

## **Press release**

### **Workshop**

#### **Corruption - Clientelism - Crisis in Europe 1789-1989**

The working scientific meeting, which took place at the National Archives on 15 March 2024 and was co-organized not only by the host institution, but also by the Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS), the Institute of State and Law of CAS, the Faculty of Arts of Charles University and the Faculty of Arts of the University of South Bohemia, was devoted to a topic that is much discussed in journalism, but on the other hand, historical research in the Czech Republic is much less devoted to it. The meeting of historians with an archivist, a political scientist, a sociologist and lawyers, one of whom is a criminal law expert and the other a legal historian, proved to be very useful and, above all, necessary. Their methodological approaches were understandably different, which was reflected in differentiated interpretations and stimulating lively discussion.

Emil Voráček (Institute of History of the CAS) introduced his talk by asking why to deal with the issue of corruption and the genesis of the contemporary perception of corruption from the turn of the 18th-19th century to the present day. Jan Kober (Institute of State and Law of the CAS) followed up with a somewhat different perspective, namely that of corrupt practices through the lens of legal history. Kristýna Bašná (Institute of Sociology of the CAS) made a great contribution, we can say an intellectual refreshment, by focusing on the sociological perspective of corruption and clientelism. She drew on a number of her own researches in the Czech environment as well as on her experiences from research stays abroad. The political science perspective was brought by Vladimír Naxera (Faculty of Arts, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen). He shed light on the question of the changes in ideological discourses of corruption in the Czech Republic from the beginning of the transformation to the present and the continuity/discontinuity with previous developments and their different interpretations. Archivist and historian of economic history Pavel Dufek (National Archives) expanded the view of the research topic with profiles of papers presented at last year's international conference (September 2023) on corruption in Košice. An insightful commentary on the development of the definition of corruption in Czech (Czechoslovak) criminal law was given by Jaromír Hořák (Faculty of Law, Charles University).

A well-represented audience (more than forty guests) responded to the lively and polemical presentations of the participants and their discussions with questions and additions. The questions were mainly directed at the issue of perceptions of corruption and clientelism in society and hence in criminal law in different regimes. The issue of shifting the boundary between lobbyism and corruption was also addressed, as well as the behavior of elites in the transformation processes following system change.

The workshop (part of the project of the Strategy AV21 of the CAS, research programme "Resilient Society for the 21st Century. Potentials of Crisis and Effective Transformation") was a preparatory event for the forthcoming international conference of the same name, which will take place on 19-20 September 2024 at the National Archives and to which an invitation and Call for Papers will be published soon.

Emil Voráček