

A Search for Truth and Justice

Upon the Jubilee of Professor Mečislav Borák

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At this time, which inclines towards narrower and narrower specialisation, personalities of broad interests who can assert themselves in a variety of disciplines and activities are inevitably becoming scarce. One of these rare exceptions is a member of the editorial board of the *Acta Silesiaca*, a renowned historian, an ethnographer, and a university lecturer, a tireless organizer of scientific research and popularizer of its results, a journalist and a script writer, as well as an experienced traveller, prof. PhDr. Mečislav Borák, CSc. Mířa, as his friends call him, and I have known each other for forty years. We have cooperated on a number of research projects and I have had the opportunity to follow closely his diverse activities which have lead him to various corners of the world and which are still continuing, so one cannot believe that earlier this year he has celebrated only his 70th birthday. Let us grasp this opportunity to commemorate his work at least, far from consummated as it may be, the detailed evaluation of which is yet to be awaited from the hands of the next generation of historians.¹

He was born towards the end of the war, on 31 January 1945, in Růžďka near Vsetín. However, he spent most of his childhood and youth in Frýdek-Místek. After finishing secondary school, he studied journalism at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Charles University in Prague. He graduated in the tumultuous year 1968, and after having performed the basic military service, he returned to the Ostravian outskirts in the autumn of the following year. He initially lived in Havířov, then moved to Ostrava, where he has been living to this day. At the start, Borák was attracted by modern history, but in the atmosphere of the norma-

¹ Until today, there have only been biographical entries, released on various occasions, which record mainly publications and in part other activities of M. Borák. Cf. Životní jubileum Mečislava Boráka [The Jubilee of Mečislav Borák], in: *Těšínsko*, 37, 1995, 4, 31; Borák Mečislav, in: PÁNEK, Jaroslav – VOREL, Petr et al.: *Lexikon současných českých historiků*, Praha 1999, 39–40; GAWRECKI, Dan: Mečislav Borák – historik Těšínska [Mečislav Borák – a Historian of Těšínsko Region], in: *Těšínsko*, 48, 2005, 1, 29–32; JANÁK, Dušan: K životnímu jubileu doc. PhDr. Mečislava Boráka, CSc. [Upon the Life Jubilee of doc. PhDr. Mečislav Borák, CSc.], in: *Časopis Slezského zemského muzea, série B*, 54, 2005, 4, 280–282; ŽÁČEK, Rudolf: Mečislav Borák – historik lidských osudů [Mečislav Borák - a Historian of Human Destinies], in: *Slezský sborník*, 103, 2005, 4, 306–318; /NP/ [Nina Pavelčíková] Mečislav Borák, in: *Kulturně historická encyklopedie Slezska a severní Moravy. Vol. I*, Ostrava 2005, 137–138; 56. Borák Mečislav, in: LIPOVSKI, Radek – DOKOUPIL, Lumír – ZÁŘICKÝ, Aleš et al.: *Lexikon českých historiků 2010*, Ostrava 2013, 52–56; FRIEDL, Jiří: Profesor Mečislav Borák jubilující [Professor Mečislav Borák Jubilating], in: *Slovanský přehled*, 101, 2015, 1, 234–237. See the bibliographic database of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, v. v. i., available at <http://biblio.hiu.cas.cz/or> own bibliography on the website of the Faculty of Public Policies of the Silesian University, available at <http://www.slu.cz/fvp/cz/uses/pracovnici/mecislav-borak>.

lization setting in, which, as an incipient journalist, he did not wish to participate in, he accepted the position of a psychologist and social worker in the Ostravian coop Zlatník instead, which he held until the mid-1970s. In his spare time, however, he pursued his interest in history, and in 1972 he received a doctorate of philosophy for his work on the history of the Catholic press,² which, at that time, was definitely not a preferred topic. His further professional career was closely associated with the Opavian Museum. From 1975, he worked as a historian in the Silesian Museum in Opava, from 1984 he was a scientific worker of the Silesian Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic) in Opava, which became part of the Silesian Museum in Opava in the spring of 1993. In the late 1980s, he was bestowed the scientific title of the Candidate of Historical Sciences for his work on anti-fascist resistance in Těšín Silesia.³ Since the early 1990s, he lectured at departments and institutes of history at the University of Ostrava, the Silesian University in Opava and the Palacký University Olomouc, where he was awarded the title of Associate Professor in 2001.⁴ In 2004, he joined the Faculty of Philosophy and Science of the Silesian University in Opava, and in 2009 he was appointed as professor in the field of Czechoslovak and Czech history. He is currently a fellow at the Institute of Central European Studies of the Faculty of Public Policies of the Silesian University in Opava, where he is the guarantor of the doctoral study of Modern Central European History, and he is active at the Silesian Museum in Opava on a part-time basis, and, since 2000, also at the Prague Documentation Centre for Property Transfers of Cultural Assets of WWII Victims.

The anchorage in the historical regions of Těšín and Silesia, where his basic research and methodologies originate, is the most symptomatic of Borák's work.⁵ In his core research activities, however, he proved capable of surpassing the regional dimension, he has interconnected his research activities on the national and international plane successfully, as it has been the case with the micro-historical and macro-historical levels. He has always been a historian of human destinies,⁶ primarily, a seeker of the ordinary „little“ people, seemingly irretrievably lost in „grand“ history, and a narrator of their life stories, which he could set into the more general framework of „grand“ history. Not only that, he has repeatedly returned to the topics that have interested him and always brought new facts and insights on whose basis he has been able to revise and extend earlier findings and deepen the existing historical knowledge.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, when he began his research into the so-called Životice tragedy, he also recounted its causes, course and significance in the monograph *Zločin v Životicích*

2 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Přehled katolického tisku v českých zemích do roku 1918* [An Overview of the Catholic Press in the Czech Lands Until 1918], rigorous thesis, Univerzita Karlova, Praha 1973.

3 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Odboj proti fašismu na odtrženém území Těšínska v letech 1938–1945* [The Resistance Against Fascism in the Breakaway Těšín Territory in 1938–1945], dissertation thesis, Slezský ústav v Opavě 1987.

4 As a inaugural dissertation, he submitted the book *Spravedlnost podle dekretu. Retribuční soudnictví v českých zemích a Mimořádný lidový soud v Ostravě (1945–1948)* [Justice by Decree. Retributive Justice in the Czech Lands and the Extraordinary People's Court in Ostrava (1945–1948)], Ostrava 1998.

5 GAWRECKI, Dan: Mečislav Borák – historik Těšínska, 29.

6 ŽÁČEK, Rudolf: Mečislav Borák – historik lidských osudů, 306–307.

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[Crime in Životice].⁷ In the broader context of the Nazi occupation policies and of the conditions in Těšín Silesia, he renewed his interest in this tragedy at the end of the millennium.⁸ He could then rely on the comparison with similar crimes in Poland⁹ the long-term studies of Nazi crimes¹⁰ and of the resistance against the occupiers in Těšín Silesia,¹¹ but also on a detailed characterization of the occupation conditions, including the security and legal system in Těšín Silesia in his monograph *Na příkaz gestapa* [As Gestapo Commands]¹² as

7 E.g. BORÁK, Mečislav: *Životická tragédie* [The Tragedy of Životice], Karviná – Ostrava 1978; Polish translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: *Żywocicka tragedia*, transl. J. Damborský, Ostrava 1979; BORÁK, Mečislav: Svědectví o životické tragédii [Testimony to the Životice Tragedy], in: *Časopis Slezského muzea, série B*, 28, 1979, č. 1, 25–39 + 1 suppl.; BORÁK, Mečislav: K 35. výročí životické tragédie [The 35th Anniversary of the Životice Tragedy], in: *Těšínsko*, 22, 1979, 1, 1–3; BORÁK, Mečislav: Dohra životické tragédie [The Aftermath of Životice Tragedy], in: *Vlastivědné listy*, 5, 1979, 1, 5–7; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Zločin v Životicích* [Crime in Životice], 1st ed., Ostrava 1980; 2nd ed., Ostrava 1984; Polish translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: Zbrodnia w Żywocicach, in: *Głos Ludu*, 3. 7. – 20. 10. 1984.

8 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Svědectví ze Životic. Těšínsko za druhé světové války a okolnosti životické tragédie* [A Testimony of Životice. Těšín Region during World War II and the Circumstances of the Životice Tragedy], Český Těšín 1999.

9 BORÁK, Mečislav: Nazistowska akcja likwidacyjna w Żywocicach (6 VIII 1944 r.) i jej sprawcy [The Nazi Extermination Operation in Životice (Aug. 6, 1944) and Its Originators], in: *Zaranie Śląskie*, 54, 1991, 1–2, 47–64.

10 BORÁK, Mečislav: Hrob u jámy Barbora. Svědectví o prvním nacistickém válečném zločinu na Těšínsku [Grave at the Barbora Pit. Testimony About the First Nazi War Crime in Těšín Silesia], in: *Těšínsko*, 32, 1989, 3, 1–6; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Na příkaz gestapa. Nacistické válečné zločiny na Těšínsku* [As Gestapo Commands. Nazi War Crimes in Těšín Silesia], Ostrava 1990.

11 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Odboj proti fašismu na odtrženém území Těšínska v letech 1938–1945* [The Resistance Against Fascism in the Breakaway Těšín Territory in 1938–1945]. A dissertation summary. Opava 1987; BORÁK, Mečislav: K některým metodologickým a heuristickým problémům regionálního výzkumu dějin protifašistického odboje (1938–1945) v Severomoravském kraji [Some Methodological and Heuristic Problems of Regional Research of the History of Anti-Fascist Resistance (1938–1945) in North Moravia Region], in: *Zpravodaj SÚO ČSAV*, Opava, leden-březen 1989, s. 7–9; BORÁK, Mečislav: K výzkumu problematiky českého a polského národního odboje na odtrženém území Těšínska v letech 1938–1945 [On the Research of Czech and Polish National Resistance in the Breakaway Těšín Territory in 1938–1945], in: *Slezsko v československo-polských vztazích 1918–1947*, Opava, 1991, 50–54; BORÁK, Mečislav: Wilhelm Kosarz i „czeska czwórka” [Wilhelm Kosarz and the „Czech Four“], in: *Kalendarz Śląski vol. 30*, 1994, 69–77; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zapomenutí hrdinové. Osudy letců z Těšínska na západní frontě [Forgotten Heroes. The Destinies of Airmen from Těšín Silesia on the Western Front], in: *Těšínsko*, 37, 1994, 1, 7–14; BORÁK, Mečislav: Vyústění koncepce českého a polského národního odboje na Těšínsku [Results of the Concept of the Czech and Polish National Resistance in Těšín Silesia], in: *Válečný rok 1944. Příspěvky účastníků mezinárodní konference konané ve dnech 19. – 20. října 1999 v Praze*, ZUDOVÁ-LEŠKOVÁ, Zlatica (ed.), Praha 2001, 160–164; BORÁK, Mečislav: Úvodem [By Introduction], in: *Cesty a osudy bohumínských odbojářů 1938–1945*, Bohumín 1995, 4–6; BORÁK, Mečislav: Dwie koncepcje oporu na Śląsku Cieszyńskim (Zaolzie) w latach 1938–1945 [Two Concepts of Resistance in Těšín Silesia (Zaolzie) 1938–1945], in: *Międzyprzymusową przyjaźnią a prawdziwą solidarnością. Czesi – Polacy – Słowacy 1938/39–1945–1989. Część I.*, BLAŽEK, Petr – P. JAWORSKI, Paweł – KAMINSKI, Łukasz (eds.), Warszawa 2007, 137–143.

12 BORÁK, Mečislav: Útěk z tábora v Dössel [Escape from the Camp in Dössel], in: *Těšínsko*, 29, 1986, 1, 23–24. Polish translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: Ucieczka z obozu Dössel, in: *Głos Ludu*, 11 July 1985, 4; BORÁK, Mečislav: Atak na tunel. Napad niemiecki na Przełęcz Jabłonkowską 26. VIII. 1939 r. [Attacking a Tunnel. German Attack on the Pass of Jablunkow 26 August 1939], in: *Kalendarz Śląski vol. 30*, 1994, 35–41; BORÁK, Mečislav: Pierwsze dni okupacji hitlerowskiej na Śląsku Cieszyńskim [First Days of Hitler's Occupation of Těšín Silesia], in: *Pamiętnik Cieszyński vol. 9*, 1994, 132–143; BORÁK, Mečislav: W obcym mundurze [In Foreign Uniform], in: *Pamiętnik Cieszyński vol. 9*, 1994, 52–53; BORÁK, Mečislav: Válečné matriky z Karvinska [War Registries of Karvina], in: *Těšínsko*, 39, 1996, 2, 28. Polish translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: Wojenne metryki, in: *Głos Ludu*, 2 May 1996; BORÁK, Mečislav: Nieznane egzekucje Polaków [Unknown Executions of Poles], in: *Kalendarz Śląski vol. 35*, 1999, 99–102; BORÁK, Mečislav: Kolaborace kněží z Těšínska s okupanty v letech 1938–1945 v materiálech poválečných soudů [Priests Collaborating with the Occupiers of Těšínska in 1938–1945 in Post-War Courts Materials], in: *An-*

well as on capturing the fate of the local inhabitants.¹³

The so-called Polenlagers, a special system of Nazi concentration camps for Poles in Silesia, formed a relatively independent aspect of war history, loosely associated with forced labour of the population on occupied territories to work in the Reich. These issues were dealt comprehensively by M. Borák in connection with his activities as a member and the Chairman of the Appellate Committee for the Compensation of Forced Labourers by the Czech Council for Victims of Nazism and the Czech-German Fund for the Future between 2001 and 2006. Already in 2001, he conducted a summarizing study of forced labour, taking into account the circumstances in Těšín Silesia and the deployment of the Poles in the Reich, which was used in determining the conditions of the compensation to forced labourers; in addition, later, of course, he informed other European countries and the professional public on the course of compensation of Nazi victims in our country.¹⁴ In 2004, he published the first comprehensive study of the so-called Czech Polenlagers, which he had already focused on in several articles.¹⁵

In the late 1990s, he devoted much attention to clarify controversial issues related to the Polish annexation of the Těšín territory in 1938–1939; whether it was an activity of the so-called Silesian resistance and the Czech subversion in the Těšín region in 1938–1939¹⁶ or

dros probabilis. Sborník prací přátel a spolupracovníků Prof. PhDr. Miloše Trapla, CSc. k jeho 70. narozeninám, MALÍŘ, Jiří – MAREK, Pavel (eds.), Brno-Olomouc 2005, 227–239; BORÁK, Mečislav: Fenomén německé volkslisty [The Phenomenon of German Volksliste], in: PEJČOCH, Ivo – PLACHÝ, Jiří et al.: *Okupace, kolaborace, retribuce*, Praha 2010, 111–119; BORÁK, Mečislav: Hitlerowski falstart [Hitler's False Start], in: *Kalendarz Beskidzki 2014*, Bielsko-Biala 2013, 160–164.

13 BORÁK, Mečislav: Válečné osudy Karola Śliwky [War fates of Karol Śliwka], in: *Těšínsko*, 32, 1989, 3, 17–19. Polish translation: Uwaga! Niebezpieczny agitator! [Attention! Dangerous Aligator!], in: *Głos Ludu*, 23 March 1989, 3; BORÁK, Mečislav: Polské obyvatelstvo na Těšínsku [Polish Population in Těšín Silesia], in: *Nacistická perzekuce obyvatel českých zemí. Studijní materiál pro učitele dějepisu*, HOŘÁK, Martin – JELÍNEK, Tomáš (eds.), Praha 2006, 33–38; BORÁK, Mečislav: Losy powstańców śląskich w kampanii wrześniowej 1939 r. na Śląsku Cieszyńskim [Fates of the Silesian Rebels in the September Těšín Silesia Campaign 1939], in: *Plebiscyt i powstania śląskie 1919–1921 - 90 lat*, LIS, Michał – DROŽDŽ, Leokadia (eds.), Opole 2012, 134–144.

