

## EDITORIAL

This year, Czech lawyers are commemorating two important anniversaries: adoption of the General Civil Code in 1811, and foundation of the legal review *Právník* (The Lawyer) in 1861. Both events influenced the formation of modern Czech legal doctrine as heir of splendid medieval and renaissance traditions of our legal history.

The middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period when modern Czech legal terminology was created, particularly based on German legal language but also using some elements of ancient Czech legal language. A continuous need for Czech legal language in civil law after the adoption of the (Austrian) General Civil Code in 1811, in commercial law after the adoption of the (Austrian) General Commercial Code in 1863, or in criminal law after the adoption of the (Austrian) General Criminal Code in 1873, led to an explosion of thoughts regarding original Czech legal doctrine. The Lawyer became an important platform for the exchange of ideas and concepts of our national legal thinking. A need for an independent legal review written in the Czech language was very important for the development of a Czech national legal system before and particularly after the creation of the independent Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. *Právník* was then an important platform for development of the new democratic legal system. A focus on our legal problems led to a relative closeness of scientific exchange among Czech lawyers, while rather few foreign ideas were being given chance to be integrated into our legal community. Such an approach was quite natural during the Nazi occupation when such an exchange of Czech views and opinions was more acceptable than to adore Nazi legal doctrine. This trend continued, more or less, after the communist takeover in 1948. Until the 1960s, *Právník* was giving almost no space to foreign legal theories, except for Soviet ones. Also, articles written in Czech were inaccessible to foreign readers since the first summaries in foreign languages were introduced only in 1958.

The closed nature of Czech legal theory together with the relatively closed circle of potential readers of *Právník* did not change radically even after 1989 when our country returned to democracy. The openness to West European or American ideas was unilateral. Those were presented on the pages of *Právník* in order to introduce them to Czech readers and potentially to be used for transformation of our legal system. But again, a review appearing in Czech naturally did not have an internationally audible voice. Czech legal science remains unsatisfactorily tied to the international legal research community; this default

has become more urgent since the Czech Republic joined the European Union in 2004. On the national level, we no more question what the European law would bring to our legal system. The question now is rather how our legal system and doctrine might contribute to the European legal development.

Launching *Právník* back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was of course a privately funded initiative. Nowadays, the Institute of State and Law, a public research institution within the framework of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, is proud to have been the publisher of *Právník* for the last more than 50 years. To our knowledge, there is worldwide no other journal dedicated to legal theory and appearing for 150 years without interruption; within the Czech Academy of Sciences itself, there are other two very traditional journals, both of them in the field of natural sciences (*Živa*, and *Vesmír*), dating back to 1853 and 1871 respectively – however not without interruptions.

The Institute of State and Law intends to celebrate the anniversary of *Právník* by adding to its value for the future. That is why we are now launching, with reference to the long tradition of *Právník*, a new supplement entitled *The Lawyer Quarterly (TLQ)*.

TLQ intends to become a truly international journal enhancing the cross-border exchange of legal thought. Its language shall be English, however with the possibility to publish individual articles in other internationally acceptable languages, too. In which case an English summary shall always be provided. We hope this approach shall help to bring about a circle of international contributors and readers so that we might be able to witness a communication of substantial ideas relating to specific legal problems and institutes – not mere comparative studies, not mere information on domestic law addressed to foreign readers. By nature of things, TLQ shall expectedly focus on problems felt in (and authors originating from) Central and Eastern Europe: It is commonplace that countries in the said geographical region share much in their history, in their legal culture, in their situation in respect of European structures. Let us regard this not only as a fact, but also as a value, and try to make the most of it so as to expand something like a regionally based pool of contributions to law theory.

If the scheme works, we are ready to deploy TLQ from the form of supplement as it is now presented to a journal of its own, and providing considerably more space for authors.

It is our dream to see this happen, and we keenly invite colleagues from other countries to join, and to support this effort.

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