A BELATED TOWN UTOPIA
Plans, Images, and the Reality of a Socialist Town in the 1960s and 1970s as Exemplified by Most in Northern Bohemia
Matěj Spurný
Most (Brüx), an historical town in northern Bohemia, was almost completely demolished in the 1960s and 1980s to facilitate open-cast brown coal mining. A new Most was erected directly adjacent, offering housing for almost 100,000 people. The present contribution deals with the ideas and conceptions for this city and of life there. This story is integrated into the broader context of how concepts of architecture and town planning developed in Czechoslovakia and how new towns boomed throughout Europe after 1945. At the center is the question whether experiments like Most had a legitimatizing function for state socialist rule. The demolition of the old town was justified by referring to rational decisions and with the promise of a life really worthy of a human being and of better hygienic conditions, and to the dire circumstances in which thousands of people lived. The study demonstrates, however, that this legitimatizing potential gradually disappeared with possibly just the opposite being the case in the end. The ultimate cause was a different mental approach which developed in East and West from the 1960s onwards. Socialist dictatorships could not master the challenges of the modern epoch. They remained firmly entrenched in the technocratic era with its focus on industrial production and on planning solutions which ought to be equally suitable for all people and for every aspect of life.

“DO WE HAVE BUT THE WATER THAT FALLS FROM THE SKY?”
Continuities of Technocratic Thinking in Socialist Czechoslovakia Shown by the Example of the Danube-Oder-Elbe Channel Project
Jiří Janáč
When a society is to be modernized, among the prerequisites is a dependable supply of water for people, agriculture, and industry. As a consequence, modern technocratic schemes for future development have always dealt, among other things, with control and administration of water resources. In the case of Czechoslovakia, the plan to link three important rivers, thus forming a nationwide water system, became the symbol of these endeavors. The idea to construct a channel joining the rivers Danube, Oder (Czech: Odra), and Elbe (Czech: Labe), was first promoted at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and gained greater popularity in the 1930s. At the center of the whole story were the members of the bureaucracy regulating water supply and distribution. Adapting to changes in the economic, cultural and political
environment, they interpreted the channel scheme in a different way each time such a change occurred. They managed to keep it important even when socialist modernization was the order of the day. Only in the 1950s, when Stalinist productivism was the norm, was it temporarily shelved. Nor was it realized in the 1960s. But far from being abandoned, it remained part of the long-term planning that was to be realized as soon as the economic advantages of the channel would be proven. This serves to demonstrate that state socialism did not represent a turning point in the thinking about utilizing water resources.

WINE GROWING AND WINE MAKING AS A RESERVE OF FREEDOM FOR VASSALS
The Social and Economic Dimension of the Terroir of Moravian-Made Wine

Martin Markel

This study deals with wine growing in Southern Moravia. It utilizes the so-called "Terroir" theory, which rests on the assumption that the qualities of a specific wine are determined not only by natural factors, but also by economic and social developments. This is demonstrated using sources from around Znaim (Znoimo) and Nikolsburg (Mikulov) from the middle of the 17th century to the early 19th. Among the decisive factors the author discerns is freedom, resulting from the fact that vineyards and publican licences were not connected to a specific estate of the realm. In contrast to Bohemia, wine making in Moravia in this period increasingly became a peasant trade. Thus, vassals growing wine on micro plots became the leading force in wine growing and wine trade. At the same time, new technical developments arose, taking the form of cellar alleys on community fringes. The terroir of Moravian wines, and Moravia’s vivid wine culture, were shaped by this mixture uniting long-term legal phenomena, developments restricted to a specific time, and strictly local peripeteia (the author singles out a particular rebellion).

NEWS ON KAFKA
An Overview of Recent Studies Aiming at Fitting His Work Into a General Biographical and Contextual Perspective

Steffen Höhne

Recently, analysis of Kafka and his writings has shown a marked shift towards dealing with the specific mental, cultural and linguistic environment that characterizes work and author. This new interest of cultural science in the context in which literature is produced, is the common trait of the recent studies examined in this overview – studies all of which possess merit and potential.