

Blažena Przybylová

The Ostrava City Archive 1923–2013 (from parchment to bytes)

Commemorating the Ostrava City Archive's first 90 years of existence, the article acknowledges the irreplaceable role played by the first ever city archivist, Alois Adamus, who founded the Archive in 1923. The article then outlines the operations of the archive from 1998 to the present day – including the opening of a new deposit block which has significantly improved the conditions for storage of archive materials. In connection with the development of new technologies, the author evaluates progress on a major ongoing project to digitize the Archive's materials. In conclusion, the article maps the Archive's various activities targeted at the general public, through which it contributes to a greater level of historical awareness among Ostrava's citizens.

Key words:

Ostrava City Archive, Alois Adamus, International Archives Day, digitization of archives, exhibition, 1923

Blažena Przybylová

The Ostrava City Archive – 50 years publishing the periodical 'OSTRAVA'

The article maps 50 years of the periodical 'OSTRAVA', containing articles and papers on the history and present day of Ostrava and the surrounding area. The periodical, published by the Ostrava City Archive, represents a major contribution to the development of regional history and underlines the importance of archives as institutions preserving historical memory. The author emphasizes the important role played by the former Director of the Archive, Karel Jiřík, in the establishment of the new periodical in 1962. The article traces the development of the periodical from 1963 to 2013, focusing on the changing composition of the editorial board, the structure and topics of the articles published, the frequency of publication, and the changing graphic layout and design.

Key words:

Ostrava City Archive, Alois Adamus, Karel Jiřík, 'Ostrava' periodical, editorial board, 1963

Denisa Labischová, Blažena Gracová

The attitude of Ostrava's students and teachers to history

This article reports on the results of an empirical research study of historical awareness and the current situation in history teaching at Ostrava's primary and secondary schools. The survey involved the distribution of a questionnaire to students and teachers at primary

schools, 'gymnázium'-type secondary schools, and secondary vocational colleges. The responses were compared with a sample of respondents from ten regions of the Czech Republic. The aim of the research was to determine the motivation of Ostrava's students for learning about history, their interest in various periods of Czech history and their preference for temporal, geographical or thematic perspectives on history, to identify 'places of memory' which are considered the most important symbols of Czech history, and to determine which forms of teaching about the history and cultural of ethnic minorities and which forms of commemorating historical milestones are preferred by both teachers and students. In terms of the current situation in history teaching, the survey focused primarily on prevailing teaching styles, the use of educational media, and the inclusion in history lessons of several previously neglected historical topics, including regional history.

Key words:

empirical research study, historical awareness, geographical perspectives on history, thematic perspectives on history, temporal perspectives on history, interest, in history, history teaching, ethnic minorities, Ostrava

Jan Sucháček

On the media image of Ostrava

'Soft factors' are increasingly being taken into account (though still not to an adequate degree) in the field of local and regional development. These factors include mental maps, which reflect the psycho-social perception of space. Territorial references in the media are among the most important determinants for the formation of mental maps. It is necessary to realize that the media transfer information selectively, presenting merely one part of a highly complex reality. The population is not only informed; its behaviour and perception of reality is also conditioned. Applying this to territorial issues, we can speak of the improvement or deterioration of the image of a given territory by means of its media portrayal. It is obvious that traditional industrial areas such as Ostrava rank among the most sensitive entities from the perspective of their media portrayal; such areas are frequently stigmatized with negative information. The article, though aware of the limitations of current data, attempts to evaluate selected aspects of Ostrava's image in selected media, both in qualitative and quantitative terms.

Key words:

Ostrava, media, mental maps, territorial image

Zbyněk Moravec

The streets of medieval Ostrava

The article draws on information from archeological surveys which have taken place in the historical centre of Ostrava during the past several years. The most interesting findings have concerned what is now Muzejní Street, where various forms of street maintenance have been uncovered. Archeologists have documented several surfacing techniques using cobblestones, fascines, and a more intricate structure consisting of a timber sub-frame overlaid with planks. Maintenance work was essential, as the street area was a major site for waste disposal (as shown by plans of Muzejní Street dating from the late 13th / early 14th century). Regular street cleaning appears to have begun during the following century. A degree of instability in the street network can be observed during the early stages of Ostrava's development; however, the network later became stabilized – as can be seen from a plan dating from 1833, which shows a system of streets that has survived essentially unchanged from medieval times.

Key words:

Middle Ages, street, archeology, road surfacing

Jaroslava Novotná

The story of Barbora Máchová, a member of the Ostrava haute bourgeoisie, and her lost pearls

The article describes the life story of the Ostrava widow Barbora Máchová, a member of the city's haute bourgeoisie, who left Ostrava following extended disputes with the husband of her elder daughter Alžběta. She found a new home in the town of Povina in Upper Hungary (now Slovakia), where her younger daughter Johana married. In August 1813 Povina was hit by a destructive flood; Máchová was lucky to survive, but her valuable pearls were lost. The loss of the pearls was the subject of official proceedings on several occasions – including for the last time in November 1815, as part of the probate proceedings concerning Máchová's estate following her death.

