

The beer trade and inn-keeping in the Ostrava region through the 19th century

Radoslav Daněk

This study focuses on the beer trade and the inn-keeping profession in Ostrava and the surrounding area throughout the 19th century. The author examines the practical impacts of the liberalizing reforms of the trade introduced in 1848, the new trade regulations in 1859, and the abolition (in 1869) of the system based on exclusive rights to sell alcoholic beverages, which was replaced by a system of provincial laws. The abolition of historical privileges and duties represented a definitive liberalization of the beer trade and introduced a system based on competition, in which inn-keepers played an important role as intermediaries between producers and consumers. In the last decades of the 19th century, inn-keepers and the holders of inn-keeping licences took maximum advantage of their special position. However, fierce competition among breweries led to attempts at forming cartels; this had a major impact on the inn-keeping trade at the turn of the 20th century.

The beginnings of street lighting in Moravian Ostrava (1836–1918)

Jozef Šerka

The first public street lighting in Moravian Ostrava used oil lamps, and was installed in 1836–1837. Kerosene was used for the first time in 1863. Gas lamps were introduced in 1870, followed by electric lighting in 1898; all three types of lighting were used simultaneously until 1918. In terms of operating costs, the cheapest form of lighting was kerosene, while the most expensive to run were the electric arc lamps. Electric lighting only became widespread shortly before the First World War, when more efficient lightbulbs were developed. However, gas lamps were still predominant. There was a fixed operating cost per lamp, set by agreement with the (privately owned) gasworks and power plant; the cost did not change significantly throughout the period under investigation.

Street lighting was an important feature of the modern city; in the period under investigation it helped improve public safety on the streets of this rapidly expanding industrial centre.

They were important taxpayers – the history of the Jewish community in Michálkovice

Blažena Przybylová

The Jewish community in Michálkovice, though never very numerous, nevertheless established itself in the rapidly growing industrial town from the 1860s onwards. In the early stages of its development, the community played an important role in the creation of the local tertiary sector. The members of the community were important taxpayers; thanks to this

position, they played a leading role in the governance of the town at the turn of the 20th century. They mainly pursued traditionally Jewish professions such as inn-keepers and shopkeepers, and the way in which they went about their business helped to reinforce the stereotypical image of Jews as naturally gifted traders. By 1910 the community had grown to over 100 members; a Jewish cemetery and the 'Tempelverein' association were established. After 1918 the numbers of Jews in Michálkovice remained stable, but the community was eventually destroyed by the transports to Terezín (Theresienstadt) in 1942.

From the Nazi concentration camp to the Soviet gulag (The fates of Ostrava's Jews from the transports to Nisko nad Sanem)

Mečislav Borák

The first Nazi transports of Jews from Ostrava, Katowice and Vienna in October 1939 were destined for Nisko nad Sanem, where the Jews were to build a concentration camp. The camp held only around 500 inmates; most of the almost 5 000 deportees were driven away by the SS guards and entered Soviet territory. This border crossing was illegal, and if caught the refugees were imprisoned in Soviet forced labour camps – gulags. Other refugees, who managed to cross the border undetected and settled in and around the city of Lvov, were later deported to Siberia along with other members of the local population. This was the fate of around 800 Jews from the Ostrava area. Archive sources show how they attempted to contact the Czechoslovak authorities in exile and how they dealt with their new situation in the gulags or as refugees. Using documents and eye-witness accounts, the author compiled a list of locations in the USSR where these Ostrava Jews were imprisoned or interned until an amnesty enabled them to join the Czechoslovak foreign legion. The study also recounts the stories of several Jewish families from Ostrava who were the victims of repression.

Internal trade and retail in Ostrava, 1971–1988

Martin Juřica

The retail sector and the consumer supply chain in Ostrava in 1971–1988 reflected the overall situation of Czechoslovakia's national economy and its internal trade system. There was sufficient shop floor space, but the retail network did not cover the entire area of the city, and the city's retail sector suffered from a multitude of technical inadequacies. Nevertheless, several self-service type stores were built, which were modern for their time. Among the largest retail investments were the Prior department store on Ostrava's central square and the 'Dům potravin' food store in Poruba. The basic needs of the population were essentially met,

but the market lacked a wide range of high-quality consumer goods; there were also persistent problems affecting the quality and regular availability of certain types of food and industrial goods. The growing disproportion in the internal market was one of the underlying reasons behind the collapse of the communist regime in the late 1980s.

