

# CHRONICLE

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## CIVIL SERVANTS UNDER CHANGING REGIMES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, 1900–1950

In the first half of the twentieth century, Europe went through dynamic and extensive changes, which naturally also affected one of the key components of public politics and city administration – civil servants. As a result of many political changes and border changes, many states had to deal with numerous problems connected with the process of ensuring the national and political reliability of civil servants, the integration of the official apparatus into new conditions and the forced migration of civil servants unwilling to continue or disavowed in that process.

As a result of the increased attention paid by historians to these and similar problems, historians from the Institute of Social Sciences CSPS of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in cooperation with Košice City Archives, Ján Bocatius Public Library and Košice Historical Society decided to organize the international conference “Civil Servants under Changing Regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, 1900–1950”. The conference was held on 25–26 April 2023 in the Ján Bocatius Public Library in Košice.

The two-day meeting was opened with an introductory keynote lecture by the main speaker of the conference, Martin Klečacký (Masaryk Institute and Archives of the CAS), which was centered to the issue of the administrative reform in 1927 as a new model for a unified Czechoslovak Administration. The subsequent programme of the conference led to particular topics within a framework of English and Slovakian/Czech session blocks.

The introductory session was focused on the problem of the adaptability of civil servants to the changing world, within which Attila Simon (Forum Institute for Minority Studies, Šamorín) presented his lecture dedicated to civil servants of Hungarian nationality in the first months after the creation of Czechoslovak republic. Martin Furmanik (Museum of Spiš of Spišská Nová Ves) devoted himself to the issue of public administration and its personnel in the region of Spiš after the creation of Czechoslovakia. Zsolt Szabó (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca) introduced the issue of the officialdom of the Maramureş County between 1845 and 1944. And the session before the discussion was closed by Veronika Szeghy-Gayer (Institute of Social Sciences CSPS SAS) with her paper on former Hungarian civil servants in the new Czechoslovak state administration in the years 1919–1924.

In the second session, dedicated to the issue of civil servants and the question of refugees in post-World-War-I Hungary, Balász Ablonczy (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest) focused on refugee and repatriated civil servants in Pest-Polis-Solt-Kiskun County after World War I. Tamás Borbély (Pál Kovács Library, Győr) continued with a presentation on refugee teachers of the Treaty of Trianon in the city of Győr. And the two authors Péter Homor (Széchenyi István University, Győr) and Róbert Balogh (National University of Public Service, Budapest) opened the issue of foresters – linking to the question of refugees and land-use programmes post-World War I in Hungary.

The next session, on the question of civil servants in fictional works and ego-documents, started with the presentation of Therese Garstenauer (University of Vienna/European University Institute, Florence) on government employees as authors and protagonists of fictional works. A pair of authors, Veronika Kršková (National Archives, Prague) and Vojtěch Kessler (Masaryk Institute and Archives of the CAS), presented a contribution on the gendarmerie service in the interwar and wartime period in the memoirs of Karel Machart. And Andrea Lőrincz (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest) dealt with the issue of women in the limelight – the accountability of state-employed actresses after World War II at the national theatre of Budapest.

Within the session “New Regime – New People”, Zdeňka Kokošková (National Archives, Prague) and Monika Václavíková (National Archives, Prague) presented an article on German officials of the Nazi-occupied administration of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Adriana Kičková (Department of History, Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra) outlined the problem of perceptions of national identity in the period of autonomy in her presentation about the Slovak school system and Czech teachers. Pavol Matula (Faculty of Education, Comenius University, Bratislava) introduced the fates of the mayors of the village

of Čierne, a locality in the Kysuce region divided by the border and the regime in the years 1938–1939. At the end of the session Robert Árpáš (Department of History, Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra) presented a contribution about the struggle for the position of government commissioner in the region of Upper Nitra under the new regime and new offices. The evening programme of the first day of the conference was devoted to a guided tour of the Historical Town Hall in Košice.