Key words:

Povina (Slovakia), floods, Barbora Máchová, jewels

Jakub Ivánek

The statue of St John of Nepomuk at the Svinov bridge – a work of the Weissmann studio in Frýdek

The accounting ledgers of the Wilczeks' Klimkovice estates for 1756 contain a record of the production of a statue of St John of Nepomuk to be located at a major transport hub in the region – the bridge over the Odra River in the village of Svinov. The statue was produced by the Weissmann studio in Frýdek, and it is a work of average quality. Due to major redevelopment work in the vicinity of the bridge during the first half of the 20th century, the statue was sold to the neighbouring village of Třebovice, where it still stands outside the church.

Key words:

St John of Nepomuk, sculpture, Ostrava-Svinov, Weissmann studio, Josef Maria Wilczek

Miloslav Kroček

Ostrava's National Guard in the revolutionary period of 1848–1849

The article describes the activities of the National Guard in Moravian Ostrava from its foundation in 1848 to its de facto dissolution in 1852. The author gives details of the number of members, their professional composition, the equipment used, and the National Guard's ceremonial flag. In 1851 the National Guard was officially disbanded, but complicated administrative procedures concerning the surrender of its weapons and flag continued into the following year.

Key words:

Moravian Ostrava, National Guard, ceremonial flag, 1848

Karel Franek

The exhibition of industry and trades held in Moravian Ostrava in 1923

In the summer of 1923 Moravian Ostrava hosted an exhibition of industry and trades, whose aim was to present and promote local industry and support business in the Ostrava region. The chairman of the organizing committee was the lawyer Karel Fajfrlík, who had already helped to organize several smaller-scale exhibitions and trade fairs in the city and the surrounding area. The exhibition grounds were on the edge of Moravian Ostrava, near the districts of Vítkovice and Mariánské Hory. The site covered an area of 30 000 m², including a newly built locomotive depot which was provided for the occasion by the Vítkovice ironworks and served as the main pavilion for the exhibition. The largest displays were by the Vítkovice ironworks and a display of the local mining industry held jointly by several companies. The event attracted 477 213 visitors, and the exhibition site also featured several restaurants and a range of visitor attractions.

Key words:

Moravian Ostrava, Vítkovice ironworks, mining industry, Association for Industry, Trades and Commerce, Karel Fajfrlík, 1923

Mečislav Borák

The Ostrava rabbi Arnošt Bass (1885-1943) and his family

Arnošt Bass was born on 1 April 1885 to a family of merchants in the Bohemian town of Kutná Hora. After studying in Vienna and Berlin, Bass received a doctorate of law and philosophy, and rose to the rank of rabbi. He was employed as the secretary at the archive of the Prague Jewish community. After the First World War he taught divinity at secondary schools in the Moravian Ostrava district, where he also acted temporarily as rabbi. After disputes with the local Jewish community, Bass resigned from his rabbinical duties and concentrated on teaching Czech and divinity. However, he remained the only qualified rabbi in the Ostrava region, and continued to appear in public as the speaker at Jewish festivals. He was also renowned as a scholar of Semitic languages and Biblical texts, and in 1938 he published a Czech translation of the Psalms from Hebrew. In September 1942, along with his wife and his son Josef (a student at Ostrava ‘Gymnasium’ secondary school), Bass was deported to Theresienstadt (Terezín) and then to Auschwitz; the family appears not to have survived. However, Bass’s brother Antonín and his family did survive the war; his nephew Ludvík Bass is a professor at the University of Queensland, Australia, and a world-renowned expert on mathematical physics, mathematical biology and the philosophy of science.

Key words:

Arnošt Bass, Ludvík Bass, Jewish history, Ostrava Jewish community, Holocaust

Hana Mášová

Emilie Lukášová and her pioneering work in infant care

The pediatrician Dr. Emilie Lukášová (1900–1954) headed the first ever Czechoslovak institution providing care for mothers and infants, opened in the Zábřeh nad Odrou district of Ostrava in 1930. Thanks to Lukášová’s personal and professional qualities, the institution was at the cutting edge of postnatal care, and became a model for later developments in Czech pediatrics and social/medical care in general. Lukášová planned to set up similar institutions throughout the country, providing care for prematurely born babies up to one year of age; her plans attracted support from some, but opposition from others. Years later, her initial focus on perinatal and neonatal care has proved to be justified – as has her insistence on the natural

unity of mother and child, which should not be disrupted by doctors, but should instead be made use of. The conclusion of the article shows how Dr. Lukášová was perceived by her contemporaries and reviews the attributes and qualifications that made her suited to her chosen calling.

