like to say one thing to all students: Be braver than me and use the opportunities offered during your studies!”



Multi-functional building in the Universitas Trunojowo Madura campus, used for exhibitions and sports, housing a library and IT centre.



Travelling in leisure time. The Bromo volcano on Java.



Warm welcome in Surabajo. Children wanted his autograph or to shake hands at least.



popular
science

text: Martina Vyslouzilová
photos: Jan Andreáš

Today an animator, and tomorrow? At the top of one's field

At Fort Science, students learn how to make science popular

They are young, smart, talented, and what is more, courageous. They have big plans and have achieved success at their young age that most will not achieve in their entire lifetime. They are not afraid to enter the unexplored waters of popular science in a centre which was opened relatively recently, in mid-2015. Fort Science has given them the chance to show what they're made of. They have become eager guides to interactive exhibits and creators of school programmes, winning award after award. As students, they have gained experience which will one day pay off for example in the post of Minister of Educa-

tion or head of an important scientific institution.

Czech Mind

In the exhibition Light and Darkness, a Czech Mind amazes visitors with his passion for science. He's Tomáš Heger, winner of the Czech Mind award given to talented students. "Yesterday there was some young chemist on the second floor, who carried out experiments using children as assistants. He was cool! He spoke like a professional, and when a foreigner came, he switched to fluent English," wrote people on social networks, admiring the student's knowl-

edge. Tomáš studies Biochemistry and focusses on plant extracts. When he was still in high school, he was working with lavender, and now he is building on his past research. "Popular science has interested me since secondary school. I read all kinds of science articles, and when they opened the Fort, I wanted to try it," he remembers. He has never regretted his decision, saying that he has only benefitted from the work and the contact with people. "In school we learn definitions and expert explanations, but when we want to offer something to the general public, it's hard to explain things precisely, without too much embellishment." →



Boring? Never. Science!

Fort Science Director Matěj Dostálek is convinced that when dealing with children and the public, one should not read from a script nor let a poster do the explaining. “In academia you sometimes come across the opinion that simplification degrades one’s field. But the opposite is true. The key is to describe something in a way that people can understand it, and that’s why it’s necessary to know how to give an explanation which caters to the individual needs of our visitors. And this is the way that science will gain prestige throughout the entire society,” he says.

Doctoral student Persefoni Urbánková, who comes from Cyprus, remembers that when the Fort was opened, she wanted to join the team any way she could. “I was afraid that my Czech might be a barrier, but as a future teacher, it was a great experience for me.” Persi wants to continue in education and perfect the teaching of mathematics. In the Fort she successfully destroys the myth that math is boring. “Mathematics develops logical and analytic thinking, which we need in life,” she explains. She’s been quite successful on her “mathematical mission”. “I ran the school programme Boring Numbers. At the end, a girl came up to me and said that she never believed mathematics could be so much fun. So I’ve fulfilled one of my life’s dreams – to prove to at least one child that math is great.”

Experiences abroad

Even Petra Hujňáková in Geoinformatics had a fear of the unknown when she

started working at the exhibit Living Water. The study job attracted her. “I found out that my knowledge was sufficient for the job. Visitors are also interested in life at our university and have wished me well in my studies,” Petra adds. Thanks to the Fort, she already knows that she likes working with people and that she will dedicate herself to doing it in the future.

In addition to her work in the Fort she and her colleagues can also take part in excursions to other science centres at home and abroad. Thanks to the Academia Film Olomouc (AFO) festival, the museum is visited by people from all over the world and animators get to meet some of the top promoters of popular science. “We can see incredible advances in the areas of communication and soft skills in our student workers. This has a positive influence on their future study, academic, and scientific research careers,” Dostálek adds.

On example is Roman Chvátal, who coordinates exhibits on physics and the planetarium. He leads a team of 20 animators and is responsible for educational school programmes. “I was aware of the great responsibility from the start, but I dived right into it. I’m that way by nature – I always want to try out what works,” says Roman. He’d like science communication at Fort Science to become part of education courses, and for the students there to get credits for it. “And how do I see the future? I’d like to transform our educational system and Czech schools. I’d like to work perhaps on the Board of the Ministry of Education,” he says, revealing his plans.

“Fort Science is not just an educational centre for the wider public, but also a platform for perfecting the communication and popularisation skills of UP students. What is essential for us is their interest in passing on their knowledge and working on themselves.”

Matěj Dostálek
Head of the Popular Science
Centre at the UP Faculty
of Science UP

Tomáš Heger (b. 1996)

Second-year student of Biochemistry at the UP Faculty of Science. Winner of the Czech Mind prize for work in the area of computational biochemistry. He dedicates himself mainly to research in the biological activity of plant extracts. He also won third place in the EUCYS (European Union Contest for Young Scientists) competition in Brussels. He has also had success at conferences in Israel and France.



