

## SUMMARY

The issue of urban rail transport has long been an interesting research topic. This is evidenced by a number of foreign publications, which deal with the history of transport as an integral part of a broad-based international socio-cultural study of the history of mobility. Research oriented in this fashion has made it possible to trace the history of mobility in connection to the global process of modernization and simultaneously approach it as an interdisciplinary, historical and comprehensive social phenomenon.

Research oriented in this fashion, however, has never been sufficiently reflected in the Czech environment. Even now, the history of transport (and not only urban) is approached in the traditional spirit. Attention is focused primarily on technical and technological aspects and the history of transport companies are viewed linearly and as non-problematic. Based on the reflection of foreign models, the aim of this work was to analyze urban transport as an important phenomenon, closely related to the development of society as a whole. The position of urban rail transport within the legislative framework of the Habsburg monarchy, i.e. Cisleithanian, was analyzed. It turned out that urban rail transport, from its beginnings until 1918, was closely tied to the railway legislation of the Danubian monarchy, and yet only vaguely formulated. Not until Act No. 2 of 1895 was the area of urban rail transport more precisely defined without regard to traction. The inclusion of this type of transport in the area of so-called short-lines resulted in the clarification of the rights and obligations of concessionaires. A platform was therefore created for the active participation of local governments in urban rail transport, i.e. self-governing bodies were given the assurance that after the expiration of the concessions the lines would become (after completing other legal conditions) their property. Municipalities therefore invested their funds "in themselves", in their future development.

The research on urban rail transportation under the Habsburg monarchy, especially in Moravia and Silesia, has also shown that it was mainly these municipal governments that had significant influence on the establishment and development of this type of transport. Without their consent, implanting the needed technology in public areas, or expanding the existing network of tracks, was impossible. Municipalities therefore became concessionaires—

holders of exclusive licenses to construct and operate rail lines. They could then contractually grant this authorization to private entities for a fixed period of time. They were in charge of the actual building and subsequent operation. The reason for this was primarily a lack of know-how on the part of the representatives of local governments needed both to build and operate a transport company. The procedure indicated above was carried out by the municipalities of Olomouc, Opava and Polish Ostrava. Especially in the case of the last mentioned municipalities and communities of the Silesian part of the Ostrava agglomeration, the situation with constructing urban rail was generally complicated by the active input of Silesian provincial authorities in the business of the so-called short-lines. The biggest difficulty in this process lay in the fact that it was the provincial authorities who approved the loans and borrowings of local governments from municipal or provincial financial institutions. Only a minimum of municipalities, if not even one, could afford to finance the construction of urban rail lines and run them from their own budgets without additional financial resources. This complication becomes even more obvious when we look at the procedure of the Moravian Ostrava local government, which was under the control of the Moravian provincial authorities. In the area of the so-called Moravian Wedge, they were not involved in this type of transport. The local government of Moravian Ostrava was thus able to build and operate a profitable municipal corporation called Moravian Ostrava—Karviná Local Line. The roots of this success, however, are deep and related to the activity of the joint stock company *Brünner Lokaleisenbahn Gesellschaft*. Its origins go back to 1886 and the incorporation of the private enterprise of Wilhelm von Lindheim, who took an inefficient Brno horse tram and modernized it into a steam-operated tram. The relationship between the businessman, or the joint stock company, and the Brno municipal government, however, gradually deteriorated. Some of it was due to the effort of the Brno municipal government to intervene in the construction and operation of the urban rail line not as a shareholder, but from the position of a contractual partner. Another reason was the fact that the Brno municipal government put nationalism before the profitability or public service of the enterprise, which de facto undermined the financial stability of the enterprise. Throughout the 1890s, *Brünner Lokaleisenbahn Gesellschaft* increasingly focused its business in Ostrava. In this context, it also began to cooperate with the municipal government of Moravian Ostrava and put two members on its board of directors. One of the successes of the municipal corporation can be found precisely in this step—the gradual acquisition of know-how by members of the council and incorporating it in their own transport business. It can be said, and this also applies to joint enterprises, that urban rail transport reflects so-called *Leistungsverwaltung*, the pro-active approach of municipal government in building urban infrastructure using rational economic decisions even at the cost of loading their municipal budgets with debt. From a professional perspective, however, it should be noted that experts held only the paid position of operations managers, whereas overseeing corporate management was entrusted to transport committees, which consisted of members of local government bodies.