14 BORÁK, Mečislav: Nucené nasazení Poláků na práce do Říše v letech 1939–1945 (s přihlédnutím k Polákům z Těšínska) [Forced Labour of the Poles in the Reich in 1939–1945 (taking into account the Poles from Těšín)], in: *Slezský sborník*, 99, 2001, 2, 95–108; BORÁK, Mečislav: Soudobé problémy odškodnění obětí druhé světové války v České republice [Contemporary Problems of Compensation to Victims of the Second World War in the Czech Republic], in: *Śląsk Opolski i Opawski w Unii Europejskiej. Problemy pierwszych lat członkostwa w stosunku do przemian społecznych / Opolské a opavské Slezsko v Evropské unii. Problémy prvních let členství se zřetelem na společenské proměny*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Opava 2007, 39–49; BORÁK, Mečislav: Klopotná cesta. Odškodňování nacistických obětí v evropských zemích [Arduous Journey. Compensation of Nazi Victims in European Countries], in: *Soudobé dějiny*, 16, 2009, 1, 177–182.

15 BORÁK, Mečislav: Relacja z poszukiwania obozu [Report on the Search of a Camp], in: *Głos Ziemi Cieszyńskiej*, 26, 1986, 27, 4; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zapomniany obóz. "Polenlager" nr 83 w Beneszowie Dolnym [The Forgotten Camp. "Polenlager" no. 83 in Dolní Benešov], in: *Kalendarz Śląski* vol. 29, 1993, 67–75; BORÁK, Mečislav: „Polenlágry” – zvláštní druh nacistických koncentračních táborů ve Slezsku [“Polenlagers” - A Special Kind of Nazi Concentration Camps in Silesia], in: *Těšínsko*, 37, 1994, 4, 24–27; BORÁK, Mečislav: Tábor pro Poláky ve Slezsku (1939, 1942–1945) [Camps for Poles in Silesia (1939, 1942–1945)], in: *Museli pracovat pro Říši. Nucené pracovní nasazení českého obyvatelstva v letech 2. světové války. Sborník ze semináře konaného ve státním ústředním archivu v Praze dne 2. dubna 2004*, PAŽOUT, Jaroslav – KOKOŠKOVÁ, Zdeňka – KOKOŠKA, Stanislav (eds.), Praha 2004, 124–137.

16 BORÁK, Mečislav: Joža Vochala a Slezský odboj [Joža Vochala and the Silesian Resistance], in: *Práce a studie Muzea Beskyd ve Frýdku-Místku* no. 8, 1993, 28–34; BORÁK, Mečislav: Neznámé dokumenty k činnosti tzv. Slezského odboje [Unknown Documents of the Activities of the So-Called Silesian Resistance], in: *Slezský sborník*,

a delimitation of borders in the autumn of 1938 and the disputes that accompanied it.¹⁷ Most recently, he has taken interest in the influence of the Polish police in the Těšín region before the outbreak of the war.¹⁸ The issue of the period 1938–1939 concerned him from the very start so much that he also studied it from a Central European perspective; either from the point of the Czechoslovak-Polish military engagement at Čadca in November 1938,¹⁹ the incident at the Polish Consulate in Moravian Ostrava at the end of that year²⁰ or the Czechoslovak defence of Carpathian Ruthenia from October 1938 till March 1939.²¹ The above-mentioned research of the period 1938–1945 became gradually projected into the processing of the history of selected municipalities and cities in Těšín Silesia,²² in a

96, 1998, 4, 297–308; BORÁK, Mečislav: Česká diverze na Těšínsku v letech 1938–1939 [Czech Diversion in Těšín Silesia 1938–1939], in: *Slezský sborník*, 94, 1996, 1, 45–53; Polish translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: Czeska dywersja na Zaolziu 1938–1939. Silesian Resistance, in: *Głos Ludu*, 21 March – 18 April 1996.

17 BORÁK, Mečislav: Zábor Těšínska v říjnu 1938 a první fáze delimitace hranic mezi Československem a Polskem (výběr dokumentů) [Occupation of Těšín Silesia in October 1938 and the First Phase of the Delimitation of the Border Between Czechoslovakia and Poland (A Selection of Documents)], in: *Časopis Slezského zemského muzea, série B*, 46, 1997, 3, 206–248; BORÁK, Mečislav: Koupaliště na hranici [The swimming pool at the border], in: *Těšínsko*, 41, 1998, 4, 20–21; BORÁK, Mečislav: Spor o chatu pod Velkým Polomem [The Dispute over the Cabin Under Velký Polom], in: *Těšínsko*, 41, 1998, 4, 9–10; BORÁK, Mečislav: Druhá fáze delimitace hranic mezi Československem a Polskem na Těšínsku v listopadu 1938 (výběr dokumentů) [The Second Phase of the Delimitation of the Border Between Czechoslovakia and Poland in Těšín Silesia in November 1938 (selection of documents)], in: *Časopis Slezského zemského muzea, série B*, 49, 2000, 1, 51–94.

18 BORÁK, Mečislav: Struktura a činnost Policie Slezského vojvodství na Těšínsku v letech 1938–1939 [The Structure and Operation of the Silesian Voivodeship Police in Těšín Silesia 1938–1939], in: *Časopis Slezského zemského muzea, série B*, 62, 2013, 1, 1–23; BORÁK, Mečislav: Personální složení jednotek Policie Slezského vojvodství na Těšínsku v letech 1938–1939 [Personnel Composition of the Silesian Voivodeship Police units in Těšín Silesia 1938–1939], in: *Časopis Slezského zemského muzea, série B*, 64, 2015, 61–78.

19 BORÁK, Mečislav: Československo–polská “malá válka” u Čadce 25. listopadu 1938 [Czechoslovak–Polish “little war” at Čadca November 25, 1938], in: *Historie a vojenství*, 47, 1998, 4, 65–90; BORÁK, Mečislav: Incident pod Tatrami 27. listopadu 1938 a delimitace hranic mezi Polskem a Česko-Slovenskem [Incident under the Tatras November 27, 1938 and the Delimitation of the Border Between Poland and Czechoslovakia], in: *Historie a vojenství*, 47, 1998, 5, 3–24; BORÁK, Mečislav: Starcie zbrojne polskiego i czechosłowackiego wojska pod Czacą 25 listopada 1938 roku [Armed Clashes of the Polish and Czechoslovak Military at Czaca, 25 November 1938], in: *Od Zaolzia po Jaworzynę. Rewindykacje graniczne jesienią 1938 roku. Práce Komisji Historii Wojskowości, tom III, Materiały z seminarium naukowego zorganizowanego w 60. rocznicę powrotu Zaolzia i Jaworzyny do Polski: Nowy Targ, 27. listopada 2003 r. Práce Komisji Historii Wojskowości, tom III*, KOWALSKI, Robert (ed.), Nowy Targ 2004, 69–100.

20 BORÁK, Mečislav: Únos „bílého orla”. Incident u polského konzulátu v Moravské Ostravě 26. 12. 1939 [Kidnapping the “White Eagle”. The Incident at the Polish Consulate in Moravian Ostrava 26. 12. 1939], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy a Ostravska*, vol. 20, Ostrava 2001, 466–472. BORÁK, Mečislav: Porwanie Orła Białego [Kidnapping the White Eagle], in: *Kalendarz Śląski*, vol. 37, 2001, 133–138.

21 BORÁK, Mečislav: Obrana Podkarpatské Rusi (říjen 1938 – březen 1939) [Defense of Carpathian Ruthenia (October 1938 – March 1939)], in: *Česko-slovenská historická ročenka 1997*, Brno 1997, 165–178; BORÁK, Mečislav: Boje československé armády na Slovensku a Podkarpatské Rusi (říjen 1938 – březen 1939) [Fights of the Czechoslovak Army in the Slovak Republic and Carpathian Ruthenia (October 1938 – March 1939)], in: *Sborník Vojenské akademie v Brně, řada C-D, vol. 2*, Brno 1999, 123–128; BORÁK, Mečislav: Obrana republiky na Podkarpatské Rusi v letech 1938–1939 [Defense of the Republic at Carpathian Ruthenia in 1938–1939], in: *Vznik ČSR 1918 a Podkarpatská Rus. (Sborník z mezinárodní konference v Praze), Edice Podkarpatská Rus, sv. 21*, BALCAR, Miroslav (ed.), Praha 1999, 87–95; BORÁK, Mečislav: Śmierć to połoninach Zakarpacia [Death in Zakarpattian Polonynas], in: *Kalendarz Śląski vol. 39*, 2003, 127–140.

22 BORÁK, Mečislav: Orlová v letech 1938–1945 [Orlová in 1938–1945], in: *Dějiny Orlové*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Orlová 1993, 112–114, 116–122, 129–140; BORÁK, Mečislav: Předchůdci Havířova v letech 1938–1945 [Predecessors of Havířov 1938–1945], in: *Havířov*, TOMOLOVÁ, Věra – ŽÁČEK, Rudolf (eds.), Havířov, 1995, 61–69;

more general analyses of the state of research and literature, including consideration of the possibilities and perspectives in the elaboration of the history of Těšín Silesia and municipality Czech Těšín,²³ and in the complex view of Těšín Silesia in the context of the occupied border region and of Silesia, including broader contexts.²⁴

Among the jubilee celebrating scientist's publication activities, other topics associated with Těšín Silesia in different periods clearly arise as well. One of them is, for instance, the Czechoslovak-Polish dispute over Těšín Silesia in 1918–1920 in the context of the Czech-Slovak-Polish relations. At the time of the Division of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic already, Borák commented clearly on the alleged damage to Slovakia while establishing Czechoslovakian-Polish border in 1920;²⁵ there he applied himself to evaluating the prepared „kidnapping” of Andrej Hlinka by the Polish intelligence,²⁶ the transfer of war material to Poland in the summer of 1920,²⁷ the attitudes of celebrities towards the dispute

BORÁK, Mečislav: Události v roce 1938; Suchá v době okupace a války v letech 1939–1945 / Wydarzenia z 1938 roku; Sucha w czasie okupacji i wojny w latach 1939–1945 [Events in 1938; Suchá During the Times of Occupation and War 1939–1945], in: *Horní Suchá 1305–2005*, Havířov, 2005, 22–31; BORÁK, Mečislav: Suchá v době okupace a války v letech 1938–1945 [Suchá During the Times of Occupation and War 1939–1945], in: *Těšínsko*, 48, 2005, 2, 16–21; BORÁK, Mečislav: Těšín za války a německé okupace [Těšín During the War and German Occupation], in: *Český Těšín 1920–1989: Válečné a poválečné osudy města*, Opava 2011, 21–41.

23 BORÁK, Mečislav – ŽÁČEK, Rudolf: Problematika historie Těšína [The Issue of the History of Těšín], in: *Stan i potrzeby badań nad dziejami Cieszyna*, PANIC, Idzi – NOWAK, Krzysztof (eds.), Cieszyn 1998, 62–65; BORÁK, Mečislav: Stav a perspektivy výzkumu dějin Českého Těšína [The State and Prospects of the Research of the History of Czech Těšín], in: *Stan i potrzeby badań nad dziejami Cieszyna*, Cieszyn 1998, 66–68; BORÁK, Mečislav: Česká historiografie k dějinám Těšínska za druhé světové války (1939–1945) [Czech Historiography on the History of Těšín Silesia During the Second World War (1939–1945)], in: *Stan i potrzeby badań nad dziejami Śląska Cieszyńskiego*, PANIC, Idzi (ed.), Cieszyn 2000, 106–118; BORÁK, Mečislav: Dějiny Těšínského Slezska 1938–1945 na stránkách Těšínska [History of Těšínsko Region Silesia, 1938–1945 on the Pages of the Těšínsko], in: *Těšínsko*, 50, 2007, 4, 4–6;

24 BORÁK, Mečislav: Těšínsko v letech 1938–1945 [Těšín Region in 1938–1945], in: *Nástin dějin Těšínska*, BORÁK, Mečislav – GAWRECKI, Dan (eds.), Ostrava – Praha 1992, 102–117. Polish translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: Śląsk Cieszyński w latach 1938–1945, in: *Zarys dziejów Śląska Cieszyńskiego*, BORÁK, Mečislav – GAWRECKI, Dan (eds.), Ostrava – Praha 1992, 102–117; BORÁK, Mečislav: Těšínské Slezsko v rámci okupovaného pohraničí v letech 1938–1945 [Těšín Silesia Within the Occupied Borderland 1938–1945], in: *Historie okupovaného pohraničí 1938–1945, Vol. 11*, Ústí nad Labem 2006, 83–135; BORÁK, Mečislav: Německá okupace Těšínského Slezska [German Occupation of Těšín Silesia], in: *Poláci na Těšínsku. Studijní materiál*, Český Těšín 2009, 42–59; BORÁK, Mečislav: Śląsk Cieszyński podczas okupacji. Część 1-2 [Těšín Silesia in Times of German Occupation. Volume 1-2], in: *Wiarus. Kwartalnik Stowarzyszenia Wojskowej Historii Śląska Cieszyńskiego*, no. 1 (66), 2011, 6–7 (1st part); no. 2 (67), 2011, 2–3 (2nd part).

25 BORÁK, Mečislav – ŽÁČEK, Rudolf: *Ukradené vesnice. Musí Češi platit za 8 slovenských obcí?* [The Stolen Villages. Do the Czechs Have to Pay for 8 Slovak Municipalities?], Český Těšín, 1993.

26 BORÁK, Mečislav: „Únos” Andreje Hlinky. Tajná akce polské rozvědky z roku 1920 [The “Kidnapping” Of Andrej Hlinka. Polish Secret Intelligence Operations of 1920], in: *Těšínsko*, 39, 1996, 4, 7–11; Polish translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: Czy Polacy chcieli porwać Hlinkę? [Did the Polish Want to Obduct Hlinka?], in: *Kalendarz Śląski vol. 33*, 1997, 141–146; BORÁK, Mečislav: Opožděný “únos” Andreje Hlinky [Belated “Kidnapping” of Andrej Hlinka], in: *Slovanské historické studie, vol. 23*, 1997, 63–67; BORÁK, Mečislav: Chystaný únos Andreja Hlinku. Tajná akcia polskej výzvednej služby [Forthcoming Kidnapping of Andrej Hlinka. Secret Action of the Polish Intelligence Service], in: *Historická revue. Časopis o dejinách spoločnosti*, 9, 1998, 7, 8–9.

27 BORÁK, Mečislav: Zadržování přepravy válečného materiálu přes Československo do Polska v letech 1919–1920 [Withholding Transport of War Material Through Czechoslovakia to Poland in 1919–1920], in: *Śląsk Cieszyński u zarania polskiej i czechosłowackiej niepodległości 1918–1920*, NOWAK, Krzysztof (ed.), Cieszyn 1999, 86–95; BORÁK, Mečislav: Rozmowy Polaków z Beneszem w sprawie polskich transportów wojskowych przez Czechosłowację w lipcu i sierpniu 1920 r [Poles in Talks with Beneš on the Polish Military Transports Through

over Těšín Silesia²⁸ and their interpretation in the Czechoslovak and Czech historiography.²⁹ Another of his topics is represented by the changes in the relations between Czechoslovakia (the Czech Republic) and Poland in Těšín Silesia, which Borák once again examined from different aspects, such as the relics of historical memory in the minds of the local inhabitants,³⁰ the fate of the memory of the crashed Polish airmen F. Żwirek and P. Wigura in Těrlicko in 1932³¹ or of the Polish activities in 1945.³² More generally, he has elaborated on this issue in a recent article on the contemporary transformation of the view of „neighbours” in the Czech-Polish border regions.³³ Finally, it is necessary to mention some minor articles on interesting personalities and events of Těšín Silesia.³⁴ Many of the works on Těšín Silesia outreach the region and are concerned, in varying de-

Czechoslovakia in July and August 1920], in: *Pamiętnik Cieszyński* vol. 14, 1999, 110–118.