The second day of the conference was opened with a session on career paths in changing regimes with the report of Gábor Egry (Institute of Political History, Budapest) on career patterns from minority to majority and majority to minority in post–World-War-I Romania. Szabolcs Czáboczky (E tv s Loránd University, Budapest) outlined the life trajectories of mayors of the Zipserdeutsche Partei in interwar Spiš. Eszter Tarnai (E tv s Loránd University, Budapest) in her article explained the transition of the apparatus of food provisioning in Hungary after World War II and the session was closed by Ondrej Ficéri (Institute of Social Sciences CSPS SAS) with his case study of the career of Jozef Kohout in the years 1896–1968 with the intention to identify political opportunism in Central Europe.

In the second session, Zuzana Tokárová (Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Pavol Jozef University in Košice) presented research outputs on the issue of the social mobility of civil servants in Slovakia in the years 1938–1945. In the following contribution, Patrícia Fogelová (Institute of Social Sciences CSPS SAS) focused on the period between the Holocaust and the communist regime and presented the issue of an official in Southern Slovakia in that period. Gabriel Szeghy (Košice City Archives) finished the session with a paper in which he mapped changes in the Košice City Archives in the first half of twentieth century in relation to archive employees as civil servants.

The final session was oriented towards the issue of career paths and the building of the administrative apparatus in a changing regime, within which Daniel Harvan (Slovak Mining Museum, Banská Štiavnica) opened the question of the integration of the official apparatus of the State Mining Directorate in Banská Štiavnica between 1919 and 1921. Tomáš Kowalski (Monument Board of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava) focused on the issue of career development between 1919 and 1945 among monument protection officers. Following that, the last report of the conference was a presentation by Jozef Pavlov (Elementary School of J. Alexy, Zvolen) pointing to the life trajectory and career of the director of the Zvolen grammar school, Stanislav Kovanda, in the interwar period and memories of him.

Turbulent changes of regimes affecting Central and Eastern Europe in the first half of the twentieth century meant that the public administrations and bureaucracy went through similar processes in individual countries during this period. The mechanism of the exchange of officials and the related question of loyalty to the newly established regimes became one of the key aspects of country management. In this regard, the international scope of the conference provided by its organizers afforded a great opportunity to comprehend the process of transformation that the organization of public administration underwent. Uncovering the international context within the presented contributions not only stimulated an engaging dialogue but was also helpful in answering previously unanswered questions related to the phenomenon of civil servants. Many of the indicated problems present an inspiration and an impetus for further historical research.

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## SUMMER SCHOOL OF HISTORICAL SOURCES FOR FAMILY RESEARCH AND GENDER HISTORY

One of the projects in which the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice participated in 2023 was the Visegrad Fund Little (Big) Women, Summer School of Historical Sources for Family Research and Gender History, whose main organiser is the Institute of Historical Sciences, Faculty of Philosophy and Science, Silesian University in Opava. The partners of the project are the Institute of History and Archival Studies, Pedagogical University in Krakow, The Department of History, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and the Humanities Faculty in Lviv of the Ukrainian Catholic University. The aim of the project is to promote cooperation between the project partners, to increase student and academic staff mobility and to develop research cooperation in the field of gender and family history in pre-modern Central Europe. In order to achieve the above-mentioned goals, the first expert meeting was held in Opava in March 2023, where the participants presented the results of their research in the field of historical sources for research on women in the pre-modern cities of Central Europe and discussed the possibilities of presenting them at the forthcoming summer school. The main event of the project, the Summer School of Historical Sources for Family Research and Gender history, took place on 11–15 September 2023 at the Institute of Historical Sciences of the Silesian University in Opava. About fifteen students and eight academic staff from four countries took part in the event.

The first day of the summer school started with a welcome meeting, where the organisers presented the history of the Faculty of Philosophy and Science in Opava and the possibilities of the Erasmus programme for students. On the second day, two lectures were held in one of the oldest rooms in the historical building of the faculty, beginning with a welcome address by the dean of the faculty, Prof. Irena Korbelařová.

