SUMMARIES

"THE ELECTIONS HAVE TO BE DECIDED IN ADVANCE!"

The First Postwar Year in the Region Ústí Nad Labem and the Electoral Victory of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (1945/46)

Volker Zimmermann

Research on the communist struggle for power in Czechoslovakia after 1945 has so far neglected regional developments. To examine the activities of regional party organizations and administrative bodies and to analyze how the local population reacted to changes in the political and social situation can, however, furnish new insights into this topic. On the example of the region of Ústí nad Labem (Aussig) in Northern Moravia, with its German majority, the present contribution shows how the CPCS in the very first year after the war succeeded in assuming a predominant position by systematically developing its regional organizations. The remaining parties did nothing to halt these activities. On the contrary, with their nationalist propaganda they contributed to aggravate social antagonisms which were, however, exploited principally by the CPCS. The May 1946 elections were proof that regions like Ústí nad Labem represented the forefront of the communist effort to seize power – here, their dominance in society and politics went unchallenged two years before the “victorious february of ‘48”.

TOWN AND UTOPIA: THE ZLÍN EXPERIMENT, 1920-1938

Annett Steinführer

In the interwar years, the Moravian town of Zlín experienced an unprecedented development for the Czechoslovak Republic, a development closely related to the rise of the Baťa company from a small business manufacturing footwear to a stock corporation with global activities. But Zlín does not solely represent the familiar story of a town’s expansion by industrialization. Expansion and development of the town combined with openly utopian elements of the struggle for a “better” society. The present contribution, dealing with biographic, business-related, and architectonic and town-planning aspects of the development of Zlín, demonstrates the close interdependence between all these aspects and appraises Zlín as an experiment having a justified place in the history of utopian concepts for society in general and towns and cities in particular.