The changing attractiveness of Ostrava as a place of employment

Igor Ivan, Jakub Calábek

This article builds on the 1987 study by Radim Prokop and Jiří Kovář, and attempts to evaluate the changing attractiveness of Ostrava as a place of employment during a twenty-year period in which the city has undergone two simultaneous transformations: a change of political regime leading to a market economy, and a process of deindustrialization (and reindustrialization). During the 1980s Ostrava was an important destination for economic migrants not only from nearby communities, but often from other regions of Czechoslovakia. This situation has since changed due to the processes mentioned above, and Ostrava has ceased to be an attractive place of employment for people from more distant regions. However, it remains the most important centre of employment in the region, despite improvements in the job markets of nearby towns. Compared to the situation in the past, commuters to Ostrava more frequently work in the tertiary sector, and less frequently in industry.

The Vítkovice Ironworks Hospital – the largest in the Habsburg monarchy (1840–1920)

Karel Jiřík

The Vítkovice Ironworks company hospital occupies a unique position in the history of Czech health care. It was the largest company hospital in the Habsburg monarchy, and it treated more patients than any other hospital in Moravia except the provincial hospitals in Brno and Olomouc. From its foundation in 1840 the hospital had to contend with a constant shortage of beds, as the dynamic growth of the ironworks and the local coal mines brought tens of thousands of new jobs to the area. In 1889 the new director, Dr. M. Munk, had an entirely new hospital built. It became a model for future hospitals due to its high architectural quality, functional layout and modern equipment. On a separate site, Munk set up a temporary hospital for injured miners, an isolation ward for treating contagious diseases, and an institute for convalescents; all of these projects helped relieve the pressure on the limited capacity of the main hospital.

The pharmacist Emil Kinský and history of the ‘U Madony’ pharmacy in Přívoz

Jana Prchalová

This paper describes the establishment of the ‘U Madony’ (Madonna) pharmacy in Přívoz at the end of the 19th century. The author outlines the key phases in the history of the pharmacy up to the present day. Particular attention is devoted to the first owner of the pharmacy, Emil Kinský, who in addition to his professional duties was closely involved in Czech community associations within the multi-ethnic town of Přívoz at the turn of the 20th century. Emil’s two sons – Jaroslav and Emil Jr. – were also pharmacists, and took over the management of the family business. Historical events led Jaroslav Kinský to join the Czechoslovak legion in Russia; on returning to his home city, he was a member of the legionnaires’ unit in Přívoz. During the Nazi occupation the Kinský family was subjected to persecution. The pharmacy was nationalized by the communist regime in 1950. After 1989 the business was restituted and privatized.

Murder, fornication and other serious crimes in Moravian Ostrava, 1922–1938

Eva Bánská

The study focuses on serious criminal activity in the Ostrava region from 1922 to 1938. The author focuses on the area falling within the purview of the Regional Court and the Moravian Ostrava Public Prosecutor’s Office, which were responsible for the investigation of these crimes and trial proceedings. The above-mentioned two institutions controlled eight separate court districts: Bohumín, Český Těšín, Frýdek, Fryštát, Jablunkov, Místek, Moravská Ostrava (Moravian Ostrava) and Slezská Ostrava (Silesian Ostrava). The author examines who committed out serious crimes, where and how the crimes took place. She also focuses on the circumstances leading to individual crimes, characterizing the perpetrators in terms of their age, sex, profession and social status.