Persefoni Urbánková (b. 1989)

Doctoral student at the UP Faculty of Science. She has a Master’s degree in Education, Mathematics and Descriptive Geometry for secondary schools. She focusses on the Theory of Education in Mathematics and in addition is looking for ways to evaluate textbook quality.



Roman Chvátal (b. 1994)

Fifth-year student in Education, Biology and Physics for secondary schools at the UP Faculty of Science. He won the Dean’s Prize for his Bachelor’s work on Physics and Fort Science (on creating educational programmes, their realisation and evaluation), and also won a prize in a national competition. He won first-place in the Rector’s Prize for scientific work in the area of education. He is a member of the Academic Senate of the UP Faculty of Science.



Petra Hujňáková (b. 1994)

Fifth-year student of Geoinformatics at the UP Faculty of Science. She won first-place in the Rector’s Prize for her educational materials in cartography and geoinformatics for secondary schools and Fort Science. She is interested in graphic visualisation of data. In the future she would like to create web maps.





photo:
Gabriela Knýblová

Reza Abdollahipour is from Iran. He has been studying at the Faculty of Physical Culture since September 2013 in the doctoral programme at the Department of Kinanthropology. He is focussing on the effects of attentional focus instructions on motor performance and learning of children with lower levels of motor coordination.

"دانشگاه پالاسکی برای من یک انتخاب خوشایند بود"

بعد از چهار سال زندگی در الوموس احساس می‌کنم که این شهر حالا خانه دوم من است. من دوستان زیادی از کشورهای مختلف پیدا کردم. الوموس یک فضای منحصر بفرده برای دانشجویانی دارد که می‌خواهند در یک محیط بین‌المللی رشد پیدا کنند. تعداد زیادی رویدادهای بین‌المللی فرهنگی برای دانشجویان در طول سال وجود دارد که به آنها کمک می‌کند آگاهی خود را افزایش دهند و تجربیاتشان را با هم تقسیم کنند. کشور چک از لحاظ فرهنگی، تاریخ و علم بسیار غنی است. من شهرها و مکانهای تاریخی زیادی را بازدید کردم و اطلاعات بسیاری در رابطه با فرهنگ، هنر، سنتها، و تاریخ زیبای کشور چک بدست آوردم.

همچنین، دانشکده فرهنگ بدنی دانشگاه پالاسکی الوموس برای دوره دکتری من فرصتهای بسیاری را فراهم نمود که شامل کیفیت بالای تحقیق، وسایل آزمایشگاهی جدید و معلمان با دانش بود. کارمندان دانشگاه بسیار مهربان هستند که تمایل دارند در همه زمانها به شما کمک کنند. دانشکده تربیت بدنی دانشگاه پالاسکی الوموس از من حمایت کرد تا از کشورهای آلمان، اسلواکی، لهستان، آمریکا، اسپانیا، و برزیل برای کارهای تحقیقی و شرکت در کنفرانسهای بین‌المللی بازدید کنم. همه این تجربیات به من کمک کرده تا ایده‌های تحقیقی ام را توسعه دهم که می‌تواند برای آینده شغلی من بسیار مفید باشد. من برای انتخابم خوشحالم و از اینکه عضوی از دانشگاه پالاسکی هستم افتخار می‌کنم.

Palacký University was a happy choice

After living four years in Olomouc I feel this city is my second home town now. I have found many nice friends from different countries and continents. Olomouc has a unique atmosphere for the students who want to grow up in an international environment. There are many international cultural events for students during the year that help them to increase their knowledge and share their experiences together. Czechia is rich in terms of culture, history and science. I have visited many cities and historical sites and obtained much information about the beautiful culture, art, traditions, and history of the Czech lands. Also, the Faculty of Physical Culture at Palacký University Olomouc has provided me many opportunities during my Ph.D. studies, including the high quality of research, modern analytic devices, and knowledgeable teachers. The university staff is also very nice and friendly, willing to help you at all times. The UP FPC supported my visits to different countries including Germany, Slovakia, Poland, USA, Spain, and Brazil for the purpose of research and attending different international conferences. All these experiences helped me develop my research ideas and will be very useful for my future career. I am happy for my choice, and I am pleased to be a member of Palacký University Olomouc.

Olomouc's *bursa pauperum*

The building housing the Sts Cyril and Methodius Faculty of Theology celebrated 300 years

The Academy, later the College of the Society of Jesus in Olomouc, founded in 1573, had at its disposal two accommodation facilities for students – the Convictorium, serving as lodgings for paying aristocracy and Papal, Imperial, and Episcopal alumni (Fellows), and the facility commonly known as the “bursa” or “contubernium pauperum” (paupers’ dormitory).