28 BORÁK, Mečislav: Spor o Těšínsko a Karel Čapek [Dispute over Těšín Silesia and Karel Čapek], in: *Těšínsko*, 44, 2001, 2, 26–27; BORÁK, Mečislav: Wojciech Korfanty a Těšínsko v pamětech Jaroslava Šaldy [Wojciech Korfanty and Těšín Silesia in the memoirs of Jaroslav Šalda], in: *Těšínsko*, 46, 2003, 2, 19–20.

29 BORÁK, Mečislav: Konflikt o Śląsk Cieszyński. W czechosłowackiej i czeskiej historiografii [Dispute over Těšín Silesia. In Czechoslovak and Czech Historiography], in: *Historia Górnego Śląska. Polityka, gospodarka i kultura europejskiego regionu*, BAHŁCKE, Joachim – GAWRECKI, Dan – R. KACZMAREK, Ryszard (eds.), Gliwice 2011, 451–455.

30 BORÁK, Mečislav: Stosunki czesko-polskie w świadomości Polaków na Śląsku Cieszyńskim po 1989 roku [Czech-Polish Relations in the Awareness of the Polish in Těšín Silesia after 1989], in: *Strefa pogranicza Polska – Czechy, Procesy transformacji i rozwoju. Materiały z konferencji międzynarodowej Opole–Ostrava 19–21 kwietnia 1995 r.*, HEFFNER, Kristian – DROBEK, Wiesław (eds.), Opole 1996, 63–69.

31 BORÁK, Mečislav: Żwirkowisko – przemiany symbolu [Żwirkowisko – Metamorphoses of a Symbol], in: *Żwirkowisko. Historia i współczesność miejsca pamięci legendarnych lotników polskich Franciszka Żwirki i Stanisława Wigury*, SZYMECZEK, József (ed.), Czeski Cieszyn 2002, 84–114; BORÁK, Mečislav: Památník letecké tragédie v Těrlicku – symbol proměn česko-polských vztahů na Těšínsku v letech 1932-1938 [Memorial of the Air Tragedy in Těrlicko – a Symbol of the Changes of the Czech–Polish Relations in Těšín Silesia 1932-1938], in: *Časopis Slezského zemského muzea, série B*, 51, 2002, 3, 269–288; BORÁK, Mečislav: Havárie polských letců Żwirka a Wigury v Těrlicku [The Crash of the Polish Airmen Żwirek and Wigura in Těrlicko], in: *Těšínsko*, 46, 2003, 1, 15–19.

32 BORÁK, Mečislav: Dvě zprávy o Těšínku v roce 1945 [Two Reports on Těšín Silesia in 1945], in: *Těšínsko*, 39, 1996, 2, 29–30; BORÁK, Mečislav: Humanitární akce nebo provokace? Polská potravinová pomoc Těšínku v červnu 1945 [Humanitarian Action or Provocation? Polish Food Aid to Těšín Silesia in June 1945], in: *Těšínsko*, 40, 1997, 1, 10–14; BORÁK, Mečislav: Nieudana misja [A Failed Mission], in: *Kalendarz Śląski* vol. 33, 1997, 69–75. Other work for the Czech-Polish relations in Těšín Silesia: BORÁK, Mečislav: Umlčené zvony [The Silenced Bells], in: *Těšínsko*, 41, 1998, 2, 25–26; BORÁK, Mečislav: Łotewska afera Pawła Kubisza [The Latvian Affair of Pawel Kubisza], in: *Kalendarz Śląski* vol. 36, 2000, 69–75.

33 BORÁK, Mečislav: Proměny obrazu „toho druhého” v česko-polských vztazích v pohraničních regionech (předpoklady a možnosti výzkumu) [Transformations of the Image of “The Other” in Czech-Polish Relations in Border Regions (Assumptions and Options for Research)], in: *Śląsk Opolski i Opawski w Unii Europejskiej. Postsocjalistyczny bagaż i unijne realia / Opolské a opavské Slezsko v Evropské unii. Postsocialistická zátěž a unijní realie*, KOZERA, Bartłomiej – LIS, Michał (eds.), Opole 2006, 98–107. Polish translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: *Przemiany image sąsiada polskich w relacjach czesko-regionów pogranicza (założenia i możliwości badawcze)*, in: *Śląsk Opolski i Opawski w Unii Europejskiej. Postsocjalistyczny bagaż i unijne realia / Opolské a opavské Slezsko v Evropské unii. Postsocialistická zátěž a unijní realie*, KOZERA, Bartłomiej – LIS, Michał (eds.), Opole 2006, 107–117.

34 BORÁK, Mečislav: Když byla cholera metlou lidstva [When Cholera Was the Scourge of Mankind], in: *Těšínsko*, 42, 1999, 2, 15–19; BORÁK, Mečislav: Orlovský farář Adolf Unger v pamětech Václava Vaška [Adolf Unger: The Parish Priest of Orlová in the Memories of Václav Vašek], in: *Těšínsko*, 46, 2003, 2, 21–22; BORÁK, Mečislav: Těšínská nota v pamětech Ivo Stolaříka [Těšín Tune in the Memories of Ivo Stolařík], in: *Těšínsko*, 46, 2003, 1, 30–31; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zajímavá židle z Těšína [Interesting Chair from Těšín], in: *Těšínsko*, 52, 2009, 3, 28–29.

grees, with the whole of the Czech Silesia or the Ostrava Region between 1938 and 1945. The subject of M. Borák's continuous interest in these areas was primarily the issue of local resistance,³⁵ however, he also captured the occupation conditions in the Ostrava Region³⁶ and elsewhere in the Czech lands and in Poland.³⁷ His main contribution, however, lies in the ongoing analysis of the state and tasks of the research³⁸ and especially in the synthetic

35 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Po stopách partyzánů v Beskydech* [Tracking the Footsteps of the Partisans in the Beskydy Mountains], Ostrava 1984; BORÁK, Mečislav: Předmluva [Preface], in: ČVANDA, František: *V nerovném boji*, Ostrava 1990, 7–10 (A Publication on the Partisan Group „White Lioness“, later under name „The Moravian–Silesian Jan Žižka“); BORÁK, Mečislav: Odboj proti nacistickým okupantům na Ostravsku v letech 1939–1945 [The Resistance Against Nazi Occupiers in the Ostrava Region 1939–1945], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a výstavbě Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 16*, Ostrava 1991, 30–54; BORÁK, Mečislav: Odboj proti nacistickým okupantům [The Resistance Against Nazi Occupiers], in: JIŘÍK, Karel et al.: *Dějiny Ostravy*, Ostrava 1993, 378–388; BORÁK, Mečislav: Odboj ve Slezsku [Resistance in Silesia], in: *Rok 1942 v českém odboji. Sborník příspěvků z vědecké konference*, Praha 1999, 60–62; Mečislav BORÁK, Odboj na území českého Slezska v letech 1938–1945 [Resistance on the Territory of Czech Silesia 1938–1945], in: *Účast křesťanů v protifašistickom odboji v strednej Európe v rokoch 1933–1945. Materiály z 1. časti medzinárodnej konferencie, ktorá sa uskutočnila 24. – 25. októbra 2000 v Múzeu Slovenského národného povstania v Banskej Bystrici pod názvom Postoje evanjelických kresťanov k fašizácii a nacizácii spoločenského života v strednej Európe v rokoch 1933–1945*, BARANOVÁ, Daniela – TÓTH, Dezider (eds.), Liptovský Mikuláš 2001, 69–79.

36 BORÁK, Mečislav: Svědectví o zastřelení anglického a kanadského letce u Moravské Ostravy v roce 1944 [Testimony on the Shooting of the English and Canadian Airmen in Moravian Ostrava in 1944], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a výstavbě Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 16*, Ostrava 1991, 147–156; BORÁK, Mečislav: Ruské protisovětské středisko v Ostravě za druhé světové války [Russian Anti-Soviet Centre in Ostrava During WWII.], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a výstavbě Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 18*, Ostrava 1997, 256–258; BORÁK, Mečislav: Krmelín za druhé republiky, za války a nacistické okupace (1938–1945) [Krmelín During the Second Republic, During the War and the Nazi Occupation (1938–1945)], in: STIBOR, Jiří – NOSKOVÁ, Miroslava – BORÁK, Mečislav – JAROLÍMOVÁ, Ludmila et al.: *Dějiny Krmelína*, Brušperk – Krmelín 1997, 121–133; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zavraždění ostravských skautů a jejich přátel v dubnu 1945 [The Murder of Ostravian Scouts and Their Friends in April 1945], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a výstavbě Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 19*, Ostrava 1999, 71–108; BORÁK, Mečislav: Oskar Schindler ve službách abwehru na Ostravsku [Oskar Schindler in the Service of the Abwehr in the Ostrava Region], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a výstavbě Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 21*, Ostrava 2003, 246–262; BORÁK, Mečislav: Odras propagandy Kominterny v ilegálním tisku ostravských komunistů na počátku II. světové války (1939–1941) [Reflection of the Propaganda of the Comintern in the Illegal Printing of Ostravian Communists at the Beginning of World War II (1939–1941)], in: *Bolševismus, komunismus a radikální socialismus v Československu. Vol. VIII*, Praha 2011, 30–51. BORÁK, Mečislav: Rozvědčik z Ostravy u Hitlerova „Vlího doupěte“. Neznámé válečné osudy Jana Borovce (1923–1944?) [Spy from Ostrava in Hitler's "Wolf's Lair". The Unknown War Fate of Jan Borovec (1923–1944?)], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a výstavbě Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 26*, Ostrava 2012, 50–81.

37 BORÁK, Mečislav: Ucieczka z transportu śmierci [Escape from the Transport of Death], in: *Biuletyn Towarzystwa Opieki nad Oświęcimiem no. 34*, Warszawa 1998, 193–196; BORÁK, Mečislav: Ucieczka z transportu śmierci [Escape from the Transport of Death], in: *Kalendarz Śląski vol. 34*, 1998, 126–129 (Articles depicting the escapes of Polish prisoners from the death transports in Prague); BARTOŠ, Josef - BORÁK, Mečislav: Češi v Říšské župě Sudety [Czechs in the Reichsgau Sudetenland], in: *Nacistická perzekuce obyvatel českých zemí. Studijní materiál pro učitele dějepisu*, HOŘÁK, Martin – JELÍNEK, Tomáš (eds.), Praha 2006, 30–51; BORÁK, Mečislav: Okupační podmínky v župě Povartí [Occupation Conditions in the Reichsgau Wartheland], in: HOHENSTEIN, Alexander: *Warthegau. Deník z let 1941–1942*, Praha 2007, 18–21.

38 BORÁK, Mečislav: Období let 1938–1945 [The Time Period 1938–1945], in: BAKALA, Jaroslav et al., *Slezsko v dějinách českého státu. Stav a úkoly výzkumu*, Opava, 1991, 225–261; BORÁK, Mečislav: Stav výzkumu dějin českého Slezska v období let 1938–1945 [The State of the Research of the History of Czech Silesia in the Period 1938–1945], in: *Slezsko v dějinách českého státu. Sborník příspěvků z vědecké konference, pořádané pod záštitou prezidenta České republiky Václava Havla u příležitosti 50. výročí Slezského ústavu SZM v Opavě*, in: BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Opava, 1998, 283–291; BORÁK, Mečislav: Okres 1938–1945 [The Period 1938–1945], in: *Śląskoznawcze deficyty badawcze nauk historycznych*, CZAPLIŃSKI, Marek – DĘBICKI, Jacek – PRZERWA, Tomasz (eds.), Wrocław 2007, 125; BORÁK, Mečislav: K problémům periodizace dějin Slezska v letech 1938–1945 [On

processing of the period 1938–1945 in the history of Czech Silesia.³⁹ The Central European dimension is also included in his considerations on the role of Silesia in international relations and foreign policy from the end of the First World War until 1945.⁴⁰

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Once the archives were made available to researchers and it was possible to study the previously tabooed topics after 1989, M. Borák became one of the most prominent figures of the research in political repression of the citizens from the end of the 1930s to the mid-1950s in Czechoslovakia and in Central and Eastern Europe. We may here distinguish four basic directions of his research activities,⁴¹ two of which have contributed primarily to the elimination of „white spots“ in our recent history after 1945, i.e. the period, which he previously dealt only marginally while working at the Silesian Institute.⁴² The first was an extensive research of internment forms in political persecution after World War II, especially various types of camps and camp systems. In the first half of the 1990s, he examined the activities of the commissions for the classification of the citizens for forced labour camps (TNP) 1948–1954 in the Ostrava Region and in Czechoslovakia, summarizing his findings in a monograph, which earned international acclaim.⁴³ Later, he captured the post-war persecution of Germans in Ostrava, which culminated in a bloody incident in the inter-

the Issue of Periodization of Silesian History 1938–1945], in: *K periodizaci dějin Slezska. (Sborník z pracovního zasedání v Opavě 11. – 12. prosince 2007)*, GAWRECKI, Dan (ed.), Opava 2008, 189–197.

39 BORÁK, Mečislav: Slezsko v letech 1938–1945 [Silesia 1938–1945], in: *Dějiny Českého Slezska 1740–2000. III. pracovní svazek 1938–2000*, GAWRECKI, Dan (ed.), Opava 2001, 441–477; BORÁK, Mečislav: České Slezsko 1938–1945 [Czech Silesia, 1938–1945], in: GAWRECKI, Dan et al.: *Dějiny Českého Slezska 1740–2000, part II.*, Opava 2003, 369–404.

40 BORÁK, Mečislav – ŽÁČEK, Rudolf: Role Slezska v zahraničních vztazích ČSR vůči Německu a Polsku v letech 1918–1938 [The Role of Silesia in the Foreign Relations of Czechoslovakia to Germany and Poland 1918–1938], in: *Československo 1918–1938. Díl 2: Osudy demokracie ve střední Evropě. Sborník mezinárodní vědecké konference v Praze, 5. – 8. října 1998, Valdštejnský palác – Senát Parlamentu České republiky*, HARNA Josef – VALEN TA, Jaroslav – VORÁČEK, Emil (eds.), Praha 1999, 566–570; BORÁK, Mečislav: Evropská dimenze dějin Slezska v letech 1938–1945 [The European Dimension of the History of Silesia between 1938–1945], in: JIRÁSEK, Zdeněk et al.: *Evropská dimenze slezských dějin*, Opava, 2009, 97–101.

41 Here to cf.: BORÁK, Mečislav: K výsledkům výzkumu Slezského ústavu o perzekucích totalitních režimů [On the Results of the Research of the Silesian Institute in Persecutions of Totalitarian Regimes], in: *Slezský sborník*, 107, 2009, 2-3, 124–134.

42 BORÁK, Mečislav: Politická orientace obyvatelstva průmyslových oblastí českých zemí v letech 1945–1946 [The Political Orientation of the Population of the Industrial Areas of the Czech Lands 1945–1946], in: *Slezský sborník*, 87, 1989, 2, 102–120.

43 BORÁK, Mečislav – JANÁKOVÁ, Marie: K činnosti ostravských komisí pro zařazování osob do TNP (1948–1953) [On the Activities of the Ostravian Commissions for the Classification of Persons for Forced Labour Camps (1948–1953)], in: *Tábory nucené práce a další projevy perzekuce 1948–1954*, Opava 1991, 28–54; BORÁK, Mečislav – JANÁK, Dušan: *Tábory nucené práce v ČSR 1948–1954* [The Forced Labour Camps of Czechoslovakia 1948–1954], Opava 1996. A book was quoted in the founding work on the issue of camps KOTEK, Joel - RIGOUT, Pierre: *Le siècle des camps. Détention, concentration, extermination. Cent ans de mal radical*, Paris 2000, pages 777 and 802, from where a secondary quotation, the record found its way into the significant publication about the history of the Soviet camps, APPLEBAUM, Anne: *Gulag. A History of the Soviet Camps*, London-New York 2003, page 410; both works have been translated into a range of languages.

ment camp „Hanke“ in 1945⁴⁴ and he compared military camps of forced labour, known in Czechoslovakia as auxiliary technical battalions (PTP) on Central European level.⁴⁵ He also informed the Slovak professional public on the results of his research on extra-judicial persecution in Moravia and Silesia.⁴⁶

In 1993, he launched the pioneering research of criminal prosecution of crimes and transgressions committed during the occupation in the so-called retribution judiciary in the years 1945–1948. At its outset, it was the analysis of the activities of the Extraordinary People’s Court (MLS) in Moravian Ostrava, whose jurisdiction included also the inhabitants of Těšín Silesia.⁴⁷ Paramount significance is attached to his extensive monograph in 1998, in which he captured the retribution judiciary in Czechoslovakia in an international context, defined the basic categories of offences and recounted specific stories of people who stood before the Ostravian Extraordinary People’s Court, thus demonstrating the model of their activity. The work was the first synthetic consideration of this issue in the Czech historiography, which provided - and still provides - a base for subsequent researches of the Extraordinary People’s Courts.⁴⁸ Later, M. Borák conducted the research of Jewish issues and anti-Semitism in retribution judiciary,⁴⁹ he devoted his attention to the general heuristic

44 BORÁK, Mečislav: Internační tábor „Hanke“ v Moravské Ostravě v roce 1945 [The Internment Camp, „Hanke“ in Moravian Ostrava in 1945], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 18*, Ostrava 1997, 88–124.

