

THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON COURTS AND RESIDENCES
OF THE INSTITUTE OF HISTORY OF THE CZECH ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES

and

THE DEPARTMENT OF AUXILIARY HISTORICAL SCIENCES
AND ARCHIVE STUDIES OF MASARYK UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS

THE CENTRE FOR LEGAL HISTORY STUDIES OF THE INSTITUTE
OF HISTORY OF THE CZECH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
AND THE FACULTY OF LAW OF CHARLES UNIVERSITY -
DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL HISTORY OF THE FACULTY OF LAW
OF CHARLES UNIVERSITY

THE DEPARTMENT OF THEORY OF LAW AND LEGAL HISTORY
OF PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY OLOMOUC FACULTY OF LAW

in collaboration with

THE FACULTY OF LAW UNIVERSITY OF WEST BOHEMIA

THE FACULTY OF LAW COMENIUS UNIVERSITY BRATISLAVA

THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDIEVAL STUDIES,
CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY, VIENNA

are hosting

January 15-16, 2025

the international and interdisciplinary conference

LAW, POWER AND THE ROYAL COURT(S)
Networks of power and legal structures



INSTITUTE OF HISTORY

Czech Academy of Sciences



MUNI
ARTS Department of Auxiliary
Historical Sciences
and Archive Studies



FACULTY
OF LAW
Charles University



Faculty
of Law

Palacký University
Olomouc

The court is a complex historical phenomenon of “long duration” which can be studied from various perspectives, and it also provides an opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration between historians and jurists. So as to trace development trends and how they change, this international conference will cover a time span of centuries from the Middle Ages to the early modern period. The first subject area will be the court as a social space for exercising power and law. From this point of view, court society will be considered primarily as a collection of people structured and organised through legal and power relations in terms of rights and related expectations, and specifically hierarchical superiority and subordination. Unlike on the periphery, law and its practice within the court may be more open to observation. However, one must recognise, in retrospect, that extra-legal connections and contexts often played a role, too. In order to achieve a greater diversity that will allow us to formulate broader comparative conclusions, the conference programme shall not be limited to the rulers and those around them, but should also take reasonable account of the courts of the secular and spiritual elites. The second main area of interest shall be the important central, regional and local institutions personally and functionally linked to the feudal courts. These institutions both participated in legislation and jurisdiction and were also important nodal points in the flow of power and legal communication. Underlying the reflections on the conference theme is the insight of the eminent legal historian and medievalist, Van Caenegem, that legal rules are not so much a theoretical invention of jurists abstracting from reality and deriving standards from the principles of natural justice, but that rather they largely emerge as a result of conflicting interests and actions of influential groups at a certain moment after a point of equilibrium has been reached in society. It was these tensions that shaped the form of law in the past. These conclusions are confirmed by sociological approaches to law (e.g. Rudolf von Jhering). In a (legal) historical perspective, then, “law” and “power” need not represent two irreconcilable opposites, but they can rather be understood as mutually influencing social phenomena whose analysis in specific historical contexts and conflicts promises to bring scholarly benefits for historians and lawyers alike.

Based on the concept thus defined in the era of monarchy and on interdisciplinary focus, the international conference will address four core subject areas:

- the “anatomy” and (dis)continuity of official power
- the centre and periphery of governance
- gender in power and legal contexts
- the formal and informal ways and means of exercising power and law and their outcomes

Organisers:

JUDr. PhDr. Jakub Razim, Ph.D. et Ph.D.
Doc. Mgr. Dalibor Havel, Ph.D.
Doc. PhDr. Dana Dvořáčková-Malá, Ph.D.
PhDr. Jan Zelenka, Ph.D.
Doc. JUDr. Jiří Šouša, Ph.D.

Guarantors: Prof. PhDr. Lenka Bobková, CSc., Prof. PhDr. Josef Žemlička, DrSc.,
Prof. JUDr. Jan Kuklík, DrSc.

Presentation duration: max. 25 minutes

Conference languages: German, English

Venue: AKC Academic Conference Centre, Husova 4a, Prague 1
and the Zoom platform (hybrid form)

We plan to publish the papers from the conference in the academic journal *Mediaevalia Historica Bohemica*, and this will involve a peer-review process.

Deadline for sending applications: 30. 4. 2024

**Application: paper summary of maximum size of 1 standard page
(1800 characters including spaces)**

Notification of application acceptance by 31. 5. 2024

Contact address for sending the summary:

Mgr. Bc. Zuzana Vařáková, varakova@hiu.cas.cz, Secretary, DaR research centre

Image:

*Charter of King Wenceslaus II for Brno dated 25 February 1293
and seal obverse, AMB, A 1/1 Collection of Charters, Mandates and Letters,
inv. no. 38.*