Key words:

Dr. Emilie Lukášová history of pediatrics, social/medical care in mid-20th century Czechoslovakia, Masaryk Institute for Mothers and Infants in Moravian-Ostrava-Zábřeh

Jindra Biolková, Petr Kašing

A fateful encounter with Ostrava: The life story of Alois Emil Dobner, professor of the Mining College in Ostrava

A. E. Dobner (1890–1953) was not only one of the foremost mining experts in Europe; he was also highly respected in America, Africa and Asia. With extensive experience in the mining industry, Dobner taught at the Mining College (VŠB) in Příbram (1913–1923) and in Ostrava (1946–1951). In 1947 he was appointed professor for rolling and pressing processes. In the early 1950s, based on unfounded witness statements, he was accused of planning to engage in espionage; in 1952 he was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment, the loss of civil rights, the confiscation of his assets, and a fine. He became seriously ill when in prison, and died on 8 April 1953. For many years Dobner's family fought to clear his name. In 1964, the Presidium of the Supreme Court in Prague annulled the original judgement, and the rehabilitation of Dobner's reputation began in 1968 at the VŠB in Ostrava. His full exoneration only came in 1990, as a consequence of the changes which swept through Czech society after the Velvet Revolution.

Key words:

Alois Emil Dobner, VŠB-Technical University of Ostrava, Příbram, political show trials

Petr Tesař

The private diary of Libuše Střelcová from Hrušov, 1938–1942

Libuše Střelcová, née Šibralová, was an educated woman and a Czech patriot from Hrušov, who married a railway official and kept a personal diary from 1938 to 1942. The diary captures a very traumatic period in the modern history of the Czech state and nation, from the announcement of partial mobilization to the third anniversary of the occupation of Czechoslovakia by German troops. Střelcová's diary entries describe and reflect upon the current international political scene and wartime events, as well as on the economic situation

and the mood of the local population – all viewed through the author's eyes. The highly emotional quality of the texts dating from the period of the mobilization, the Munich Agreement and the Nazi occupation gradually subsides over time, though it returns when Střelcová writes about the anniversaries of the foundation of Czechoslovakia (28 October) and the demise of the second Czechoslovak republic (15 March). During the terror and reprisals which followed the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich in Prague, Střelcová ceased to write, probably due to her fears for her family's safety.

Key words:

Libuše Střelcová, Hrušov, private diary, Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, second Czechoslovak republic

Svatava Bad'urová

The Velvet Revolution at the Vítkovice corporation – Civic Forum and the emerge of new trade unions

The article describes the events of 1989 and the developments which followed the Velvet Revolution of November 1989 and led up to the first free elections, focusing on one of the most important heavy industrial corporations in Czechoslovakia at the time. Vítkovice employees were surprisingly quick to become engaged in the Velvet Revolution. Large numbers of the corporation's workers participated in the general strike of 27 November, and dozens of Civic Forum chapters were established. The first demands delivered to the corporation's director on 8 December called for the immediate cessation of the influence of the Communist Party on company operations. Later, Civic Forum focused on building up a new trade union organization, making changes in management positions, and improving the corporation's efficiency. Although the trade unions (headed by the most capable members of Civic Forum) soon began to work very effectively, it was not possible during just six months to achieve fundamental changes in the company's day-to-day operations.

Key words:

Civic Forum, strike, Velvet Revolution, Vítkovice ironworks, 1989

Tomáš Čermák, Jindra Biolková, Petr Kašing, Jindřich Cigánek, Petr Jelínek, Julie Švábová, František Varadzin

The post-1989 transformation of the VŠB Mining College to a technical university

In these memoirs, the former Rector of the VŠB in Ostrava, Tomáš Čermák, describes the key events in the transformation of the Mining College (Vysoká škola báňská, or VŠB) in Ostrava

to become a fully-fledged technical university. The major events in the post-1989 period are viewed in the context of historical facts concerning the development of the institution. The memoirs emphasize a number of key changes which had to be implemented, including the following: improving the quality of the teaching staff, the transformation from five-year degrees to a two-stage system of Bachelor's and Master's degrees, the re-profiling of the former mining college to become a technical university in the broader sense, the expansion of the range of degree programmes offered, the development of research activities, language teaching, international links, and improvements to the university's technical equipment and premises.

Key words:

VŠB-Technical University of Ostrava, transformation, technical university, Tomáš Čermák, university rector

Miloslav Kroček

The first mine explosion in Moravian Ostrava – new findings

Based on newly accessible materials from the Ostrava City Archive, it is now possible to date the first mine explosion in Moravian Ostrava to 1847. Previously the first such event was thought to have occurred in 1853.

Key words:

mining, mine explosion, Moravian Ostrava, 1847