45 BORÁK, Mečislav: Fenomén tzv. vojenských táborů nucené práce v Československu a jeho mezinárodní souvislosti [The Phenomenon of the So-Called Military Camps of Forced Labour in Czechoslovakia and its International Context], *Slezský sborník*, 98, 2000, 1-2, 78–92.

46 BORÁK, Mečislav: Táborů nucené práce na Ostravsku [Forced Labour Camps in the Ostrava Region], in: *Internacné formy politickej perzekúcie. Zborník referátov, remenicencií a autentických dokumentov*, Košice 1992, 25–33; BORÁK, Mečislav: Výzkum mechanismů mimosoudních perzekucí na Moravě a ve Slezsku v letech 1945–1954 [Research in the Mechanisms of Judicial Persecution in Moravia and Silesia 1945–1954], in: *Internacné formy politickej perzekúcie vol. II. Zborník referátov a utajovaných dokumentov*, Košice 2002, 43–62.

47 BORÁK, Mečislav: Činnost Mimořádného lidového soudu Moravská Ostrava v letech 1945–1948 [The Activity of the Extraordinary People’s Court of Moravská Ostrava 1945–1948], in: *Časopis Slezského zemského muzea, série B*, 44, 1995, 1, 64–90.

48 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Spravedlnost podle dekretu*.

49 BORÁK, Mečislav: Antisemitismus a židovská otázka ve světle materiálů retribučních soudů [Anti-Semitism and the Jewish Question in the Czech Lands in the Light of Documents of the Retribution Courts], in: *Fenomén holocaust. The holocaust phenomenon: sborník mezinárodní vědecké konference: Praha – Terezín, 6. – 8. října 1999*, Praha–Terezín 1999, 103–107; English translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: Anti-Semitism and the Jewish Question in the Czech Lands in the Light of Documents of the Retribution Courts, in: *Fenomén holocaust. The holocaust phenomenon: sborník mezinárodní vědecké konference: Praha – Terezín, 6. – 8. října 1999*, Praha–Terezín 1999, 108–113; BORÁK, Mečislav: Mimořádný lidový soud Moravská Ostrava a projevy antisemitismu v jeho spisech [The Extraordinary People’s Court Moravská Ostrava and Manifestations of Anti-Semitism in Its Documents], in: *Poválečná justice a národní podoby antisemitismu. Postih provinění vůči Židům před soudy a komisemi ONV v českých zemích v letech 1945–1948 a v některých zemích střední Evropy. Sborník příspěvků*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha – Opava 2002, 52–78; BORÁK, Mečislav: Postih provinění vůči Židům před retribučními soudy a komisemi ONV v českých zemích v letech 1945–1948 (výsledky výzkumu) [Sanction for Wrongdoing Against the Jews Before the Retribution Courts and Commissions of the District People’s Committee in the Czech Lands in 1945–1948 (Results of Research)], in: *Poválečná justice a národní podoby antisemitismu. Postih provinění vůči Židům před soudy a komisemi ONV v českých zemích v letech 1945–1948 a v některých zemích střední Evropy. Sborník příspěvků*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha – Opava 2002, 363–373; BORÁK, Mečislav: Spisy mimořádných lidových soudů z let 1945–1948 v českých archivech a možnosti zkoumání židovské problematiky [Files of Exceptional People’s Courts from the years 1945–1948 in the Czech Archives and the possibility of Exploring Jewish Issues], in: *Retribuce v ČR a národní podoby antisemitismu: židovská problematika a antisemitismus ve spisech*

and methodological problems⁵⁰ and followed the prosecution of the German population and war-time journalists accused of collaboration with the Reich-protectorate by the Extraordinary People's Courts of Ostrava and Czech Silesia.⁵¹

Another topical field is represented by the Holocaust research and the research of various forms of persecution of the Jewish population. Although closely associated with his interest in the history of Těšín Silesia and of Silesia, it soon gained international parameters, since from the mid-1990s, M. Borák addressed in detail the history of the first deportation of European Jews in the transports from Moravian Ostrava to Niska upon San 1939-1940, to which he dedicated several monographs⁵² and a number of studies.⁵³ He also traced the fate of Jewish citizens in Czech Silesia⁵⁴ from various aspects, as well as the members of

mimořádných lidových soudů a trestních komisí ONV v letech 1945–1948: (sborník příspěvků), BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha – Opava 2002, 31–58.

50 BORÁK, Mečislav: Archivní fondy k retribučnímu soudnictví v České republice [Archives to Retribution Judiciary in the Czech Republic], in: *Vězeňství ve střední Evropě v letech 1945–1955. Sborník z mezinárodního semináře konaného dne 25. 10. 2000 v Praze*, Praha 2001, a Supplement to the magazine *České vězeňství*, 2001, 3, 150–175; BORÁK, Mečislav: Osoby souzené u retribučních soudů v nepřítomnosti [The People Tried In Absentia by the Retribution Courts], in: *Právněhistorické studie vol. 42*, 2012, 269–284.

51 BORÁK, Mečislav: Protektorátní novináři před retribučními soudy v letech 1945–1948 (na příkladu Mimořádného lidového soudu v Ostravě) [The Protectorate Journalists Before the Retribution Courts 1945–1948 (on the Example of the Extraordinary People's Court in Ostrava)], in: *Fragmenty dějin. Sborník prací k šedesátinám Jana Gebharta*, HÁJEK, Jan – KOCIAN, Jiří – ŽITKO, Milan (eds.), Praha 2006, 507–527; BORÁK, Mečislav – JANÁK, Dušan: Die tschechoslowakische Retributionsgerichtsbarkeit und die deutsche Problematik 1945–1948. Die außerordentlichen Volksgerichte in Moravská Ostrava, Opava und Nový Jičín [Czechoslovak Retribution Judiciary and the Issue of Germans 1945–1948. Extraordinary People's Courts in Ostrava, Opava and Nový Jičín], in: *Sozialgeschichtliche Kommunismusforschung. Tschechoslowakei, Polen, Ungarn und DDR 1948–1968*, BRENNER, Christianne – HEUMOS, Peter (eds.), München 2005, 365–422; BORÁK, Mečislav: Československé retribuční soudnictví v letech 1945–1948 a postih německého obyvatelstva u mimořádných lidových soudů [The Czechoslovak Retribution Judiciary 1945–1948 and the Recourse of the German Population at Extraordinary People's Courts], in: *Právněhistorické studie vol. 42*, 2012, 239–268.

52 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Transport do tmy. První deportace evropských Židů* [Transport into the Darkness. The First Deportation of the European Jews], with foreword by Václav Havel, Ostrava 1994, 223; BORÁK, Mečislav: *První deportace evropských Židů. Transporty do Niska nad Sanem (1939–1940)* [The First Deportation of the European Jews. Transports to Nisko upon San (1939–1940)], 2nd revised edition, Ostrava 2009; English translation: BORÁK, Mečislav: *The First Deportation of the European Jews: the Transports to Nisko upon San (1939–1940)*, Opava 2010.

53 BORÁK, Mečislav: Příprava a průběh niských transportů [The Preparation and Progress of the Nisko Transports], in: *Akce Nisko v historii „konečného řešení židovské otázky“ k 55. výročí první hromadné deportace evropských Židů. Mezinárodní vědecká konference. Sborník referátů*, NESLÁDKOVÁ, Ludmila (ed.), Ostrava 1995, 100–105; BORÁK, Mečislav: Transporty do Niska nad Sanem ve světle literatury a pramenů [Transports to Nisko upon San in Light of the Literature and of Primary Sources], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 22*, Ostrava 2005, 272–294; BORÁK, Mečislav: Deportace do Niska nad Sanem a jejich místo v historii holocaustu [Deportation to Nisko upon San and Their Place in the History of the Holocaust], in: *Historica. Revue pro historii a příbuzné vědy*, 1, 2010, 2, 150–168; BORÁK, Mečislav: Mezinárodní vědecká konference Transporty do Niska nad Sanem (1939–1940). První deportace evropských Židů. Ostrava 14. října 2009 [International Scientific Conference Transports to Nisko upon San (1939–1940). The First Deportation of the European Jews. Ostrava, October 14, 2009], in: *Historica. Revue pro historii a příbuzné vědy*, 1, 2010, 2, 245–248; BORÁK, Mečislav: Z nacistického koncentračního tábora do sovětských gulagů (Osudy ostravských Židů z transportů do Niska nad Sanem) [From the Nazi Concentration Camp into a Soviet Labour Camps (the fates of Ostravian Jews from the transports to Nisko upon San)], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy vol. 25*, Ostrava 2011, 97–135.

54 BORÁK, Mečislav: Situace židovského obyvatelstva na území českého Slezska v době okupace (1938–1945) [The Situation of the Jewish Population on the Territory of Czech Silesia During the Period of the Occupation]

the Ostravian community.⁵⁵ He captured even the response to „Kristallnacht“ in Czechoslovakia.⁵⁶ At the beginning of the new millennium these researches led him to turn to the issue of the restitution of the cultural property of WWII victims, thus obtaining international reputation as one of the leading experts.⁵⁷

The Katyń crime of 1940 became his last major issue, especially its victims originating from the Czech lands, particularly the Poles from Těšín Silesia or related to it. After the release of the first Czech monograph on this crime and of the first extensive work on the victims of Katyń from the territory of the Czech Republic in Polish,⁵⁸ the search for and the registration of the victims continued along with the exploration of a series of subtopics in a number of articles and studies,⁵⁹ which were carried out after the year 2000 as part of the research of

(1938–1945)], in: *Židé ve Slezsku. Studie k dějinám Židů ve Slezsku*, SPYRA, Janusz – WODZIŃSKI, Marcin (eds.), Český Těšín 2001, 142–152. BORÁK, Mečislav: The Situation of the Jewish Population on the Territory of Czech Silesia During the Period of the Occupation 1938–1945, in: *Jews in Silesia*, SPYRA, Janusz – WODZIŃSKI, Marcin (eds.), Kraków 2001, 181–192; BORÁK, Mečislav: Sytuacja ludności żydowskiej na obszarze czeskiego Śląska w okresie okupacji (1938–1945) [The Situation of Jewish Citizens on the Territory of Czech Silesia during Occupation (1938–1945)], in: *Śląsk Opolski*, 11, 2001, 2/44, 38–44; BORÁK, Mečislav: Prameny k transportům z opavského obvodu Sudetské župy do Terezína [Sources to the Transports from the Opavian District of the Reichsgau to Terezín], in: *Terezínské listy vol. 33*, 2005, 36–44.

55 BORÁK, Mečislav: Změny v postavení židovské městské komunity v Ostravě (1938–1945) [Changes in the Position of the Jewish Municipal Community in Ostrava (1938–1945)], in: *Česko-slovenská historická ročenka 2001*, Brno 2001, 85–91; BORÁK, Mečislav: Šanghaj a záchrana židů z Ostravska za druhé světové války [Shanghai and the Rescue of Ostrava Region Jews during World War II], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy a Ostravska vol. 23*, Ostrava 2007, 98–135; BORÁK, Mečislav: Ostravský rabín Arnošt Bass (1885–1943) a jeho rodina [Ostravian Rabbi Arnošt Bass (1885–1943) and His Family], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy vol. 27*, Ostrava 2013, 165–183.

56 BORÁK, Mečislav: Wydarzenia „nocy kryształowej“ i ich oddźwięk on terenach Czechosłowacji [The Crystal Night Events and their Reverberation on the Czechoslovak Territory], in: *Colloquium Opole '98 – 60 rocznica pogromu Żydów w Niemczech*, LIS, Michał – A. TRZCIELIŃSKA-POLUS, Aleksandra (eds.), Opole 2000, 49–60.

57 BORÁK, Mečislav: Kulturní statky a problémy vlastnictví. Zkušenosti střední Evropy po roce 1989 [Cultural Assets and the Problems of Ownership. The Experience of Central Europe after 1989], in: *Terezínské listy vol. 32*, 2004, 85–94; BORÁK, Mečislav: O restitucích kulturních statků obětí holokaustu [Restitution of Cultural Assets of the Victims of the Holocaust], in: *Soudobé dějiny*, 11, 2004, 1-2, 282–299; BORÁK, Mečislav: Verspätete Gerechtigkeit. Die Restitution von enteigneten Kulturgut in Tschechien [Belated Justice. Restoration of Dispossessed Cultural Monuments in the Czech Republic], in: *Osteuropa*, 56, 2006, 1-2, 247–262; BORÁK, Mečislav: Budoucnost ztraceného dědictví. Dokumentace, identifikace a restituce kulturních statků obětí druhé světové války [Future of the Lost Heritage. The Documentation, Identification and Restitution of Cultural Property of the Victims of the Second World War], in: *Soudobé dějiny*, 13, 2006, 3–4, 507–526; BORÁK, Mečislav: Některé možnosti muzejní identifikace předmětů patřících obětem holokaustu [Some of the Options of the Museum Identification of Objects Belonging to Holocaust Victims], in: *Ztracené dědictví. Příspěvky z «kulatých stolů» na téma dokumentace, identifikace a restituce kulturních statků obětí II. světové války*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha, 2006, 76–82; BORÁK, Mečislav: Mezi Ruskem a Německem. Problém „přemístěných“ kulturních statků ve střední Evropě v letech 2000–2006 [Between Russia and Germany. The Problem of “Displaced” Cultural Assets in Central Europe 2000–2006], in: *Terezínské listy vol. 35*, 2007, 151–168; BORÁK, Mečislav: The Identification of Works of Art Belonging to the Holocaust Victims and the Possibility of Restoring them to their Original Owners (Using the Example of the Silesian Regional Museum), in: *Holocaust Era Assets. Conference proceedings*, SCHNEIDER, Jiří – KLEPAL, Jakub – KALHOUSOVÁ, Irena (eds), Praha 2009, 857–864. See also: [online] EU2009CZ: Holocaust Era Conference, Prague, 26–30 June 2009, the HEA Conference Proceedings, 1–7 [cit. 5. 7. 2015], available at http://www.holocausteraassets.eu/files/200000251-1b938a2d36/WG_LA_12.pdf

58 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Vraždy v Katyňském lese* [Murders in the Katyń Woods], Ostrava 1991; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Symbol Katyńia. Zaolziańskie ofiary obozów i więzień w ZSRR* [The Katyń Symbol. The Zaolzie Victims of Camps and Prisons in USSR], Czeski Cieszyn 1991.

59 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Głos historii (Groby w Lesie Katyńskim, Obóz w Ostaszkwie, Obóz w Starobielsku)* [The

the Czechoslovak political victims of persecutions in the USSR.⁶⁰ The results of this extremely challenging work were wrapped up in a monograph in 2011 containing biographies of almost 500 people, shot in 1940 by members of the NKVD in Katyń, Kharkov, Tver, the Ukrainian Bykoven and in other parts of the USSR, which were verified in Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Czech and German materials.⁶¹ However, the research goes on and, thanks to the extensive popularization and information activities, further relatives and descendants of the victims keep reporting yet.