A temple of luxury – the story of the Texilia/Ostravica department store from its birth to its destruction

Romana Rosová

The former Texilia department store originally consisted of two separate buildings (no. 243 and no. 284). In the second half of the 19th century the site was occupied by wooden houses, then masonry structures, which were adapted in several stages around the turn of the 20th century to serve residential and commercial purposes. One of these buildings was designed by

the local contractor Felix Neumann. In 1928–1929 building no. 243 was demolished and replaced by the Textilia department store, designed by the German architect Marie Frommer. When built, it was one of the largest and most luxurious department stores not only in Ostrava, but in the whole of Czechoslovakia. In 1934 the store was expanded into the neighbouring building (no. 284). In 1945 the remaining buildings forming part of the city block were demolished. The department store continued to function (under its new name Ostravica), but only essential maintenance work was carried out. The fate of the buildings culminated in 2000, when part of the structure collapsed during reconstruction work and the site had to be closed.

Antonín Barcuch, Eva Rohlová

History of architecture in old Zábřeh nad Odrou and Hulváky (continued)

This paper is a continuation of an article whose first part was published in the previous collection of papers. The authors focus on the historical development of architecture and town planning in the cadastral district of Zábřeh nad Odrou: ecclesiastical buildings, mining and industrial sites, sandpits and brickworks, workers' housing schemes, railways, bookshops and publishers, ponds, water pipelines, inns and hotels, playgrounds, parks, sports facilities, memorials and monuments. The description of the buildings includes their current address and use, so the article can also be used as a guide to historical walks around the district. The paper also includes historic photographs of the buildings, enabling readers to compare past and present appearances.

Last wills and inventories of assets of the Moravian Ostrava burghers in the second half of the 18th century

Jaroslava Novotná

Last wills and inventories of assets fall into the category of inheritance-related sources. In Moravian Ostrava these matters were handled by members of the town council – the Burgomaster and the councillors. The officials were bound by the stipulations of Magdeburg law, later replaced by Czech legislation drawn up by Pavel Kristián of Koldín. The last wills were drawn up on the initiative of the testator, who stated how his property was to be distributed after his death. Inventories of assets were drawn up after the death of a burgher, regardless of his will. The author studies a sample of last wills and inventories to determine the principles applied when drawing up these documents. Study of these sources would reveal details of the social and professional stratification of the burghers of Moravian Ostrava. It

would also provide details on specific households and give an insight into the everyday lives of burghers in the town.

On the lives of Ostrava's burghers in the 16th – 18th century

Miloslav Kroček

Using examples taken from selected entries in the oldest land registry books of Moravian Ostrava, plus the oldest surviving municipal document of the town (known as the 'Commemorative Book'), the author demonstrates the wealth of source materials and the many possibilities offered by the sources as a basis for further research. The extracts offer an unusually convincing glimpse of the private lives of Ostrava's inhabitants from all strata of society, from the nobility to smallholders, at a time when the social system was rigidly entrenched. The author focuses on premarital agreements, sales of houses, agreements on land use, donations to churches, last wills and funerals.

Ostrava's fortifications in the light of archeological surveys

Marek Kiecoň, Zbyněk Moravec

Regular archeological surveys carried out in recent years in the historical core of Moravian Ostrava have revealed the remnants of fortifications at several locations – at the site of the Puppet Theatre (1998), in Kostelní St. (2006, 2008), and in Puchmajerova St. (2007). Two types of fortification have been identified: a moat and a wall. The wall had three openings (gates) and was reinforced by bastions. The most thoroughly surveyed area is around the former church gate. The moat, which was probably a distributary channel of the Ostravice river, ran in front of the gate, limiting the space available for settlement. As the moat was probably formed by natural processes, it is possible to surmise that it was used by burghers in the 13th – 16th centuries. There was probably a bridge outside the church gate. A stone wall was apparently built in the period 1362-1375. Archeological finds indicate that the wall was rebuilt in the first half of the 15th century.

Underground Ostrava. The 1980s and living with the police

Jan Král

The author describes the atmosphere in Ostrava and the north Moravian region in the late 1980s, viewed from the perspective of a young man who had come into conflict with the communist regime. Opposition to the authorities was focused around underground concerts

and samizdat publications. Král describes his first interrogations by the secret police (StB) and the growing pressure exerted on him by the security apparatus.

He describes his prosecution for supporting the imprisoned dissident Václav Havel, and gives an account of the regular meetings of the local Charter 77 signatories. The story continues into the 1990s, when Král visited the Interior Ministry's archive in Pardubice and viewed some of the StB's files on him.

