

Igor Ivan, Jiří Kovář

The status of Ostrava among the large Czech cities according to the results of the 2011 census

This paper presents an analysis of the results of the 2011 census in Ostrava, including a comparison of these results with the data for Prague, Brno, Plzeň and Olomouc. The analysis and comparison are situated within the wider context of historical developments for the monitored indicators. The paper reveals a key underlying trend as Ostrava becomes increasingly similar to the other large cities while also experiencing a process of demographic shrinkage.

Martin Juřica

State cultural policy and its impact on literary and artistic life in Ostrava during the 1970s and 1980s

The change of political direction that followed the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968 placed the artistic community in a new situation. The policy of 'normalization', which was applied with particular harshness in Ostrava, removed the former protagonists of the reform movement from public life, replacing them with politically reliable figures. The authorities launched an exemplary crackdown on awkward publications such as the magazine 'Red Flower' ('Červený květ') and closed down galleries of sculptures from symposia held in 1967 and 1967 because they contravened the dictates of socialist realism. However, most artists and cultural workers attempted to find a workable modus vivendi with the regime. An increasing number of literary works turned to historical or folklore-based themes, and lyrical poetry was also viewed as politically unproblematic. An interesting scene grew up around an association known as the Club of Friends of Art. It was not until the late 1980s that a new generation of Ostrava artists created an independent scene consciously distancing itself from official cultural production.

Jana Prchalová

The persecution of 'kulaks' in the Ostrava region and the case of the Pravda brothers from Kunčice nad Ostravicí

The totalitarian communist regime's persecution of 'kulaks' – wealthy inhabitants of rural areas – also affected the industrial Ostrava region in the 1950s. On the instructions of the Ostrava city authorities, local and municipal councils within the Ostrava district drew up lists of 'kulaks', who were then subjected to economic and social discrimination. These so-called 'class enemies' included the brothers František and Metoděj Pravda, the pre-war owners of the chateau, estate and brickworks in Kunčice nad Ostravicí. The brothers were falsely accused of deliberately sabotaging the economy of the state and failing to comply with compulsory supply arrangements; in 1955 they were found guilty and sentenced to lengthy prison terms and the confiscation of their property. Most of their assets and land went to the state for purposes of building the NHKG steelworks in Ostrava-Kunčice.

Jozef Šerka

The public finances of Moravian Ostrava during the Nazi occupation

The city of Moravian Ostrava achieved annual budget surpluses until 1942. This was primarily due to the city's ability to increase revenues from municipal tax surcharges and fees and by channelling the profits of city-owned companies into the budget. Thanks to these high revenue levels, it was possible to increase certain items of expenditure up until the beginning of 1941, mainly to cover the wages of city officials and manual workers. In 1943 there was a sharp downturn in revenues due to the abolition of several taxes on which municipal surcharges had also been levied; in 1944 operating expenditure was reduced accordingly.

Investments remained at a relatively high level until 1941 (construction of municipal apartment blocks, roads and sewers); this came to a halt when a ban on most construction activities was introduced. The city continued to invest mainly in building civil defence structures against air raids. The savings were channelled into the purchase of real estate (mostly Jewish-owned property) and the exceptional repayment of municipal debts.

Jakub Gryžboň

Road transport-related professions in the Ostrava region, 1918–1938

This paper maps the range of road transport-related professions in the Ostrava region in the early days of motorized road vehicles; some of these professions required a special licence, while others were open to anybody. The article begins by briefly outlining the sources and literature used. It then moves on to trace the beginnings of motorized road transport in the region and the development of driving and road traffic regulations. The main part of the paper focuses on two professional associations in Ostrava – the Association of Road Transport Professionals and the Association for Public Passenger and Goods Transport, whose members were involved in passenger transport (motorized taxis) and freight transport. This section describes the emergence of the individual professions, maximum fees, public taxi ranks, the numbers of taxi drivers and goods vehicle drivers in Ostrava, the vehicles used, and the eventual abolition of the licensing system.

Lenka Černíková

On the production of Bohuslav Martinů's stage works in Ostrava

This article represents a brief commemoration of this major Czech composer as part of the Year of Czech Music 2014. The author presents little-known information on Martinů's visits to the Ostrava region in the early 1920s with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. The paper also examines the composer's 1927 correspondence with the conductor and director of the Ostrava opera Jaroslav Vogel, before moving on to discuss the performance of several of Martinů's works in Ostrava after 1945, including an overview of productions of his operas at the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre.

Blažena Przybylová, Jozef Šerka

Changing street names in Mariánské Hory

The paper brings a brief overview of changing names of streets and public areas in the Mariánské Hory district of Ostrava from the establishment of the cadastral district in 1901 to the present day. The first part of the article focuses on the factors which influenced the process of change – both factors stemming from within the municipality (primarily the growth in population, construction of housing, and the development of the road network) and also factors which had an effect on the entire city within its historic boundaries (the merging of municipalities, plus socio-political changes with nationwide impact). The second part of the article consists of an alphabetical list of the names of streets and public areas, both existing and defunct, including explanations; the list is compiled on the basis of archive materials, printed street indexes, address books and map sources.

Karel Jiřík

The role of the Ostrava deputies Petr Cingr and Arnošt Berner in the largest obstruction to the business of the House of Deputies of the Vienna Imperial Council in 1897

By the end of the 19th century, the Vienna parliament was the scene of frequent political, national and linguistic conflicts which often grew to huge proportions. Parliamentary business was frequently paralyzed by 'obstructions'; these were an effective tactic of parliamentary

opposition, and their aim was to prevent the parliament from being able to perform its basic legislative tasks and other functions. This paper describes the largest of these ‘obstructions’, which took place on 26–27 November 1897 as a result of the approval of a new set of procedural rules; order ultimately had to be restored by the police. Key figures in the ‘obstruction’ were two social democratic deputies from Ostrava – Petr Cingr and Arnošt Berner. The concluding part of the paper summarizes the public reaction to these parliamentary upheavals.