Particularly significant was the founding role of M. Borák in the already mentioned research

Voice of History (Graves in Katyń Woods, Ostashkov Camp, Starobilsk Camp)], in: *Szkice i dialog. Kwartalnik społeczno-kulturalny, Polish Evangelical Institut in Stocholm*, 11, 1990, 40, 32–40; BORÁK, Mečislav: Katyń – neznámé souvislosti. Občané z Těšínska obětmi zločinu NKVD [Katyń – Unknown Circumstances. The Citizens of Těšín Silesia Victims of NKVD's Crimes], in: *Těšínsko*, 34, 1991, 3, 10–15; BORÁK, Mečislav: Mrtví od Charkova. Občané z Těšínska v Katyni číslo 2 [The Dead of Kharkov. The citizens of Těšín Silesia in Katyń Number 2], in: *Těšínsko*, 35, 1992, 1, 16–22; BORÁK, Mečislav: Obyvatelé Těšínska obětmi táborů a věznic v SSSR (výsledky výzkumu) [The Inhabitants of Těšín Silesia Victims of the Camps and Prisons in the USSR (results of research)], in: *Slezský sborník*, 90, 1992, 2, 108–120; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zaolziańskie ofiary Katynia [The Zaolzie Victims of Katyń], in: *Łambinowicki Rocznik Muzealny vol. 15*, 1992, 20–27; BORÁK, Mečislav: Echa katyńskie [Echoes of Katyń], in: *Kalendarz Śląski vol. 29*, 1993, 49–52; BORÁK, Mečislav: Tragédie slezských policistů [Tragedy of Silesian Police Officers], in: *Těšínsko*, 36, 1993, 4, 11–19; BORÁK, Mečislav: Pamiěć, nie opuszczą żywych [The Living Do Not Lose Memory], in: *Zwrot*, 45, 1993, 4, 8–15; BORÁK, Mečislav: Katyn dans la mémoire des Tchèques et des Polonais de Silésie [Katyń in the Recollections of Czechs and Poles of Silesia], in: *La Nouvelle Alternative. Revue pour les droits et les libertés démocratiques en Europe de l'Est, Paris*, no. 32, 1993, 28–31; BORÁK, Mečislav: Trzy spowiedzi Franciszek Kozika [Three Confessions of Franczisek Kozik], in: *Suplement. Pismo Stowarzyszenia Autorów Polskich w Krakowie*, no. 22, 1993, 3–7; BORÁK, Mečislav: Svědectví ze Slovenska [Testimony from Slovakia], in: *Těšínsko*, 37, 1994, 3, 18–20; BORÁK, Mečislav: Ostravští rodáci obětmi zločinu NKVD v Katyni [Natives of Ostrava Victims of NKVD Crime in Katyń], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy a Ostravska, vol. 17*, Ostrava 1995, 152–163; BORÁK, Mečislav: Dlaczego kłamał Franciszek Hajek? [Why František Hájek Lied?], in: *Biuletyn Katyński, vol. 42*, 1997, 55–69; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zločin v Katyni a jeho české a slovenské souvislosti [Crime in Katyń and its Czech and Slovak Context], in: *Evropa mezi Německem a Ruskem. Sborník prací k sedmdesátinám Jaroslava Valenty, ŠESTÁK, Miroslav – VORÁČEK, Emil* (eds.), Praha 2000, 505–522.

60 BORÁK, Mečislav: Największa zbrodnia w historii Zaolzia. Podróż do Miednoje [Greatest Crime in Zaolzie History. The Journey to Miednoje], in: *Kalendarz Śląski, vol. 37*, 2001, 106–111; BORÁK, Mečislav: Katyńský zločin a jeho oběti z Těšínského Slezska [Katyń Crime and its Victims from Těšín Silesia], in: *Časopis Slezského zemského muzea, série B*, 55, 2006, 3, 218–250; BORÁK, Mečislav: Ofiary zbrodni katyńskich w świetle nowych ustaleń [The Victims of Katyń Crimes in the Czech Republic in the Light of New Findings], in: *Łambinowicki Rocznik Muzealny*, no. 30, 2007, 63–84; BORÁK, Mečislav: Pamiěć Katynia after obu stronach Śląska [A Memory of Katyń on Both Sides of Silesia], in: *Z pamiěcią ku przyszłości (zapis konferencji Rydułtowy 21–22 września 2007)*, CHLEBIK-TUREK, Janina – KACZOROWSKA, Iwona (eds.), Rydułtowy 2007, 107–126; BORÁK, Mečislav: Záhada katyńských lebek [The Mystery of the Skulls of Katyń], in: *Acta Historica et Museologica Universitatis Silesianae Opaviensis vol. 8*, 2008, 511–532; BORÁK, Mečislav: Ewangelicy ze Śląska Cieszyńského wśród ofiar Katynia, Ostaszkowa i Miednoje [Evangelicals of Těšín Silesia Among the Victims of Katyń, Ostashkov and Miednoje], in: *Trzysta lat tolerancji na Śląsku Cieszyńskim*, CZYŻ, Renata – GOJNICZEK, Waclaw – SPRATEK, Daniel (eds.), Cieszyn 2010, 226–234; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zbrodnia Katyńska i ofiary z Zaolzia / Katyńský zločin a oběti z Těšínska [The Katyń Crime and its Victims of Těšín Silesia], in: *Katyń – Pamiěć Narodu. Publikacja okolicznościowa z okazji 70. rocznicy Zbrodni Katyńskiej / Katyń – Memory of the Nation. Amanac to the 70. Anniversary of the Katyń Crime*, ŠTEFFEK, Marian (ed.), Český Těšín, 2010, 3–20; BORÁK, Mečislav: Spis ofiar zbrodni katyńskie / Seznam obětí katyńského zločinu [List of the Victims of the Katyń Crime], in: *Katyń – Pamiěć Narodu. Publikacja okolicznościowa z okazji 70. rocznicy Zbrodni Katyńskiej / Katyń – Memory of the Nation. Amanac to the 70. Anniversary of the Katyń Crime*, ŠTEFFEK, Marian (ed.), Český Těšín, 2010, 28–46; BORÁK, Mečislav: Преступление в Катыни и его чешский и словацкий контекст [Crime in Katyń and its Czech and Slovak Context], [online] Катынские материалы [cit. 22. 5. 2010], available at: http://katynbooks.narod.ru/czechoslovakia/borak_ru_cz.html.

61 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Ofiary Zbrodni Katyńskiej z obszaru byłej Czechosłowacji* [Victims of the Katyń Crime from the Territory of Former Czechoslovakia], Opava 2011.

of political persecution of the Czechoslovak citizens in Soviet Russia and later in the Soviet Union 1918–1956. The research plan was conceived by Borák on the basis of the experience gained in the 1990s while examining the political persecution of the population in Czechoslovakia and Central Europe by totalitarian regimes and in direct connection with the Katyń research. From the beginning of the Millennium, it was carried out in three stages within the research projects of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic, which was conducted under his supervision by Opavian and Prague historians.⁶² Their goal was to cover the progress and the mechanisms of political persecution (in the Russian terminology of „repression“) in the USSR, to find out about their specific victims from among the Czechs, the Czechoslovak citizens and the population of the Czech lands, to create a computer database about them (the input hypothesis assumed approximately 5, 000 victims) and to gather the supporting documents for the verification of individual cases and of the fates of the persecuted ones.

During the first study visit of Opavian historians in Moscow in the summer and fall of 2001, work contacts were established, among other things, with the organizations dealing with this issue, in particular the Association of the Memorial and Museum of Andrei Sakharov in Moscow, which is grateful to Professor Borák to this day. An indicative survey of literature and sources in their collections and in funds of the Central Russian Archives in Moscow enabled the verification of the basic methodological procedures and the heuristic possibilities of the archive research.⁶³ A comprehensive analysis of the issues and ideas about further procedure was then presented by M. Borák in the Conference proceedings of the International Conference *Osudy československých občanů v bývalém SSSR (1918–1956)* [The fate of Czechoslovak Citizens in the Former USSR (1918–1956)] in Prague in February 2002 and in the following year again in a separate monograph.⁶⁴

In the next phase of the research in 2004–2007, apart from research in the archives of

62 It was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic research project no. RB 19/27/01 “Czechoslovak Citizens from the Territory of Today’s Czech Republic persecuted in the USSR,” carried out in 2001, the project of the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic no. 409/04/0779 “Forms and Extent of the Persecution of the Czechs, Czechoslovak Citizens and the Inhabitants of the Czech Lands in the Soviet Union (1918–1956)” carried out 2004–2007, and the continuation project no. 409/09/0555 “Persecution of Czechoslovak Citizens in the Soviet Union (1918–1956)” carried out from 2009 to 2014.

63 BORÁK, Mečislav: Materiály k perzekuci československých občanů ve 30. – 50. letech v SSSR v ruských archivech [Documents on the Persecution of the Czechoslovak Citizens in the 1930s – 1950s in the USSR in Russian Archives], in: *Vězeňské systémy v Československu a ve střední Evropě 1945–1955. Sborník z mezinárodní konference konané ve dnech 28. – 29. 11. 2001 v Praze*, JANÁK, Dušan (ed.), Opava, 2001, 76–86; BORÁK, Mečislav: Prameny k perzekuci české menšiny a československého exilu v bývalém SSSR v ruských archivech [Sources on the Persecution of Czech Minority and Czechoslovak Exile in the Former USSR in Russian Archives], in: *Acta Universitatis Palackianae Olomucensis Facultas Philosophica, Historica*, vol. 31, 2002, 383–397; BORÁK, Mečislav: Czechosłowaccy jeńcy wojenni w ZSRR 1945–1955 (problem weryfikacji narodowości i obywatelstwa w sowieckiej ewidencji) [Czechoslovak Military Prisoners in the USSR 1945–1955 (the issue of determining nationalities and citizenships in Soviet records)], in: *Jeńcy wojenni w latach II wojny światowej. Łąbinowicki Rocznik Muzealny*, no. 25, 2002, 109–120.

64 BORÁK, Mečislav: Českoslovenští občané z území dnešní České republiky perzekvovaní v SSSR [Czechoslovak Citizens from the Territory of Today’s Czech Republic, Persecuted in the USSR], in: BORÁK, Mečislav et al.: *Perzekuce občanů z území dnešní České republiky v SSSR*, Sešity ÚSD AV ČR, sv. 38, Praha 2003, 7–205; BORÁK, Mečislav: *České stopy v Gulagu. Z výzkumu perzekuce Čechů a občanů ČSR v Sovětském svazu* [Czech Traces in the Gulag. From the Research on the Persecution of Czechoslovak citizens in the Soviet Union]. 2nd edition, revised, Opava 2003.

Prague and Moscow focusing on the victims of illegal executions, including the ongoing examination of the Katyn crime,⁶⁵ M. Borák created a unique source capacity of foreign-language literature on the issue of political repression, a computer database of the victims of repression and the website of Czech Traces in the Gulag at the Silesian Institute in Opava, Silesian Museum, respectively.⁶⁶ He also organised a collection of contributions from the international scientific conference for the completion of the project in November 2006 in Prague, and a two-part collection of synthetic studies *Perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956)* [The persecution of Czechoslovak Citizens in the Soviet Union (1918–1956)], which was issued in the spring of 2007.⁶⁷ While the first one presented the results of the project, the second one published a major study on the executions as part of political repression in the USSR and their victims in the years 1918–1956.⁶⁸ In the last stage, 2009–2014, he examined the fate of the Czechs executed in the period of the „Great Terror“ 1937–1938, not only in the Russian archives, but more consistently also in archives, libraries and universities in Ukraine, where he also gained the Ukrainian regis-

65 BORÁK, Mečislav: Formy i rozmiar represji wobec Czechów i mieszkańców ziem czeskich w Związku Radzieckim do 1956 r. Stan badań [Forms and Scope of Repression Against Czechs and Citizens of the Czech Lands in the Soviet Union until 1956. State of the Research], in: *Represje sowieckie wobec narodów Europy 1944–1956*, ROGUT, Dariusz – ADAMCZYK, Arkadiusz (eds.), Żelów 2005, 323–341; BORÁK, Mečislav: Českoslovenští Židé – oběti gulagů a popravišť v Sovětském svazu [Czechoslovak Jews – Victims of Gulag and Scaffolds in the Soviet Union], in: *První pražský seminář. Dopady holocaustu na českou a slovenskou společnost ve druhé polovině 20. století*, MACHAČOVÁ, Helena (ed.), Praha 2008, 97–110; Cf. also studies and articles in the note 60.

66 Specialized fund of foreign-language literature, mainly of Russian and Polish, partly Ukrainian, now already comprising a thousand volumes, stored in the Central Library of the Silesian Museum. The working version of the database currently includes over four thousand victims and is continuously being supplemented, validated and edited. The website Czech Traces in Gulag [online] is available at: <http://gulag.szmo.cz>

67 *Výzkum perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956). Sborník příspěvků z mezinárodní vědecké konference pořádané Ústavem pro soudobé dějiny Akademie věd České republiky, Národním archivem České republiky a Slezským zemským muzeem 30. listopadu 2006 v Praze* [Research on the Persecution of Czechoslovak Citizens in the Soviet Union (1918–1956). Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference Organized by the Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, National Archive of the Czech Republic and the Silesian Museum, November 30, 2006 in Prague], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.) Opava, 2007; *Perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956). Část I. Vězni a popravení. Část II. Váleční zajatci a internovaní. Sborník studií* [Persecution of Czechoslovak Citizens in the Soviet Union (1918–1956). Part I. Prisoners and the Executed. Part II Prisoners of War and Internees. Collection of Studies], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Opava 2007.

68 BORÁK, Mečislav: Výzkum a evidence obětí perzekuce z řad Čechů, československých občanů a obyvatel českých zemí v Sovětském svazu v letech 1918–1956 [Research and Registration of Persecution Victims from Among Czechs, Czechoslovak Citizens and the Population of the Czech Lands in the Soviet Union 1918–1956], in: *Výzkum perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956). Sborník příspěvků z mezinárodní vědecké konference pořádané Ústavem pro soudobé dějiny Akademie věd České republiky, Národním archivem České republiky a Slezským zemským muzeem 30. listopadu 2006 v Praze*, Opava 2007, 10–40; BORÁK, Mečislav: O výzkumu československých obětí politických represí [Research of Czechoslovak Political Repression Victims], in: *Perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956). Část I. Vězni a popravení*, Opava 2007, 7–14; *Část II. Váleční zajatci a internovaní*, Opava 2007, 7–14; BORÁK, Mečislav: Popravy jako součást politických represí v SSSR a dosud zjištěné oběti z řad Čechů a československých občanů [Execution as Part of Political Repression in the USSR and the Hitherto Known Victims of the Czechs and the Czechoslovak Citizens], in: *Perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956). Část I. Vězni a popravení*, Opava 2007, 117–236; BORÁK, Mečislav – JIRÁSEK, Zdeněk: Spisy dozoru Prokuratury SSSR a československé oběti politických represí [The Documents of Supervision of the USSR Prosecutor's Office and the Czechoslovak Victims of Political Repression], in: *Perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956). Část I. Vězni a popravení*, Opava 2007, 237–252.

ters of persecution victims. He then applied the new findings in addition to the domestic studies to the victims of the „Great Terror“ from the Ostrava and Těšín Silesia⁶⁹ as well as in Russia⁷⁰ and Poland, where he stepped up in support of the Russian non-governmental organisations and researchers uncovering the crimes of Stalinism,⁷¹ in the above mentioned syntheses on the transports to Nisko upon San and on the Katyń crime,⁷² and especially in his two new major monographs. In the first one, he demonstrated the mechanisms of the Soviet political repressions by the cases of the Czechs and Czechoslovak citizens executed in Moscow between 1922 and 1953 and he brought information about the fates of 121 persons, buried at all five of the Moscow burial sites of repression victims. In the second one, dealing with the repression of the Czech residents of Soviet Ukraine, he presented a register of more than 500 Czechs and Czechoslovak citizens executed and described in detail the fates of the executed from the area of Volyně and Podillya.⁷³

It is visible on the issue of the persecution of the Czechs and Czechoslovak citizens in the Soviet Union how Borák's work intertwines individual topics, how he returns to already researched phenomena from a different angle, based on new sources and findings, asking more and more questions. This continuity becomes even more apparent with the last of his great research interests, concerning the problems of the Polish minority and inter-ethnic relations, which he was led to by his research on Těšín Silesia. As one of the leading experts in this area, he focused on controversial or conflicting topics which affected and are affecting the Czechoslovak-Polish or Czech-Polish relations in their history and in the present.⁷⁴ He devoted considerable attention to the development of the Polish minority

69 BORÁK, Mečislav: Oběti „velkého teroru“ v Sovětském svazu v letech 1937-1938 původem z Ostravska [Victims of the “Great Terror” in the Soviet Union 1937–1938, Originally from Ostrava], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy a Ostravska*, vol. 24, Ostrava 2009, 9–40; BORÁK, Mečislav: Z nacistického koncentračního tábora do sovětských gulagů (Osudy ostravských Židů z transportů do Niska nad Sanem) [From the Nazi Concentration Camp into a Soviet Gulag (the Fates of Ostravian Jews from the Transports to Nisko upon San)], in: *Ostrava. Příspěvky k dějinám a současnosti Ostravy*, vol. 25, Ostrava 2011, 97–135; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zatajené popravy. Oběti “velkého teroru” z let 1937–1938 v Sovětském svazu původem z Těšínska a případ Józefa Gibiece z Třince [Secret Executions. Victims of the “Great Terror” in the Soviet Union 1937–1938, Originally from Těšín Silesia and the case of Józef Gibiec from Třinec], in: *Těšínsko*, 56, 13, 4, 17–31; BORÁK, Mečislav: Zmarnowane życie Józefa Gibca z Końskieja [The Wasted Life of Jozef Gibec from Kónská], in: *Kalendarz Śląski* vol. 49, 2013, 88–99; BORÁK, Mečislav: Powrót Józefa Gibca [The Return of Jozef Gibec], in: *Kalendarz Śląski* vol. 50, 2014, 48–53.

