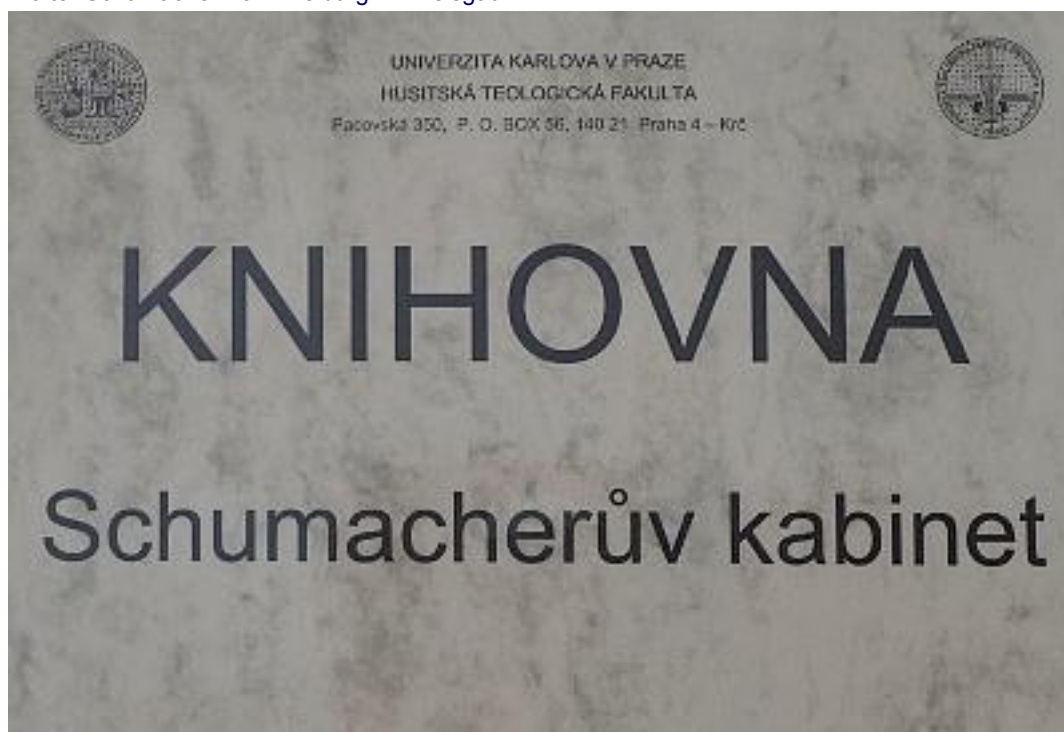

To Build A Library: Introducing the Schumacher Cabinet of the Hussite Theological Faculty

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“This is the place”, said the Dean of the Hussite Theological Faculty professor Jan B. Lášek and started a small informal meeting of the management of the faculty with the Rector of Charles University, professor Václav Hampl. The meeting took part in a work environment: while the officials discussed the library, librarians were in midst of entering thousands of books into the library's catalogue. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce a unique collection of over 6,000 books that will become the Schumacher Cabinet, bearing a name of the original owner and creator of this collection, professor Walter Schumacher from Freiburg im Breisgau.



“We learned about the possibility of the purchase of the collection from professor Shumacher's estate about two years ago”, said Mr. Lášek. “We are very grateful that the management of Charles University supported the purchase as a part of the development project running at the Hussite Theological Faculty with the sum of 25,000 euro, which is very generous, especially in the current economic situation. We truly acknowledge the importance of such a gesture.”



prof. ThDr. Jan B. Lášek, the Dean of the Charles University Hussite Theological Faculty
Before the purchase, a number of visits had taken place, during which the value of the Schumacher library had been appraised and its possible contribution to students and experts in the field examined. After the contract had been signed, the books were moved to their new place in February 2009.



The unique collection was then introduced to the guests by PhDr. Jiří Pavlík, Ph.D., vice dean for development:

“A notable German scholar, art historian and archaeologist professor Walter Schumacher was born in 1913 in Cologne and died in 2004 in Freiburg. The book collection in his estate, noted both for its quality and importance, spans 6,000 volumes of scholarship from the fields of Christian archaeology, early Christian and Byzantine art, theology and classical philology. We wanted to maintain the collection's integrity, so we placed them into a separate section of the faculty's library and the Schumacher Cabinet was born. The collection will be a valuable asset for scholars and students from the whole university. As of now, about two thirds of the books have been cataloged. Cataloging should be done and the cabinet should be opened to public at the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year.”



The Schumacher Cabinet will fill the gap in the availability of scholarly works after the year 1949, when purchases of particular books from the fields of theology, history, archaeology and philology and, more importantly, of books from certain editions or publishing houses, were banned. The ban was in action for no less than 40 years. “This Cabinet is where many of these publications from the 1960's and 70's, previously unavailable in the Czech Republic, can be found. There are of course many standard books that each library has, but 70% of them are unique and rare items and we had to buy the whole collection. We will have things that are not available anywhere else and we are very happy for that.” “The university has provided you with only the most basic thing: the money”, said Rector of Charles University professor Václav Hampel. „But that is not enough; there is much more work to be done. I truly appreciate the enormous efforts of your team, which is far beyond the usual and without which this unique collection would not be here. This is an important asset for Charles University and the Hussite Theological Faculty and I hope the Cabinet will soon open for the public.”



professor Václav Hampl, Rector of Charles University

After looking at the Schumacher Cabinet, the rector visited the faculty's new lecture hall and two new reading rooms; all of these have undergone extensive reconstruction, during which the spaces were redesigned and equipped with ICT. Students and researchers can now take advantage of new furniture, lockers, copying machines, printers or Internet connection for laptops. The modernization of the premises and services of the Hussite Theological Faculty is a part of the development projects from 2008, 2009 and 2010, headed by the vice dean for development Mr. Jiří Pavlík.

(Marie Kohoutová)

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