The first lecture, held by Hana Komárková of the Silesian University in Opava, focused on the topic of the oath in the urban environment of late medieval and early modern Silesian cities (“The Oath in Central European Urban Environment (from the Late Medieval Era till the End of the Early Modern Era)”). Hana Komárková presented a terminological and methodological overview of the topic of oaths with illustrations of sources and pictures, depicting men and women in various situations related to oath swearing. From the perspective of gender history the lecturer focused on oaths concerning women and examined two types of oaths – oaths mentioning women and oaths for women. The lecturer showed many examples of oaths taken by women in different positions and social functions. The long period of research gives an opportunity to explore how the oath has changed over the centuries.

Oleksander Zaitsev of the Catholic University of Lviv gave an online lecture entitled “Legal Status of Women in the Kingdom of Poland (from Speculum Saxonum to Legal Treatises of the Humanist Era)”. The aim of the lecture was to discuss the legal position of women in the Saxon Mirror and Magdeburg Law, focusing mainly on the women in the cities of the Kingdom of Poland. The lecturer and students discussed various aspects of women’s lives and legal norms concerning property, marital status and childbirth.

During the afternoon programme the participants visited the State District Archives in Opava, where a presentation on the archives, its sources and digitization was given.

The second day of the summer school began with a lecture by me myself, Mária Fedorčáková of the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, with the title “Women in the Late Medieval Confraternities: A Case Study of the Matris Misericordiae Confraternity in Bardejov”. I started with a general overview of the medieval confraternities with special emphasis on the development of the lay confraternities in Hungary. The analysis of the main source – the account and membership book of the confraternity of the Mother of Mercy in Bardejov showed that two thirds of the members of the confraternity were women. The lecture focused on possibilities of research on women in lay confraternities, and more generally, on their position in late medieval urban society. The analysis of the records in the account and membership book shows that despite the membership of women in lay confraternities, they were rather invisible, and we know even less about their activities.

Jarosław Pietrzak of the Pedagogical University in Krakow enjoyed interest in his lecture on the abbesses of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the eighteenth century (“She-Wolf with Pastoral: The Abbesses from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as Defenders of Monasteries in the Eighteenth Century”). The lecturer borrowed the term “she-wolf” from English literature to describe the activities of powerful women from Catholic spiritual orders who were represented in pictorial sources with insignia similar to the bishop’s pastoralia, the symbol of pastoral leadership. The author focused on monastic chronicles, which contain not only the history of the monasteries, but also recipes and gossip. He dealt with the role of chronicles as collective diaries by stressing the importance of gossip and anecdotes. The analysis of the chronicles shows the competencies and duties of the mother abbess. Another point of the lecture was the social composition of the monastery and the role of the abbess in times of peace and war.

In the afternoon the students from Ukraine gave a presentation on the current situation of women in the Ukrainian army and appealed for support. This was followed by an excursion to the regional archives in Opava.

The third day of the Summer School was dedicated to excursions and building relationships. The first place on the map was the Obecní dům, which offered various exhibitions. One of them was about the history of the city of Opava from its beginnings to the twentieth century. The second exhibition was about the cuisine in aristocratic seats at the end of the Middle Ages. This was followed by a visit to the former Dominican monastery and the Church of St Wenceslas, now rebuilt as the Centre for Contemporary Art – Dům umění, where the medieval church’s history is combined with new art exhibitions. In the afternoon, the participants of the summer school took part in an excursion to the nearby Raduň Chateau, a beautiful classicist castle. The farewell banquet was opened with a quiz on Czech history and culture and continued in a friendly atmosphere.

The summer school, as well as the whole Visegrad Project, offered great opportunities for students and academics to strengthen academic mobility and contacts, as well as to present the results of research. Besides the summer school event, the publication of a textbook remains one of the main objectives of the project.

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