70 BORÁK, Mečislav: Presledovanije čechov i graždan Čechoslovakiji v SSSR v 1918–1945 gg [The Persecution of Czechs and Czechoslovak Citizens in the USSR 1918–1945], in: *Školnyje uroki po teme „Istorija političeskich repressij i soprotivlenije nesvobode v SSSR”*, ed. I. A. Mišin, Moskva 2012, 534–542

71 BORÁK, Mečislav: O fašifikatorach istorii [On the Falsifiers of History], in: *Jevropa. Žurnal Polського instituta međunarodnych del*, 9, 31, 2009, 2 (31), 15–18.

72 BORÁK, Mečislav: *První deportace evropských Židů* [The First Deportation of the European Jews]; BORÁK, Mečislav: *The first Deportation of the European Jews*; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Ofiary Zbrodni Katyńskieja* [Victims of the Katyń Crime]; see also footnote 52 and 61.

73 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Moskevská pohřebiště. Češi a českoslovenští občané popravení v Moskvě v letech 1922–1953* [Moscow Burial Sites. The Czechs and the Czechoslovak Citizens Execute in Moscow 1922–1953], Opava, 2013; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Zatajené popravy. Češi a českoslovenští občané popravení na sovětské Ukrajině. Z historie Velkého teroru na Volyni a v Podolí* [Secret Executions. The Czechs and the Czechoslovak Citizens Execute in Soviet Ukraine. From the History of the Great Terror in Volyn and Podolia], Opava 2014.

74 In addition to the literature referred to above in notes 13–33 for example BORÁK, Mečislav: Pod opieką policji [Under Police Surveillance], in: *Kalendarz Śląski* vol. 34, 1988, 138–139; BORÁK, Mečislav: Poláci v České republice po roce 1989 a sporná místa česko-polských vztahů [Poles in the Czech Republic After 1989 and the Points

in the nationally mixed Těšín Silesia, and in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic⁷⁵ and their situation after 1989.⁷⁶

When enumerating the research and publication activities of Professor Borák, one may not forget his systematic, organizational activity. He participated in carrying out nearly forty research projects from international projects through grants of State and interdepartmental agencies, the Moravia-Silesia Region or from the statutory city of Ostrava, to scientific tasks in the institutions he was active in, being the research group leader or auxiliary investigator on the project.⁷⁷ During these activities, he undertook a number of foreign study visits and

of Dispute of Czech–Polish Relations], *Slezský sborník*, 93, 1995, 1–2, 67–70; BORÁK, Mečislav: Les conflits du passé dans la mémoire de la minorité polonaise en République tchèque après 1989 [Past Conflicts in the Memory of the Polish Minority after 1989], in: *La Nouvelle Alternative. Revue pour les droits et les libertés démocratiques en Europe de l'Est*, no. 38, 1995, 34–36; BORÁK, Mečislav: Očima Poláků. Historie a současnost československo-polských vztahů a polská menšina v Československu v zrcadle polského tisku na Těšínském Slezsku v letech 1989–1992. Komentovaná bibliografie [Through Polish Eyes. History and Present of Czechoslovak-Polish Relations and the Polish Minority in Czechoslovakia in the Mirror of the Polish Press in Těšín Silesia 1989–1992. Annotated Bibliography], in *Acta historica Universitatis Silesianae Opaviensis – Supplementa Tomus IX*, Opava 2010.

75 BORÁK, Mečislav: Polská menšina v České republice [The Polish Minority in the Czech Republic], in: *Menšiny v ČR a v sousedních zemích z perspektivy integrace České republiky do Evropské unie (Menšiny v ČR a Evropě)*, Praha, 1996, 128–136; BORÁK, Mečislav: Z historie Poláků v České republice [From the History of Poles in the Czech Republic], in: SOKOLOVÁ, Gabriela – HERNOVÁ, Šárka – ŠRAJEROVÁ, Olga et al.: *Češi, Slováci a Poláci na Těšínsku a jejich vzájemné vztahy*, Opava, 1997, 22–32; BORÁK, Mečislav: Problémy polské menšiny v České republice v devadesátých letech [The Problems of the Polish Minority in the Czech Republic in the 1990s], in: *Národnostní menšiny a majoritní společnosti v České republice a v zemích střední Evropy v 90. letech XX. století*, SOKOLOVÁ, Gabriela – ŠRAJEROVÁ, Olga (eds.), Opava – Praha 1998, 230–241; BORÁK, Mečislav: Polská menšina v České republice [The Polish Minority in the Czech Republic], in: GABAL, Ivan et al., *Etnické menšiny ve střední Evropě. Konflikt nebo integrace*, Praha 1999, 120–127; BORÁK, Mečislav: Stav a perspektivy výzkumu dějin polské národnostní menšiny v ČSR (ČR) [The State and Prospects of the Research of the History of the Polish Ethnic Minority in Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic)], in: *Polacy na Zaolziu 1920–2000. Zbiór referatów z konferencji naukowej, która odbyła się 13. – 14. 10. 2000 w Czeskim Cieszynie / Poláci na Těšínsku 1920–2000. Sborník příspěvků z vědecké konference konané ve dnech 13. – 14. 10. 2000 v Českém Těšíně*, SYZMECZEK, Jozsef (ed.) *Czeski Cieszyn 2002*, 31–48; BORÁK, Mečislav: Vlastenectví Poláků v českých zemích za první a za druhé světové války [The Patriotism of the Poles in the Czech Republic During the First and Second World War], in: *Česká společnost za velkých válek 20. století (pokus o komparaci)*, GEBHART, Jan – ŠEDIVÝ, Ivan (eds.), Praha 2003, 93–102.

76 BORÁK, Mečislav: Problém dvojjazyčnosti na Těšínsku po roce 1990 [The Problem of Bilingualism in Těšín Silesia After 1990], [online] *Člověk a společnost*, 3, 2000, 1, [cit 5. 7. 2015], available at: <http://www.saske.sk/cas/archiv/1-2000/borak.html>; BORÁK, Mečislav: Problémy menšinových médií na příkladu polské národnostní menšiny v ČR [Problems of Minority Media on the Example of the Polish Minority in the Czech Republic], in: *Śląsk Opolski i Opawski w kierunku standardów europejskich. Regiony i procesy integracyjne po wejściu do Unii Europejskiej / Opavské a opolské Slezsko ve směru evropských standardů. Regiony a integrační procesy po vstupu do Evropské unie*, Opava 2005, 127–133; BORÁK, Mečislav: Centralizační aspekty v menšinové politice v českých zemích po roce 1945 (na příkladu polské menšiny v Těšínském Slezsku) [Centralizing Aspects in the Minority Policy in Czech Lands after 1945 (on the example of the Polish minority in Těšín Silesia)], in: *Udržitelnost rozvoje společnosti a kvalita života*, VÁCLAVÍKOVÁ, Anna – CHMELÁŘOVÁ, Magdalena (eds.) Opava 2009, 6–16.

77 Besides the above mentioned projects of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Grant Agency of the Czech Republic (See note 62) for example *Mémoire des guerres et des résistances en Tchéco-Slovaquie, Europe centrale et en France (Paměť války a odboje v Česko-Slovensku, střední Evropě a ve Francii)* [The Memory of the War and of the Resistance in Czechoslovakia, Central Europe, and in France], Institute d'histoire du temps présent, Paris, France, research project period 1992–1994; *Činnost mimořádných lidových soudů ve Slezsku a na Ostravsku v letech 1945–1948* [The Activities of the Extraordinary People's Courts in Silesia and in the Ostrava Region 1945–1948], Grant Agency of the Czech Republic no. 404/93/0141, research project period 1993–1996; *Židovská problematika a antisemitismus ve světle retribučních soudů 1945–1948* [Jewish Issues and Anti-Semitism in the Light of Retribution Courts, 1945–1948], Grant Agency of the Academy of Sciences of the

internships – in the 1990s, primarily in the archives and scientific institutions in Poland, from 2000 in Russia and Ukraine, but also in Israel or in China.⁷⁸

In this context, his extensive editorial activity should be recalled, which includes nearly thirty professional books published in the past quarter-century. These are especially syntheses and collections relating to the history of the regions of Těšínsko and Silesia, as well as⁷⁹ to the current problems of the Opava Region and⁸⁰ to the Czech-Polish relations.⁸¹ Furthermore, they are works dedicated to the persecution of the Czechoslovak citizens in the former Soviet Union⁸² and the retribution judiciary,⁸³ however, the largest group is made

Czech Republic no. 9063902/1999, research project period 1999–2002; *Zákonná opatření a nezákonné zásahy vůči skupinám obyvatelstva a jednotlivcům v Československu v letech 1938–1948* [Legal Measures and Illegal Interventions Against Groups and Individuals in the Population of Czechoslovakia 1938–1948], Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic no. RB 8/2003, research project period 2003–2006; *Historie a postavení polské menšiny v ČR (ČSR)* [The History and Status of the Polish Minority in the Czech Republic (Czechoslovakia)], The Silesian Institute of the Silesian Museum, research project period 1992–2005, etc.

78 Let us mention for instance Stefan Batory Foundation scholarship study in Wojskowy Instytut Historyczny in Warsaw 1994–1995, since 2001, study stays in Central State Archives and libraries, in the Memorial Association and Andrei Sakharov Museum in Moscow, since 2005 in similar Ukrainian institutions in Kyiv, but also archives in Uzhhorod, Berehiv and Lviv, (2005) and the State archive of the Zhytomyr area and Zhytomyr State University in Zhytomyr (2010–2011), Exchange in the social science institutes in Shanghai and Beijing in 2005 or four study stays in Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and the Wiener Library in Tel Aviv between 2003 and 2014.

79 *Nástin dějin Těšínska* [An Outline of the History of Těšín Silesia], BORÁK, Mečislav – GAWRECKI, Dan (eds.); *Zarys dziejów Śląska Cieszyńskiego* [An Outline of the History of Těšín Silesia], BORÁK, Mečislav – GAWRECKI, Dan (eds.); *Dějiny Orlová* [A History of Orlová], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.); *Slezsko v dějinách českého státu* [Silesia in the History of the Czech State], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.).

80 *Śląsk Opolski i Opawski w kierunku standardów europejskich. Aktywność społeczna mieszkańców pogranicza / Opolské a opavské Slezsko ve směru evropských standardů. Společenská aktivita obyvatel pohraničí* [Opolean and Opavian Silesia in the Direction of European Standards. The Social Activity of the Inhabitants of the Borderlands], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.); *Śląsk Opolski i Opawski w kierunku standardów europejskich. Regiony i procesy integracyjne po wejściu do Unii Europejskiej / Opavské a opolské Slezsko ve směru evropských standardů. Regiony a integrační procesy po vstupu do Evropské unie* [Opolean and Opavian Silesia in the Direction of European Standards. Regions and Integration Processes after the Accession to the European Union], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.); *Śląsk Opolski i Opawski w Unii Europejskiej. Problemy pierwszych lat członkostwa w stosunku do przemian społecznych / Opolské a opavské Slezsko v Evropské unii. Problémy prvních let členství se zřeteltem na společenské proměny* [Opolean and Opavian Silesia in the European Union. Problems of the First Years of EU Membership in Regard to Social Transformations], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.).

81 *Česko-slovensko-polské vztahy v letech 1938–1939. Příspěvky z mezinárodní konference* [Czech-Slovak-Polish Relations 1938–1939. Contributions from an International Conference], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), *Slezský sborník*, 94, 1996, 1, 1-100; *Česká a polská bohemistika na přelomu století / Czeska i polska bohemistyka na przełomie stuleci* [Czech and Polish Bohemistics at the Turn of the Century], BORÁK, Mečislav – GŁADKIEWICZ, Ryszard (eds.), Praha 2007; *Polacy i Czesi między Rosją i Niemcami (XIX–XXI wiek)* [Poles and Czechs Between Russia and Germany (from 19th to 21st Century)], BORÁK, Mečislav – GŁADKIEWICZ, Ryszard (eds.), Wrocław 2008; *Česká polonistika a polská bohemistika na přelomu století / Czeska polonistyka i polska bohemistyka na przełomie stuleci* [Czech Polonistics and Polish Bohemistics at the Turn of the Century], BORÁK, Mečislav – GŁADKIEWICZ, Ryszard (eds.), Wrocław 2009.

82 *Perzekuce občanů z území dnešní České republiky v SSSR* [Persecution of the Citizens from the Territory of Today's Czech Republic in the USSR], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.); *Výzkum perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956)* [Research on the Persecution of Czechoslovak Citizens in the Soviet Union (1918–1956)], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.); *Perzekuce československých občanů v Sovětském svazu (1918–1956). Část I-II* [Persecution of Czechoslovak Citizens in the Soviet Union (1918–1956), Part I-II], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.).

83 *Retribuce v ČR a národní podoby antisemitismu* [Retribution in Czechoslovakia and the National Forms of Anti-Semitism], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), *Poválečná justice a národní podoby antisemitismu* [Post-War Judiciary and National Forms of Anti-Semitism], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.); *Československé právní normy z let 1940–1945 a*

up of monographs and conference proceedings on the issue of the restitution of cultural assets stolen during WWII.⁸⁴ A unique position is then occupied by an almanac upon the 70th birthday of a historian and close friend Boris Čelovský, whose life and work are provided with an extensive study.⁸⁵ The symbiosis of a historian, a journalist and a narrator then persuaded M. Borák to try to restore the tradition of popular entertaining reading in the form of two series of historical calendars from the years 1994–1997 and 2004–2006, which he prepared together with another friend, editor Miroslav Týrlík.⁸⁶

jejich poválečná aplikace v českých zemích [Czechoslovak Legal Standards 1940–1945 and Post-War Applications in the Czech Lands], BORÁK, Mečislav – KOCIAN, Jiří – KUKLÍK, Jan jr. (eds.), Brno 2008.