If we even stepped outside, they rounded us up

Pavla Skýbová

The author recalls signing Charter 77 as a young woman in Ostrava, and the consequences of this act. She describes how it was essential to choose one's friends very carefully due to the constant secret police surveillance of the signatories. Working in very primitive conditions and shrouded in secrecy, the author printed hundreds of newsletters about the Charter 77 movement, plus other samizdat publications. She also attended a meeting of a representative from the American embassy with leading dissidents in Ostrava. At night she would stick up posters in Ostrava's streets. She was arrested and interrogated on many occasions – including the biggest operation mounted by Ostrava's security apparatus, on 28 October 1989.

Stanislav Vopasek – the first director of the Mining Museum in Ostrava

Oldřich Klepek

Stanislav Vopasek (1935-2006), the first ever director of the Mining Museum in Ostrava, was a renowned expert on mining and a passionate advocate of the traditions, history and culture of the mining profession. He joined the industry as part of a nationwide recruitment drive in 1950. After completing his apprenticeship as a miner, Vopasek studied at a mining college and then at Ostrava's mining university. This paper maps his professional career at the 'Victorious February' colliery in Ostrava. The author outlines the activities leading up to the establishment of the Ostrava Mining Museum, describing Vopasek's role and his efforts to preserve mining heritage sites in Ostrava. The article traces the history of the museum from its establishment in 1987 to its public opening in 1993 and Vopasek's appointment as the museum's first director in 1994. The author also shows how the museum built up its collections and describes Vopasek's role within the Landek Foundation. An overview of Vopasek's extensive publications is given at the end of the article.

“I most certainly will die, but I know not when...” The life and death of the Dean of Ostrava Oschevius (†1656)

Vladimír Mañas

This study examines the life of the priest Adam Hynek Oschevius, born around 1600 in the Silesian town of Rybník, who died in 1656 in Moravian Ostrava after three years serving as the town’s local priest and dean. The author focuses mainly on Oschevius’ last will (written in Czech); the paper includes an edited text with commentary.

The difficulties of Moravian Ostrava with the town walls in the early 18th century

Eva Rohlová

This paper presents the text of a Czech letter and a translation of a German letter sent in 1706 by the authorities of Moravian Ostrava to the Bishopric of Olomouc. The town complained that the provincial court in Těšín had refused to accept witness statements taken in Moravian Ostrava due to the fact that the town was not encircled by walls. Representatives of the town admitted that the walls were in poor condition, but cited historical privileges related to fortifications and asked the Bishopric – the controlling body of the town – for assistance in the matter.

The sale of the Faldynovský mill to Pavel Masař in 1757

Jaroslava Novotná

This paper presents the Czech text of a contract selling the Faldynovský mill in Přívoz to one Pavel Masař in 1757. The contract is held in the collections of the Ostrava City Archive. Pavel Masař came to Přívoz in 1754. When the local miller died, he took over the mill and looked after the miller’s widow and her young children. The contract, concluded at the Moravian Ostrava town hall, sets out the rights and responsibilities of the new owner. Among his duties were the settlement of debts and the payment of other outstanding accounts and inheritances. The contract also contains important provisions on the operation of the mill and the mutual relationship between the miller and the Moravian Ostrava drapers’ guild.

The establishment of the Ostrava City Archive in the correspondence of the archivists of Prague and Plzeň

Antonín Barcuch, Jitka Janečková

This article presents the text of several previously unpublished sources connected with the establishment and early difficulties experienced by the Ostrava City Archive. The first municipal archivist in Ostrava, Alois Adamus, received valuable advice from two experienced professionals – Václav Vojtíšek at the Prague City Archive and Fridolín Macháček from the archive in Plzeň. Both Vojtíšek and Macháček thus played an important role in the early years of the Ostrava City Archive. The authors also present three documents from the Ministry of Education and National Enlightenment in Prague, emphasizing the importance of the Ostrava archive for the city and the wider region and recommending that the new archive should seek advice and guidance from the two above-mentioned archivists.