
The 54th Annual Summer School Of Slavonic Studies Comes To Close

On September 26, 2010, in a ceremony held in the Great Hall of the famous Karolinum under the auspices of professor Petr Volf, prorector of Charles University, the 54th annual Summer School of Slavonic Studies came to its close. Organized by the Institute of Czech studies of the Charles University Faculty of Arts, this year's installment opened on July 31 and hosted 178 participants, 145 of them on site and 35 at distance, from 38 different countries.

"We are flattered by the interest in the course. We are happy to see that even though Czech might be just a language of a small nation in Central Europe, it is attractive enough for people from all over the world to dedicate it a month's worth of studying. I believe that they found Summer School to be time well spent and that they will return next year to expand on what they have learnt," said Jiří Hasil, the director of the Summer School and secretary of the Institute of Czech Studies. Courses were divided into four levels based on participants' skills. Beginners and lower intermediate students, who were first being introduced to Czech, were taught in English, German, French, and Spanish. Upper intermediate students could improve their Czech skills in language in use and conversation courses.



Advanced students took advantage of both language classes, a special history and culture seminar, and three lecture series. Two of them – a linguistic and a cultural history one – were taught in Czech. The third one focused on Czech history, arts and culture and was taught in English and German. Lecture series were conceived to reflect the contemporary developments in Czech humanities and social sciences.

Among the speakers who gave lectures to the international audience of Slavonic and Czech studies were the writer Ivan Klíma and a number of excellent scholars working both at the Faculty of Arts and elsewhere at the University, and in other academic and cultural institutions.

Classes were accompanied by a range of cultural and social activities, including concerts, trips and walks around Prague. As for trips, students visited Mariánské Lázně, Pilsen, Litoměřice or Liberec and commemorated anniversaries of the authors K. H. Mácha (Litoměřice, Bezděz) and Karel Čapek (Strž), the president T. G. Masaryk (Lány) and the composer G. Mahler (Jihlava). Afternoon walks included a tour of Vyšehrad, a walk in the footsteps of Franz Kafka and visits to museums and galleries, such as the Theatre of the Estates, the Vítkov monument or the Kampa Museum. In the evenings, film were screened, music performed and students were taught Czech folk songs.

Summer School's participants have gained knowledge of Czech language, literature, culture and history. Our wish was for Czech language to become a universal means of communication, to become a language of mutual friendship, tolerance and understanding. We believe that our wish once again came true.

For more information:

Václav Hájek
Department of External Relations
Charles University
tel: +420 224 491 248
e-mail: pr@cuni.cz

Translation: Jaroslav Švelch