84 *The Lost Heritage of Cultural Assets. The documentation, identification and repatriation of the cultural assets of WWII victims*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2005; *Ztracené dědictví. Příspěvky z „kulatých stolů“ na téma dokumentace, identifikace a restituce kulturních statků obětí II. světové války* [The Lost Heritage. Contributions of the “round tables” on the subject of documentation, identification and restitution of cultural assets of the victims of World War II], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2006; *The Future of the Lost Cultural Heritage. The documentation, identification and restitution of the cultural assets of WWII victims*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Prague 2006; *The Future of the Lost Cultural Heritage. Documentation, Identification and Restitution of Cultural Assets of the Victims of World War II*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2007; KREJČOVÁ, Helena - KREJČA, Otomar: *Jindřich Baudisch a konfiskace uměleckých děl v protektorátu* [Jindřich Baudisch and the Confiscation of Artworks in the Protectorate], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2007; KREJČOVÁ, Helena - VLČEK, Mario: *Návraty paměti. Deponáty židovského majetku v Uměleckoprůmyslovém muzeu v Praze* [Memories Returned. Jewish Property at the Museum of Decorative Arts, Prague], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2007; *Restituce zkonfiskovaných uměleckých předmětů. Přání nebo realita. Dokumentace, identifikace a restituce kulturních statků obětí II. světové války. Příspěvky z mezinárodní vědecké konference v Liberci (24.-26. října 2007)* [Restitution of Confiscated Art Objects. Wishes or Reality. Documentation, Identification and Restitution of Cultural Assets of the Victims of World War II, ed. Contributions from the international scientific conference in Liberec (24 – 26 October 2007)], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Šenov u Ostravy – Praha 2008; *Restitution of Confiscated Works of Art. A Wish or a Reality? Documentation, identification and restitution of cultural property of the victims of World War II. Proceedings of the international academic conference in Liberec (24. – 26. 10. 2007)*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2008; KREJČOVÁ, Helena - VLČEK, Mario: *Memories Returned. Jewish Property at the Museum of Decorative Arts, Prague. (Translation of the opening pages, introductory study and editorial notes from the Czech-language publication Návraty paměti)*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha – Šenov 2008; KREJČOVÁ, Helena - VLČEK, Mario: *Výkupné za život Vývozy a vynucené dary uměleckých předmětů při emigraci židů z Čech a Moravy v letech 1938–1942 (na příkladu Uměleckoprůmyslového muzea v Praze) / Lives for Ransom. Exports and Forced Donations of Works of Art During the Emigration of Jews from Bohemia and Moravia 1938–1942 (the case of the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague)*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Šenov u Ostravy 2009; KREJČOVÁ, Helena - VLČEK, Mario: *M. Siegfried Blumenthal. Život v realitě a mimo ni. Protizidovská opatření v Protektorátu Čechy a Morava na příkladu loupeže majetku Siegfrieda Blumenthala a torzo jeho sbírky stříbra v Uměleckoprůmyslovém muzeu v Brně / Siegfried Blumenthal. Life In and Outside Reality. Anti-Jewish Measures in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The Looting of Siegfried Blumenthal's Property and Part of his Silver Collection at the Museum of Applied Arts in Brno*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2010. *“The West” Versus “The East” or The United Europe? The different conceptions of provenance research, documentation and identification of looted cultural assets and the possibilities of international cooperation in Europe and worldwide: proceedings of an international academic conference held in Poděbrady on October 8–9, 2013*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2014; DRBOHLAV, Vladimír – DRBOHLAVOVÁ, Vanda – KREJČOVÁ, Helena – PROUZOVÁ, Johana – VLČEK, Mario: *Osudy válečných deponátů. Uměleckoprůmyslové muzeum v Praze / The Wartime Fate of Deposits. Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, Volume 1*, BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), Praha 2014.

85 *K poctě historika mnichovské konference. Sborník příspěvků k osmdesátinám Bořivoje Čelovského* [An Homage to a Historian of the Munich Conference. Collection of Contributions upon the 80th Birthday of Bořivoj Čelovský], BORÁK, Mečislav (ed.), *Slezský sborník*, 101, 2003, 3, 161–420; Mečislav BORÁK, *Historik Bořivoj Čelovský a jeho dílo* [The Historian Bořivoj Čelovský and His Work], *Ibidem*, 163–194; Mečislav BORÁK, Bořivoj Čelovský, in: *Biografický slovník Slezska a severní Moravy, nová řada*, No. 11 (23), Ostrava 2008, 27–30.

86 *Kratochvilný kalendář historický Moravskoslezského dne na obyčejný rok 1994. Za císaře pána* [An Entertaining Historical Moravian-Silesian Daily Calendar for the Ordinary Year of 1994. Back in Lord Emperor's Day],

The list of the jubilee celebrating scientist's professional activities could yet go on for a long time. He has published over 60 reviews and reports in the trade press.⁸⁷ He presented at 44 international conferences abroad, of which let us mention for instance the VII. World Congress of ICCEES in Berlin 2005, where he led the panel on The Situation of National Minorities in the Post-Communist Countries of Central Europe, and 95 conferences, seminars and workshops in the Czech Republic.⁸⁸ He compiled over a hundred expert reports for various purposes, including the preparation of new legislation on compensation for WWII victims and of the political persecution of totalitarian regimes, among which e.g. the completion and verification of the list of Slovaks executed in 1937–1938 in Kiev and buried in the woods near the village Bykivnia near Kiev for the Institute of National Memory and the Office of the President of the Slovak Republic Ivan Gašparovič in Bratislava⁸⁹ in 2010–2011.

BORÁK, Mečislav – TYRLÍK, Miroslav (ed.), Ostrava 1993; *Kratochvilný kalendář historický Moravskoslezského dne na obyčejný rok 1995. Za první republiky* [An Entertaining Historical Moravian-Silesian Daily Calendar for the Ordinary Year of 1995. Back in the Day of the First Republic], BORÁK, Mečislav – TYRLÍK, Miroslav (ed.), Ostrava 1994; *Kratochvilný kalendář historický Moravskoslezského dne na přestupný rok 1996. Za války a po ní* [An Entertaining Historical Moravian-Silesian Daily Calendar for the Ordinary Year of 1996. During and After the War], BORÁK, Mečislav – TYRLÍK, Miroslav (ed.), Ostrava 1995; *Kratochvilný kalendář historický Moravskoslezského dne na obyčejný rok 1997. Za socialismu* [An Entertaining Historical Moravian-Silesian Daily Calendar for the Ordinary Year of 1997. Back in the Socialism Times], BORÁK, Mečislav – TYRLÍK, Miroslav (ed.), Ostrava 1996; *Moravskoslezský kalendář na přestupný rok 2004* [The Moravian-Silesian Calendar for the Leap Year of 2004], BORÁK, Mečislav – TYRLÍK, Miroslav (ed.), Šenov u Ostravy 2003; *Moravskoslezský kalendář 2005* [The Moravian-Silesian Calendar 2005], BORÁK, Mečislav – TYRLÍK, Miroslav (ed.), Šenov u Ostravy 2004; *Moravskoslezský kalendář na rok 2006* [The Moravian-Silesian Calendar for the Year of 2006], BORÁK, Mečislav – TYRLÍK, Miroslav (ed.), Šenov u Ostravy 2005.

87 E.g. Zpravodaj Slezského ústavu ČSAV Opava, Časopis SZMO, Slezský sborník, Těšínsko, Archivní časopis, Soudobé dějiny, Tereziánské listy, etc.

88 Other contributions in the international forum in the country and abroad to be recalled are for instance the conference *Katyň – zločin století* [Katyň - Crime of the Century] (Český Těšín, 1993), *Les régimes post-communistes et la mémoire du temps présent* [Post-Communist Regimes and Contemporary Memories] (Paris, 1993), *50 rocznica tragedii żywocickiej* [50. Anniversary of Żivotice Tragedy] (Haviřov-Bludovice, 1994), *Śląsk Cieszyński u zarania polskiej i czechosłowackiej niepodległości* [Těšín Silesia at the Dawn of Polish and Czechoslovak Independence] (Cieszyn, 1998), *Dzieje i kultura Żydów na Śląsku* [History and Culture of Jews in Silesia] (Wrocław, 2000), *Między przymusową przyjaźnią a prawdziwą solidarnością. Czesi – Polacy – Słowacy 1938/39–1945–1989* [Between Forced Friendship and Actual Solidarity. Czechs-Poles-Slovaks 1938/39 – 1945- 1989] (Wrocław, 2004), *Represje sowieckie wobec społeczeństw Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej 1944–1956* [Soviet Repressions Against the Population of Mid-Eastern Europe] (Piotrków Trybunalski, 2005), *Between Russia and Germany. The problem of displaced cultural goods in Central Europe in 2000–2006* (Warsaw, 2006), *Holocaust Era Assets* (Praha, Terezín, 2009), *Istorija političeskich represij i soprotivlenija nesvobode v SSSR* [History of Political Repression and the Resistance to the Oppression in the USSR] (Moscow 2011), *Ukrajina-Čechija: istorija ta s'ogodennja* [Ukraine-Bohemia: Mutual History] (Odesa 2012) aj.

89 On the issue of political persecution and compensation to their victims for example an expert statement for the Committee of the Federal Assembly – the possibility of compensation to victims of the camps and prisons in the Soviet Union (1992); for the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament - draft of the bill on the compensation of victims of war (1994); for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Czech Republic — the specifics of the persecution of Poles in the Czech Lands during the war and the possibility of compensation (1999); for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Czech Republic – the victims of Katyň crime and their nationality and the possibility of compensation to their survivors (1999); for the Czech Social Security Administration – on the bill no. 172/2002 Coll. on compensation of victims of deportation to the USSR (2002); for the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic – a proposal to the disclosure of funds significant to the Czech historiography, stored in the archives of the Russian Federation (2006); for the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes in Prague and for the Volja Magazine in Moscow – Material on the Results of the project of Grant Agency of the Czech Republic no 409/09/0555 Persecution of Czechoslovak Citizens in the Soviet Union, 1918–1956, carried out at the Silesian Museum and Silesian

He held a number of consultations with individuals, organizations and various authorities, and worked on nearly thirty national and international expert boards.⁹⁰ The results of his scientific activities were naturally projected into his university instruction and he was able to advise and help students in virtually all areas of the 20th century thanks to the breadth of his scientific interests and contacts, as historian Jiří Friedl recalls.⁹¹ In this respect, his particularly significant merit is his contribution to the youngest faculty of the Silesian University in Opava – the Faculty of Public Policies in Opava, where he commissioned several new articles devoted to the problems of minorities, political persecution and the compensation of their victims including study material; and he is the guarantor and chairman of the Professional Council of doctoral study of the field Modern History of Central Europe.⁹²

University in Opava (2010), etc. On the Position of the Polish Population of Těšín Silesia on the Issue of Volksliste e.g. expert opinions for the Parliament of the Czech Republic – the bill on property restitution and rehabilitation of the Polish Central School Association in Czechoslovakia and explanatory memorandum (1995); for the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic – German Volksliste and service in the Wehrmacht (1994), the adoption of the German Volksliste after reaching the age of majority (for the purposes of the application of Act 255/46 Sb, 1995); for the Council of Poles in the Czech Republic and the General Committee of the Polish Cultural and Educational Union – the position of the Poles in Těšín Silesia during the occupation (1999); to Czechoslovakia–Polish relations expert opinions for the commission of the Czech National Council – analysis of the Polish press (1991); for the foreign Committee of the Czech National Council – the problems of Czechoslovakia–Polish relations (1992), etc. On the issue of the Holocaust and the restitution of the property e.g., expert opinions for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland – the search for the 10 paintings from the collections of the Museum of Těšín Silesia in Cieszyn, that were lost during the war, allegedly on the territory of today's Czech Republic (2005); the Documentation Centre for Property Transfers of Cultural Assets of WWII Victims– discovery of paintings: J. Wimmer "Still Life", F. Frank "Viennese Square Am Hof" and "Viennese Kärtnering Boulevard", seized by the Gestapo from the Pammov Family of Lanškroun, searching out the descendants of the original owners and ensuring documentation for the restitution (2007); for the Federation of Jewish Communities in Prague and the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic – an assessment of the nature of the concentration camp in Nisko upon San and the time of imprisonment of its prisoners in terms of Act no. 255/1946 Sb. (2008) and others.

90 He was a member of scientific councils of the Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague (2000–2006) and the Silesian Museum in Opava (2005–2015), he is currently a member of the scientific councils of the Silesian University in Opava and the Faculty of Public Policies of the Silesian University in Opava and of the scientific and programmatic Council of the Museum of Těšín Silesia in Český Těšín. A long-standing member of the editorial boards of the Slezský sborník, Těšínsko and Slovanský přehled, member of the editorial board of Bitliotheca Tessinensis, Książnica Cieszyńska Cieszyn and the scientific editorial board of the editorial centre of the Silesian University in Opava, he also operates in the professional councils of doctoral studies focusing on Czech and Czechoslovak history at the Faculty of Philosophy and Science of the Silesian University in Opava and the Modern History of Central Europe at the Faculty of Public Policies of the Silesian University in Opava. He was a member of the permanent joint Czech-Polish Commission of Humanities at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic (2000–2006), the Czech National Committee for Central and Eastern European Studies (2001–2009) and a member and Chairman of the Appellate Committee for the Compensation of Forced Labourers by the Czech Council for Victims of Nazism and the Czech–German Fund for the Future (2001–2006). Currently, he continues to operate in the Czech–Russia (Russia–Czech) Commission of Historians and Archivists, Czech-Polish Forum at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and Polish–Czech Scientific Society. In addition, he has worked in nine different professional working groups and committees.

91 FRIEDL, Jiří: Professor Mečislav BORÁK, Jubilating, 237.

92 For Bachelor's study, he prepared for example the subjects Compensation to Victims of Repression, Protection of Minorities, The Problem of Minorities, Transformations of Reconstituted Poland, Jews and Central Europe; for the follow-up master's study Comparative Analysis of Political Persecution in the 20th Century Central and Eastern Europe, Inter-Ethnic Issues in Central Europe; for Doctoral study Historiography of Modern Central European History, Ethnic Minorities and Migration in Central Europe.

From his study materials e.g. BORÁK, Mečislav: *Ochrana menšin. Rozšířený sylabus a čítanka* [Protection of Minorities. An Extended Syllabus and Reader], Opava, 2006, 2nd edition 2008; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Odškodňování*

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An important part of Borák's work is writing on current affairs and various forms of the popularization of scientific findings. He has published over 500 articles in newspapers and magazines, appeared in more than 100 television programs and 70 radio programs, familiarizing the Czech and Polish public in an appealing way not only with the results of his research, but also with historical events, tabooed topics and commonly unknown facts.⁹³ He dedicated a considerable part of his journalism to the experience of his study visits and expeditions that took place over the two decades, mostly in Central and Eastern Europe, but one of them introduced him to Latin America as well.⁹⁴ Initially, he set out to the sites of the events he was researching,⁹⁵ later, he organized interesting expeditions in the footsteps of historical theories and facts. In the summer of 1995, for instance, he organized the Great Valachian Expedition, during which he and his two companions crossed on foot the Carpathians Mountains, following a 1,600 km long route from the Banat at the Danube through Romania, Ukraine, Poland and Slovakia into the Moravian-Silesian Beskydy Mountains, to verify the migration theory on the origin of Valachs. In the summer of 2001, the Expedition Amber Trail set out, which followed the tracks of the historic trade route from Russian Kaliningrad at the Baltic Sea to Italian Aquileia at the Adriatic Sea both in the countryside and in the collections of more than a hundred museums on the territory of eight countries.⁹⁶ Each of these expeditions was different, but the core was always an interesting and novel idea and the effort to make historical events, his own experience, storytelling or memories of witnesses and contemporaries available to the public. It is symbolic that while

obětí represí. Rozšířený syllabus a čítanka [Compensation to Victims of Repression. An Extended Syllabus and Reader], Opava, 2006, 2nd edition 2008; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Odškodňování obětí politických represí. Distanční studijní opora* [Compensation to Victims of Political Repressions. Distance Study Support], Opava 2012 [online], available at: <http://elearning.fvp.slu.cz>. For more details see: BORÁK, Mečislav: *Problematika menšin ve studijním programu Slezské univerzity v Opavě* [The Problem of Minorities in the Study Programme of the Silesian University in Opava], in: *Metody výchovy a vzdělávání ve vztahu k národnostním menšinám. Mezinárodní konference. 4. setkání národnostních menšin a 23. setkání Hnutí R. 11. - 12. listopadu 2004*, BALVÍN, Jaroslav (ed.), Praha 2005, 27–30; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Polské aspekty v programu středoevropských studií Slezské univerzity v Opavě* [The Polish Aspects of the Central European Studies Program of the Silesian University in Opava], in: BARON, Roman – MADECKI, Roman et al.: *Česká polonistická studia: tradice a současnost (filologie – historie – politologie – právo)*, Praha 2014, 240–244.

