A dream come true: the Faculty of Social Sciences presents new insignia

Twenty-five years after it was founded, the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University finally has its own insignia. So far, the students making their matriculation and graduation vows had to swear on the scepter borrowed from the Faculty of Arts.

The ceremony was hosted by Václav Moravec, graduate from the Faculty of Social Sciences and teacher at the Department of Journalism, and also one of the initiators of the fundraising campaign “Let’s Swear on Our Own”. The campaign started in spring 2017 at the crowdfunding portal Hithit and enabled the faculty to successfully complete the insignia project, started more than twenty years ago by then Dean, Professor Miloslav Petrusek.

The scepter consists of a globe resting on the fingertips of a human hand. Each finger is a symbol of one of the five branches of the faculty. “When I was working on the concept of the human palm holding the globe, I always came across the idea that there should be something more above the fingers. First I wanted to put a heart to this area, but then I moved it to the lower part, so you can insert your hand into it,” said the author of the scepter, academic sculptor Otmar Oliva. “On the inside of the heart, the signature of Miloslav Petrusek is engraved, out of gratitude felt by all his students,” added the author of the new insignia.

Then the packed Grand Hall of the Carolinum heard the speech of the current Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Jakub Končelík. "It's a big honor for us to present this new faculty scepter today. Why so much ado about it? Because its symbolic value is really high – it's one of the symbols of dignity that has always been part of the ceremonial traditions of European universities. We use two types of insignia at the university; for the attire of teachers, i.e. robes and medals of academic notables, suspended on the chains of dignity. Then there's the central insignia – the faculty scepter. Each faculty of Charles University has its own scepter, the only exception has so far been our Faculty of Social Sciences – we had to borrow the scepter from the Faculty of Arts. But no more – today our faculty finally gets our own sign of dignity. That's the reason of this celebration, and all this ado,” said the Dean.

Exhibition of the new insignia

The new insignia of the Faculty of Social Sciences – scepter and robe – will be on display at the exhibition in the Carolinum Vault, from Friday January 19 till Tuesday February 20. Also exhibited are the photographs documenting the manufacture of the scepter. The robe of the Faculty of Social Sciences was designed and made by Alena Zvolánková, graduate from the Department of Clothing Technology at the Technical University of Liberec and from the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University. Her gowns are already used by the beadles of Charles University Rectorate and several faculties. The gown for the Faculty of Social Sciences is unique because of its fully original design, made in cooperation with the faculty members and the author of the scepter, Otmar Oliva. The whole process of making of the faculty insignia is also documented in a new book “Let's Swear on Our Own”.

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