

owing to the insight of the framers of the Constitution, who took part in the conference – revealed some of their causes and roots. However, it could not entirely pay off the debt consisting in the insufficient explanatory report of the Constitution, mentioned for instance by Jan Kudrna, and in the generally sketchy information on arguments and stances that formed the shape of the institutes and provisions of the Constitution. On the other hand, it also offered noteworthy contributions regarding topics that had not and could not have been thought out at the time of adoption of the Constitution, such as the implications of the membership of Czech Republic in the European Union or the impact of the case-law of the Constitutional Court. The output of the conference will be a collection of contributions by the speakers as well as other participants of the conference. It will be published in the first half of 2013.

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Seminar of the Charles University Law Faculty and the Russian Law Academy of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation, Moscow, 18–22 June 2013

On 18–22 June 2013, the Russian Law Academy of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in Moscow hosted a research seminar as part of cooperation between this educational institution and the Law Faculty of Charles University in Prague. The cooperation project started more than ten years ago and consists of the exchange of academics and students as well as of the organizing of research seminars and subsequent publishing of papers delivered during the respective seminar in the form of a collective monograph.

The Russian Law Academy of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation is an educational institution in the position of a university. Its headquarters is located in Moscow and branches are placed in larger cities of the Russian Federation. The Academy is headed by its Rector; individual departments are divided according to traditional branches of law and subjects. The Academy provides legal education in the form of Master's and Doctoral studies within particular subject-areas of law. It is one of more than 1,100 higher education institutions focusing on law which exist in Russia. This number seems to be quite high considering that the population of Russia is around 140 million; on the one hand, such a high number of educational institutions focusing on law may create a competitive environment, but, on the other hand, it may lead to a certain devaluation and variable quality of legal education provided.

The Charles University Law Faculty started its cooperation with the Russian Academy in 2002. Until 2011 the cooperation had applied just to its affiliation in St. Petersburg (North-West affiliation) consisting of the exchange of teachers and students and organizing research seminars once a year in Prague and St. Petersburg interchangeably. Papers from those seminars were regularly published in collective monographs; however, it should be noted that recently the publication has become stagnant. In 2012, the Russian delegation to the research seminar in Prague was composed of teachers from the Moscow Headquarters, and the experience inspired them to extend the cooperation to the centre of the Academy.

This year, the research seminar was held in Moscow with a traditional agenda. Members of the delegation of the Prague Law Faculty delivered their papers in their respective expertise subject-area; their primary focus was on legal issues topical and extensively debated in the Czech Republic. In

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subsequent discussions, they responded to questions from the audience and/or reacted to “comparative” notes raised by Russian participants in the seminar. The Charles University Law Faculty was represented by seven papers out of a total of twenty one presentations. The language of the seminar was Russian.

Professor Aleš Gerloch, Dean of the Law Faculty and Head of the Department of Legal Theory and Legal Doctrine and the Department of Constitutional Law, delivered his paper entitled “The recent status of the constitutional system of the Czech Republic and prediction of its development”; he outlined several theses and ideas *de constitutione ferenda* with respect to selected and traditionally perceived constitutional institutions, also in relation to the membership of the CR in the European Union. He focused on the traditional elements of a parliamentary form of government, which appears in the Czech Republic to be gradually complemented with features of different systems, namely quasi-presidential or chancellor-type, resulting in a hybrid system where it may become rather difficult to rely on constitutional traditions and custom developed in different constitutional circumstances.

Dr. Jiří Hřebejk, member of the Department of Constitutional Law, built his follow-up presentation on his paper delivered last autumn. The topic was the amendment of the Constitution providing for a direct election of the President of the Republic and the implementing Act No. 275/2012 Sb.; in Moscow, he outlined problems arising from this law and revealed during the first direct election of the head of the Czech Republic (e.g. checking the data contained in obligatory petition sheets supporting a particular candidate’s standing, time-limits for judicial review, monitoring the funding of campaigns, etc.). Discussion following the presentation brought in ideas and experience with respect to the direct election in the Russian Federation, which is 216 times larger than the CR, and with more than 14 times the population of the CR (and correspondingly more voters).

Dr. Radovan Suchánek from the Department of Constitutional Law, focused on a topical issue of “The constitutional and legal regulation of activities of political parties in the Czech Republic”. He pointed at the basic legal regulation contained in Act No. 424/1991 Sb., as amended, and at some disputed provisions of the law whose meaning should be determined by interpretation. Special attention was drawn to the funding of political parties.

Professor Hana Markova, Vice-Dean of the Law Faculty and member of the Department of Financial Law and Financial Science, delivered a paper entitled “Supervision over the State Budget”. In her speech she tackled debates on budget deficits in the EU as well as in the Czech Republic; then she focused on the so-called “financial constitution”, a draft of which has been considered within the legislative procedure and whose main motivation should be to stabilize the state budget.

Professor Pavel Štruma, Vice-Dean and Head of the Department of International Law, in his paper entitled “Tasks of the UN Commission for International Law” dealt with the codification and development of international law. A significant part of work of the Commission has been to prepare and propose international instruments reacting to the contemporary development of international law. Some topics are selected by the Commission itself, some are referred to the General Assembly or to the UN Economic and Social Council. After the Commission has completed its work on a particular topic, the UN General Assembly usually convenes an international conference of plenipotentiaries. Its task is to draft an international convention. Some of these conventions form the basis upon which national legislation is built to regulate respective international relations. The second major area in the work of the Commission comprises unilateral legal acts of states, rights to diplomatic protection, conventional reservations, responsibility of international organizations, sharing natural resources of states and fragmentation of international law linked with difficulties resulting from the diversification and development of international law.

Dr. Josef Staša, member of the Department of Administrative Law and Administrative Science, entitled his presentation, and focused on, “Contemporary tendencies of the development of forms of administrative activities in the CR.” This topic gave rise to numerous positive reactions from the part of the audience representing the Department of Administrative Law of the Russian Academy; Dr. Staša responded to many questions relating to the activities of bodies within individual segments

of public administration. The discussion proved that the issues, as well as the search for their solution, are identical in both the CR and RF.

The paper by **Associate Professor Věra Štangová**, Vice-Dean and member of the Department of Labour Law and Social Security Law, focused on “Contemporary tendencies in the development of forms of labour law”. In her analysis the author emphasised a coordinating role of international organizations and other institutions with respect to the codification of labour law in the Czech Republic.

All papers delivered by participants in the seminar representing both the Czech Law Faculty and the Russian Law Academy, along with selected papers from the seminars held in the past, should be soon published in a collective Czech-Russian monograph.

Besides the two-day seminar at the Russian Law Academy of the Justice Ministry of the Russian Federation, the participants were shortly hosted by another educational institution – the Russian Academy of National Economy and Civil Service of the President of the Russian Federation; its representatives showed deep interest in the mode of teaching law in Prague, and in establishing closer relations and starting cooperation with the Charles University Law Faculty.

Similar events are traditionally accompanied by a cultural programme aimed at better understanding of the host country. Within the visit of the Czech delegation of the Law Faculty in Moscow, the Russian party prepared a visit to Kuskovo, a small Moscow castle, and to the town of Suzdal. The Kuskovo Castle used to be a summer house of Earl Sheremetyev, one of the most significant figures in Russia in the 18th century. The town of Suzdal (entered in the UNESCO list of memorial places) served as a spiritual centre of Ancient Russia; from the 11th century the town possessed an unofficial status of the capital of the Russian Orthodox Church, where the mentality and nature of the Russian people were formed.

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