An analysis of Brünner Lokaleisenbahn Gesellschaft and its internal workings, while following its move from southern Moravia to the Ostrava region, has shown another interesting area of research that has not been adequately reflected in Czech and foreign literature. From a financial perspective, it is doubtlessly interesting that a joint stock company established under the General Commercial Code began to provide the necessary investment capital at the turn of the 19th and 20th century with loans in addition to issuing stocks. These loans were acquired from established financial institutions (Dutschka & Co., Österreichische Länderbank) and gradually became the exclusive means for procuring finance. The process culminated in the 1911 purchase of a majority stake by the firm Vereinigte Elektrizitäts-Aktien-Gesellschaft. The change in the method of financing this company was also reflected in the composition of the board of directors, the highest governing body of the company Brünner Lokaleisenbahn Gesellschaft. Up until the end of the 19th century, the members of the board of directors were primarily representatives of industries in Brno and the middle class (Offermanns, Bauers, Lindheims). With the change in the activity of the company and financing it, as well as in generations, experts in the field of electrical engineering and representatives of financial institutions—the creditors of transport companies—were elected to the board of directors. The force behind this change was the election of Maxime von Krassien, managing director of Niederösterreichische Escompte Gesellschaft, as the chairman of the board. We believe that this process of the professionalization of the board of directors can also be seen in the spirit of so-called *Leistungsverwaltung*.

The management of the individual companies and an analysis of it is complicated by the incompleteness of the source base, which allows only partial surveys to be made. The best preserved are the sources for Brünner Lokaleisenbahn Gesellschaft. It can be said from their study that the company was stable and profitable throughout the period and able to pay dividends and super-dividends to shareholders. The main source of income was the transportation of people, although the company also hauled freight on their lines. The same can also be said for the local line from Moravian Ostrava to Karviná, but with the difference that the company did not pay dividends because it was not incorporated, rather a communal enterprise. In the case of Opava and Olomouc, no relevant conclusions can be drawn based on the few extant data. It seems, however, that the companies in this case stabilized and showed slight profitability after a brief period of financial uncertainty, primarily due to the startup operation. In the case of street tracks laid in Těšín, the financial data is completely missing. The impact of the First World War on the financial situation of the companies can, moreover, be observed for three companies only, namely for Brünner Lokaleisenbahn Gesellschaft, Moravian Ostrava—Karviná Local Line, and partly for Silesian Provincial Railways. It can be doubtless asserted that the armed conflict had significant influence on the development of urban rail. In the case of Ostrava, the direct effects of the war cannot be seen until 1916. The biggest contradiction lay in the fact that the companies were able to respond to increased transport demands when they had the means to

invest in fleet renewal and the modernization of tracks. Increased inflation, along with the lack of necessary material and war rationing, completely eliminated these options, however. The disproportion began to manifest itself in rising wage demands, which the company responded to with difficulty. The reason was declining income caused by the collapse in freight transport on the one hand and an inflexible system of tariffs, which could not be increased without the approval of the municipal government, on the other. Nevertheless, the researched companies managed to generate profits and pay their contractual fees. The sorry state of transport companies after the First World War, especially in their fleets and track superstructures, must therefore not be attributed to the poor financial condition of the companies, rather only to the detriment of wartime rationing and inflation.

While the above research topics are indeed the key to understanding urban rail transport in its entirety, we are aware that this transport service must also be analyzed with regard to social history. This field, which the present work intentionally passed over, is a call and commitment for future work. Only then will it be possible to write a synthesis of transportation in urban areas as a complex phenomenon of a modernizing society.