Seminary opposite the gaol

The founder of this facility built in 1586 was Olomouc Bishop Stanislav Pavlovský; Olomouc Jesuits built their own building from 1594–1596 on the site of three houses opposite the gaol. At the beginning of the 17th century the *bursa pauperum* got the name St Francis Xavier Seminary – St Francis Xavier (1506–1552) was chosen as its patron by the “rhetorics”, i.e. students of the 5th and final year of the Jesuit college, and the seminary chapel was dedicated to him. Seminary boarders were supported by numerous foundations, their task in addition to studies was to provide choirs and music during services, as well as participate in school theatre productions on religious themes. In 1682, there were a total of 43 boarders at the St Francis Xavier Seminary, of which two were designated as *amusi* (unmusical) and so had to pay for their meals.

The cornerstone of the new Baroque seminary building was laid on 4 November 1717. Construction was carried out under Wolfgang Reich and the building was finished on 2 August 1719.

Muses and dissection room

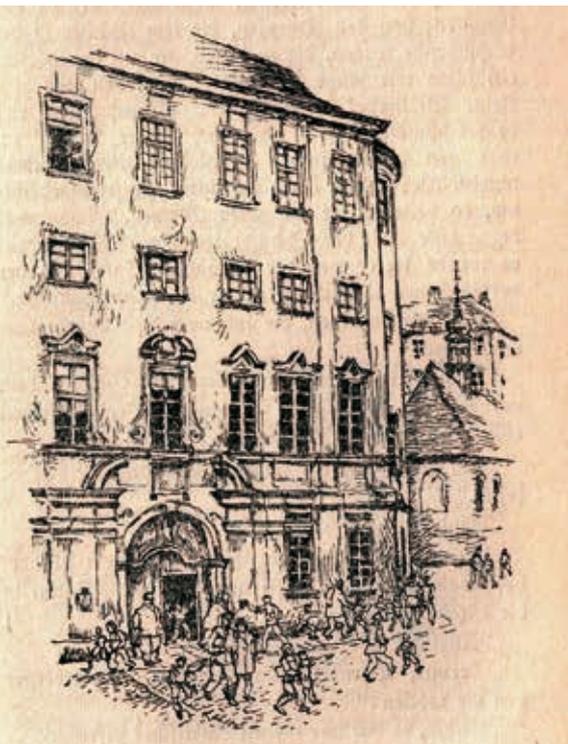
After the dissolution of the Jesuit Order in Austria-Hungary in 1773, the building served nationalised schools, except during the years 1778–1782, when the Olomouc university was moved to Brno and at the Olomouc site remained only a normal school and high school. After the return of the university – degraded to a lyceum – to Olomouc, only the Philosophical Faculty returned to the original complex, while the faculties of Law, Theology, the Medical-Surgical faculty founded in Brno, and bonesetters and midwives wound up in the abolished Carthusian monastery.

Emperor Joseph II. upon his visit to Olomouc on 27 September 1783 gave the building of the former St Francis Xavier Seminary to the entire Lyceum, as is evidenced by its inscription on the façade: “OPTIMARUM ARTIUM LUDIS JOSEPHUS II AUG. MDCCLXXXIII” (TO SCHOOLS OF GREAT ARTS JOSEPH II. AUGUST 1783). The Emperor Franz Joseph University was located here from 1827, housing faculties of philosophy, law, theology, and medical-surgical study with its own dissection room. Some faculties survived the disbanding of the university in 1860: the Emperor Franz Joseph Theological Faculty and Emperor Franz Joseph Medical-Surgical Faculty were dissolved fifteen years later; and the Emperor Franz Joseph German Gymnazium went into a newly-remodelled building (now the UP Faculty of Arts) in 1902.

Dissolution and re-establishment, hopefully for good

Substantial remodelling of the interwar headquarters of the Sts Cyril and Methodius Theological Faculty had to wait until the years 1936–1937, when it was remodelled by the Olomouc builder František Macharáček – and a monument was dedicated upon its ceremonial reopening on 22 February 1937.

It remains to add that after the closing of all Czech universities by the Nazis on 17 November 1939, the Olomouc Hitlerjugend moved in, and the CMFT resided there from 1945 only until 1950, when the faculty was dissolved and its building “bequeathed” to the Faculty of Education. It was only in 1990 that the Baroque complex of the Olomouc Jesuits was returned to its spiritual mission as the seat of the Sts Cyril and Methodius Theological Faculty of Palacký University Olomouc.



Building of the Emperor Franz Joseph Theological Faculty and German Gymnazium in Olomouc in the 1880s, illustration by Rudolf Mather (1891–1975) from the memoirs of Julius Krick (1869–1939), *Stadt an der March* (Olmütz 1941, 1944)



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Genius loci...

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