

Abstract

After the Second world war in Czechoslovakia as well as in most European countries there was a tendency to implement into the economy the principles of nationalization, planning and production rationalization. However, in reality the use of these rules encountered difficulties that had not been expected neither by political nor economic areas. It was not only the issue of the rate and form of interventions into the economy from the communist and non-communist parties but also disputes and fights for pushing through particular interests which were being accompanied by a radical form of expropriation done by the communists after the overthrow in February 1948.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the nationalization development in brewing industry which belonged to traditional Czech industrial branches and despite its considerable capital and production concentration it preserved a high level of diversity ranging from mass-production to family facilities.

This paper will deal with e.g. mechanisms of occupying of leading positions, nationalization impact and effect of political changes on employees, unions activities, production management strategies (reaching the plans of governmental institutions, socialist competition among companies), by the influence of state programmes, improvement of population nutrition or anti – alcoholic program.

The author also describes the social impact of brewery nationalization and rationalization: how it was perceived by employees and customers, and how it influenced the general culture of beer consumption and restaurants in the Czech society.

The analysis is concentrated on central Bohemia's breweries. The reasons for such a regional determination is as followed: firstly, it results from the logic of merging the breweries in this area under one national company, secondly, due to the availability of archive documents, which are situated in one archive fund for this reason.

Chronologically, the year 1945 will be set as a starting point of this paper. During this year some breweries after the enemy's property confiscation and the first nationalization wave came under the national administration. The final point will be 1955, when the production rationalization process culminated by establishing the united national company Středočeské pivovary (Central Bohemian Breweries).

The most attention will be dedicated to the largest brewery in Central Bohemia, namely Velké Popovice Brewery, that became the main branch of the united company in 1955.

Key words

beer, brewing industry, nationalization, Czechoslovakia 1945-1955, economic planning, consumer culture