93 Among daily press, these were mainly *Moravskoslezský den* and *Głos Ludu*, but also *Nová svoboda*, *Metropolitan*, *Ozvěny*, *Region*, *Mladá fronta Dnes*, *Práce*, *Ostravský večerník*, *Nové Valašsko*, *Deník*, etc.; among magazines *Reportér*, *Hlas revoluce*, *Kulturní měsíčník*, *Český Böhmen-Express*, *Těšínsko*, *Národní osvobození*, *Společnost* or *Televize*.

94 This was the expedition *DEN v Mexiku* [DAY in Mexico], which started in the early spring of 1997 in the footsteps of Czech exiles in Mexico, and established contacts with the Czech minority,

95 During the first study journey *Zločin v Katyni* [Crime of Katyn] in 1990, he visited Katyn and Smolensk, and in 1993, expeditions *Koncentrační tábor v Nisku nad Sanem* [The Concentration Camp in Nisko upon San] to Poland concerning the deportation of European Jews and *Oběti internačních a zajateckých táborů na Ukrajině* [The Victims of Internment and POW Camps in Ukraine] (Lviv, Stryj, Sambor, Drohobych) followed a year later *Místa obrany Podkarpatské Rusi v letech 1938–1939* [Defense Points of Carpathian Ruthenia 1938–1939] (Uzhgorod, Ushok Pass, Chust, Buchtina, polonina Runa, Volove, Tiachiv, Velykyi Bereznyi Perechyn, Verecky, etc.).

96 Last of those expedition was hiking *Okolo Moravy a Slezska* [Around Moravia and Silesia] in the summer of 1998, tracing the historical land borders, whose objective was the documentation of the historic border stones and the current situation on the Czech Republic borders with Poland, Slovakia and Austria.

during his first expedition *Zločin v Katyni* [Crime of Katyń] in 1990, he only visited Katyń and Smolensk, after years of research and gaining new knowledge, in 2006, he set out on a much greater expedition, *Po stopách katyňských zločinů* [In the footsteps of Katyń Crimes] again, which led him to a number of places in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, and two years later, on the latest expedition *Po stopách popravených Čechů a československých občanů* [In the Footsteps of Executed Czechs and Czechoslovak Citizens], leading to five cities in Russia and Ukraine.⁹⁷

M. Borák presented the results of his historical research and expeditions to the public through television films, for which he wrote the story and screenplay, prepared the documentation, and which he usually hosted himself. From half a dozen films, some received extraordinary response, such as *Zločin jménem Katyň* [A Crime Named Katyń] in 2007, which won a number of prizes at international festivals and shows, and *Secret Executions* in 2009, telling the story of about 500 Czechs and Czechoslovak citizens executed in the USSR at the time of the so-called. „Great Terror“.⁹⁸

An important part of the popularization of scientific research consisted of exhibitions and display scenarios, in whose organization he was involved. Among twenty such events, the Katyń exhibitions occupy a specific place, continuously presenting the newly established facts. In particular the last one, which was installed as a representative event of the Czech Embassy in Warsaw, presenting the results of the Czech research on the victims of the Katyń crime under the auspices of the Polish Republic's Senate Marshal Bogdan Borusewicz and the Ambassador of the Czech Republic in Warsaw Jan Sechtera in the building of the Senate of the Polish Republic, 25 – 31 May 2011.⁹⁹ From the other ones, let us recall an

97 In 2006, it was Moscow, Tver, Ostashkov, Mednoyie, Smolensk, Kozelsk and Katyń in Russia, Minsk and Kuropaty in Belarus and Kharkov, Lviv, Starobyelsk in Ukraine, and in 2008 Moscow and Saint Petersburg in Russia and Kiev, Lviv and Zhitomir in the Ukraine.

98 The documentary film *Zločin jménem Katyň* [A Crime Named Katyń] in 2007 was awarded the prize of the *Dějiny a současnost* magazine at the international festival Academia Film Olomouc, main prize Grand Prix 2007 at the VII. International Festival in Bar, Montenegro, and the annual price of the Trilobite Display, in 2008 the main price of the Visegrad Seal at the III. Festival of Non-Central Studies of Public Television of the Visegrad and was admitted at a number of international festivals and shows. For the film *Zatajené popravy* [Secret Executions] was granted the Center of the documentary Ostrava on parade Trilobite Beroun 2009 honorable mention of the Czech film and television Association (FITES). More films: *Zpráva o zločinu* [Report on a Crime] (1984), *Stíny strážních věží* [The Shadows of the Watchtowers] (1988), *Stíny svědomí* [The Shadows of Conscience] (1990), *Válka o tunel* [The War Over a Tunnel] (1992), *Transport do neznáma* [Transport Into the Unknown] (1994), *Bílá místa na černé zemi* [White Spots on the Black Earth] (1994), *Výstřely v Karpatech* [Shots Fired in the Carpathians] (1995), *Nedovolené sňatky* [Illegal Marriages] (1996), *Křivda* [Grievance] (1997), *Intolerance* (1997), *Zatykač na Oskara Schindlera* [Warrant for Oscar Schindler] (1999), *Lebka* [The Skull] (2009) and *Abiturienti* [The Alumni] (2012) and *Po stopách Jana Borovce* [In the Footsteps of Jan Borovec] (2014 – professional cooperation). In addition, he appeared in other films by other authors.

99 *Ofiary Katynia* [Katyń Victims]. PZKO Club Český Těšín, 31 August – 15 September 1990; *Katyň – symbol zločinů stalinismu* [Katyń – a Symbol of the Crimes of Stalinism]. Silesian Museum in Opava, 14 – 31 May 1991, and the Bruntál District Museum, 29 November – 31 December 1991; *Katyň – zločin století* [Katyń – Crime of the Century]. Museum of Těšín Silesia in Czech Těšín, 16 April – 9 May 1993; *Katyň – prawda i pamięć* [Katyń – Truth and Memory]. Galeria Domu Narodowego Cieszyn, 10 – 29 April 1995; *Katyňské zločiny – neznámé souvislosti* [Katyń Crimes --Unknown Context]. Hungarian Cultural Centre in Prague, 5 – 6 May 1999, Polish Institute, Prague 7 – 31 May 1999, Dom Narodowy, Cieszyn, Poland, 4 April 2000; *Katyň – prawda i pamięć* [Katyń – Truth and Memory]. Książnica Cieszyńska v Cieszyně, 9 – 28 April 2000 (with a subsequent re-installing in Skoczow, Ustroń and Zebrzydowice); *Katyň – Pamięć Narodu Polskiego / Katyń – the Memory of the Polish Nation*. Těšín Theatre in Český Těšín, 28 April – 9 May 2010 Memorial II. World War II in Hrabýn, 18 May – 15 June 2010, the Senate of

exhibition on the transports to Nisko upon San¹⁰⁰, the participation in the organization of an exhibition about the assets of Holocaust victims¹⁰¹ or the exhibitions about the persecution of the Czechoslovak citizens in the USSR, which saw his professional collaboration with young authors from the Prague Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes,¹⁰² he has arranged two occasional thematic exhibitions.¹⁰³ He has been also long involved in the preparation of the museum exhibits in Havířov-Životice and at the World War II Memorial in Hrabyně.¹⁰⁴

The extensive creative activities of M. Borák have been highly rewarded. He has received more than twenty various awards for his professional activity, of which we may recount the various prizes for professional publication¹⁰⁵ or the award in the national competition "Gloria musaealis" for his participation in major publishing and exhibition feats.¹⁰⁶ For his

the Polish Republic, 25 – 31 May 2011, Kutno, 8 – 20 January 2012, and Gdansk 8 – 21 May 2012.

100 *Transport do Niska* [Transport to Nisko]. The New Town Hall in Ostrava, 18 October – 4 November 1994; Monument to the Životice Tragedy in Havířov-Životice, 10 August 1994 – 31 December 1996.

101 *Návraty paměti. Příběhy majetku obětí holocaustu* [Memories Returned. Stories of the Assets of Holocaust Victims], curators Helena Krejčová – Mario Vlček, Exhibition Hall of the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, 27 June – 28 September 2009.

102 *Osudy československých občanů v SSSR* [The Fate of Czechoslovak Citizens in the USSR]. Exhibition of archival documents and publications during a scientific conference. The Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic in Prague, 20 February 2002; *Čechoslováci v gulagu* [Czechoslovaks in the Gulag], authors Adam Hradílek, Jan Dvořák, introductory text, Mečislav Borák, the Montmartre Gallery in Prague, 22 March – 31 May 2012 (subsequent reinstallation in the North Bohemian Museum in Liberec, in the Václav Štěcha Library in Slaný, in the House of National Minorities in Prague, at the Cultural and Information Club of the Old Arena in Ostrava); *Židé v gulagu. Českoslovenští Židé v sovětských pracovních táborech v období II. světové války* [Jews in the Gulag. Czechoslovak Jews in Soviet Labour Camps During World War II.], Václav Havel Library, Praha, 10 December 2013 – 12 January 2014, authors Adam Hradílek, Jan Dvořák (professional cooperation Mečislav Borák, and others).

103 *DEN v Mexiku* [DAY in Mexico]. Co-authors P. Hamza, M. Šmýd, M. Tyrlík. Photographic exhibition. The Antonín Dvořák Theatre Ostrava, 16 October – 5 November 1997; *Stereotypy i uprzedzenia: Polacy, Niemcy i Czesi w karykaturach* [Stereotypes and Prejudices: Poles, Germans and Czechs in Caricature]. Exhibition of historical cartoons in the library of Uniwersytet Opolski in Opole in cooperation of the Evangelische Academy Görlitz, Instytut Śląski in Opole and Silesian Museum in Opava, 20 November – 10 December 2000.

104 *Okupace a odboj na Těšínsku 1938–1945* [Occupation and Resistance in Těšín Silesia 1938–1945], display at the Memorial of the Tragedy of Životice in Havířov-Životice, since 6 August 1994, renovation in 2004; *Obrana Podkarpatské Rusi 1938–1945* [The Defense of Carpathian Ruthenia, 1938–1945], part of the display *Okupace a odboj v ČSR 1938–1945* [Occupation and Resistance in Czechoslovakia 1938–1945], National Monument of Freedom in Hrabyně, from 26 May 1995 to 2005; *Památník II. světové války v Hrabyni* [The Memorial of World War II in Hrabyně] (participation in the blueprint of the permanent exhibition 2004–2005); *Doba zmaru a naděje* [Time of Doom and Hope], a memorial of World War II in Hrabyně (a member of the organizing team to complete the display since 2009). He also took part in the display *Z historie Tříneckých železáren* [From the History of Třinec Ironworks], Museum of Třinec Ironworks in Třinec, since 8 April 1994.

105 E.g. 1. prizes in the category of historical works in the competition of the Czechoslovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters (1988) and in the competition of the Czech Union of Freedom Fighters (1998), the introductory word of President Václav Havel to the publication of *Transport do tmy* [Transport Into the Darkness] (1994), the City of Ostrava Prize for his share in the book *Dějiny Ostravy* [History of Ostrava] (1996).

106 In 2008, special award "Gloria musaealis" for publication of research results on the persecution of the Czechs and the Czechoslovak citizens in the USSR was bestowed on him, then in 2009, he was included among the recipients of "Gloria musaealis" in category Museum Exhibition of the Year 2009 won by the Silesian Museum in Opava for the permanent exhibition *Památník II. světové války – Doba zmaru a naděje* [Time of Doom and Hope, a Memorial of World War II] (professional cooperation on the blueprint and implementation) and also the second place in the category of the Museum Act of 2009, which was won by the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague for the project *Návraty paměti – Příběhy majetku obětí holocaustu* [Memories Returned - Stories of the

research of the persecution of the population by totalitarian regimes and related activities, he has received numerous honorary certificates and commemorative sheets, an honorary Medal of the Czech Union of Freedom Fighters in 1997, and the „Order of Scout Gratitude“ in 2003. In 2006 he received the Honorary Medal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic for his long-term participation in the development of Czech-Polish cooperation. He has been repeatedly awarded for his role in the development of the Silesian University in Opava.¹⁰⁷ His journalist qualities are well testified to by granting him the highest journalist award – „The Quail Award“ in 1997 and by the 1st prize in the journalist competition „Prix Non Pereant - Monuments in Need of Publicity“ in the print category by the Pro Bohemia Foundation and the Syndicate of Journalists of the Czech Republic, and others.¹⁰⁸

He has also gained high respect from our northern neighbours. Already in July 2001, he was decorated with the „Officer Cross of the Order of Merit of the Polish Republic“ by the President of the Republic of Poland, then in 2008, he received a diploma of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Polish Republic for significant merits for making a name for Poland in the world. In addition, the Office for the Affairs of Resistance Fighters and Persecuted Persons of the Polish Republic awarded him with the medal „Pro Memoria“ for „outstanding merit for the preservation of monuments of the people and their actions in the fight for the independence of Poland in World War II. and after its end“ in 2001 and 2010 and the Medal „Pro Patria“ in 2011.

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The multilateral and diverse activities of M. Borák confound not only by their scope, but especially by their inter-dependency and continuity, which enable him to find new and unexpected connections. They are characterised by a never ending search for the historical truth, by uncovering the mechanisms of persecution and the long forgotten fates of their victims, by the attempt to bring to light their memories and thus return them to their families and descendants, by the search of the roots of the current conflicts in the historical memory and the effort to solve them. In his work he combines erudition and deep knowledge of each topic or issue examined with the fervour of a reporter, approaching the „crime scene“, and the ability to capture in special, engaging ways the results of the study of the past. In the present Czech historiography, he is the founder of international renown of the research on persecution of the population in Central and Eastern Europe in the 20th century, and an expert on the issue of compensation to their victims, a leading expert of the Holocaust and the restitution of lost Jewish assets. His researches of the persecutions, of Czech-Polish relations, and of the Polish minority in Těšín Silesia and in Czechoslovakia are

Assets of Holocaust Victims] (professional cooperation on the exhibition and a share on the issue of *Návraty paměti* [Memories Returned] and *Výkupné za život* [Lives for Ransom] publications).

107 For scientific and pedagogical activities and representation of the University abroad, he was awarded the 2009 Commemorative Medal, a bronze one in 2011, and a silver one in 2013, of the Silesian University in Opava.

108 For example the Award of the Mayor of the city of Olomouc at the Festival „Academia Film Olomouc“ for the documentary film *Válka o tunel* [War Over a Tunnel] (1993), or 2nd prize from the journalist competition „Ostravský krystal – Vítkovice ‘98“ in the category of regional press, bestowed by the Syndicate of Journalists Ostrava and Vítkovice, Inc. (1998)

highly valued both in our country and in Poland. At the same time, he is a tireless advocate and promoter of the discovered knowledge, aiming at its practical use, including their embedding in the legislation – an expert, to whom people and organizations may turn for help and on whom they can rely. It is this „feedback“ upon the thousands of hours of hidden intense work, search for material and correspondence, which are nowhere to be seen, and which were often the stimulus for further research. Although, according to the jubilee celebrating man, the time of great projects is over, let us believe that this is not quite the case yet and that we may look forward to his next creative achievements. For that, I would like to wish him in the years to come especially good health, strength, and enthusiasm, on which he has always relied both in serious and simple matters.