Romana Rosová

Why the chateau in Ostrava-Kunčice no longer exists

The paper traces the fate of one of the few chateaux that existed within the city of Ostrava, now unfortunately no longer standing. This Baroque structure was the result of a reconstruction of an earlier Renaissance chateau in the early 17th century, and it was one of the city’s best-preserved chateaux. When the Kunčice estate was confiscated from its owners (the Pravda brothers) in 1948, the chateau gradually fell into disrepair. Up to 1989 it was owned by the NHKG steelworks; it was used as a restaurant and a civil defence storage facility. The steelworks at least carried out basic maintenance work, but from 1991 onwards the owners stopped maintaining the site at all. The chateau went through various changes of ownership by companies using it for real estate speculation. In 1999 the building was badly damaged by a fire, and the owners attempted to have it removed from the list of cultural monuments to enable it to be demolished. Despite opposition from heritage experts, its protected status was eventually removed in 2010, and the chateau was demolished.

Zbyněk Moravec

Waste disposal in medieval Ostrava

Archeological surveys have revealed that waste disposal in medieval Ostrava took place at four types of location. Primarily waste was thrown into pits which were dug expressly for this purpose, and which were often lined with timber planks. Secondly, waste was sometimes thrown into pits that were originally dug for other purposes. The third type of waste disposal site were areas situated in public places (today’s Muzejní St., Masaryk Square and near the old town walls in Pivovarská St.). Here surveys have revealed the presence of household waste, such as wooden and ceramic pots, tiles, tools and other equipment, items of clothing; manufacturing waste, such as slag, pieces of leather, animal bones (indicating the activities of blacksmiths, leatherworkers and butchers); and rubble (mainly dating back to the period after a fire in 1556). Waste could also be transported outside the city for disposal (the fourth type of site), or it could be covered with a layer of earth.

Gabriela Pelikánová

Not every region has its Sprušil

The first curator of the collections at Ostrava’s ‘House of Art’ gallery, Alois Sprušil (1872–1946), made a significant contribution to the artistic and cultural life of the city and the entire region. Sprušil was among the closest friends of František Jureček (1868–1925), a patron of the arts who left his collection of 122 works to the Association for the Construction and Maintenance of an Art Pavilion in Moravian Ostrava. Sprušil’s career was launched with the opening of the House of Art in 1926. Thanks to his outstanding gift for organization, his twenty years at the gallery saw a wide range of high-quality exhibitions (including the works of Václav Radimský, Jan Zrzavý, Václav Špála, Josef Šíma, Jindřich Štýrský and Toyen), with the gallery’s stocks growing to over 2100 items. During the 1920s and 1930s Ostrava’s House of Art became the second most prestigious gallery in the country (after the National Gallery in Prague).

Jindra Biolková, Petr Kašing

The mining expert Karel Frič and his times

The mining engineer Karel Frič (1857–1945) was not only an expert on mining, but also a Czech patriot who helped to build Czech educational and community institutions during a period of Germanization and Polonization in Silesia. In 1880, after graduating from the mining academies in Leoben and Příbram, Frič began work as a supervisor at a mine in Lubná near Rakovník, and in 1885 he was relocated to the Bettina colliery in the Silesian town of Doubrava. In 1893 he became the site manager at the Eleonora colliery, and in 1905 he was promoted to the post of mine manager for the Doubrava section at the Vítkovice Coal Mining Company. From 1907 to his retirement in 1930 Frič held the position of superintendent mining inspector. He was very active in various patriotic and professional associations, as well as in local politics, serving as the mayor of Orlová from 1910 to 1913. In 1929 the mining academy (VŠB) in Příbram awarded him an honorary doctorate in mining sciences in recognition of his contribution to the field.

Jaroslava Novotná

The woolworkers' guild recognizes the honourable origins of the wife of the master woolworker Jiřík Zámotný

The article reprints a Czech-language entry in the oldest surviving city chronicle, held at the Ostrava City Archive. The entry concerns a meeting of Ostrava's woolworkers' guild on 7 February 1661, at which the members recognized the honourable origins of the wife of the master woolworker Jiřík Zámotný. The introduction to the article outlines the development of historical research into the social situation in Moravian Ostrava in the second half of the 17th century, including the development of manufacturing trades. The paper presents information on the woolworkers and the activities of the guild at the time – particularly the guild members' duty to uphold the guild's honour, discipline and moral conduct. These issues, and other contraventions, were discussed at guild meetings.

Eva Rohlová

The first proposal for a new building zone for the city of Moravian Ostrava in 1876

The article contains a Czech translation of a German report submitted by the municipal council of Moravian Ostrava to the district directorate in Místek on 15 June 1876 outlining the first proposal for the delineation of a new building zone for the city. The report characterized the cadastral area of the city outside its central part and described the changes that had occurred since the start of the industrial boom in the first half of the century. In the opinion of the municipal council, the only suitable area for further expansion of the city was the zone between the city centre, the industrial communities of Vítkovice and Přívoz, and the settlement of Fifejdy near Mariánské Hory. Due to frequent flooding, the council noted that the north-eastern part of the city's cadastral area (near the Ostravice river) should not be included in the building zone. The report also emphasized the necessity to protect the city's buildings and industrial facilities against the effects of ground subsidence caused by coal mining. After protracted negotiations, the proposal was eventually approved in 1891.