

Faculty of Arts – University of Ostrava



**CENTRE FOR REGIONAL STUDIES**

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## CENTRE FOR REGIONAL STUDIES

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### **Identity of places and regions in the literature, language, and culture**

Today's globalized civilization is blurring boundaries between national countries, but at the same time, it creates the need to identify with the familiar world of local culture. The existence of regional and local identity has its unchanging features, but at the same time, it is subject to contemporary changes in connection with social, political and religious development. Literature, language, art, and culture reflect transformations of regions and contribute to the image of individual places - either "industrial" Ostrava, or „idyllic" South Bohemia or "harsh" Šumava. The team of the Centre for Regional Studies, FA UO (CERES) is asking the questions related to these topics.

[#regionalstudies](#) [#identity](#)

[#regionalism](#) [#literature](#)

[#culture](#) [#history](#) [#region](#) [#art](#)

## CERES

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Centre for Regional Studies was established in 1996 under the original name of the Institute for Regional Studies. Since its origin, in addition to individual research projects, it has been focusing on the large team tasks, bringing together experts from several scientific fields. The first phase of this activity was completed by the two-volume Cultural-Historical Encyclopedia of Silesia and Northeast Moravia (2005).

In 2001, the Vojtěch Martínek Library was founded within CERES and its book collection consists mainly of books from the estate of this prominent writer, publicist and organizer of the culture life in the Ostrava region. The library holds many unique publications and bibliophilias and currently consists of 6 287 volumes.

Over the past decade, the team has expanded its activities to other topics and its focus is interdisciplinary. The main area of interest lies in the field of literary science, but the team also cooperates with linguists, art historians, and ethnographers. In addition to the wider Ostrava region, the centre of attention is also the regions of Wallachia, Těšín and Czech Silesia, but the research does not avoid even more distant localities. At the same time, it also responds to the current trends of cultural sciences, in which the interest in the phenomenon of space is growing. Ostrava researchers examine the depiction of landscape, nature, rural area and industrial towns in literature and art, and draw the attention to evolutionary changes of these topics from pre-modern times to the present time with its ecological threats.

CERES, in the targeted effort to cultivate the public's relation to regional culture, cooperates with the Fiducia Antiquarian Bookshop and Club, with the Ostrava City Library, with the Moravian-Silesian Research Library in Ostrava, with the Petr Bezruč Memorial of the Silesian Museum

in Opava and with the National Open Air Museum. Tips for regional literature can be found at the Centre website: [ff.osu.cz/ceres/publikacni-cinnost/](http://ff.osu.cz/ceres/publikacni-cinnost/). You can also read the popularization texts of the Centre members in the Krásná Ostrava newsletter.

**Dr Jakub Ivánek, the head of CERES, says more about CERES activities.**

### What makes the activities of the Centre for Regional Studies unique?

The essence of our work is that the local region is noticeable. We deal with the wider Ostrava region, which is not only Ostrava and its surroundings. Our Cultural and Historical Encyclopedia of Czech Silesia and Northeast Moravia has such a long title because this whole area is truly culturally associated with the wider Ostrava region. Most writers writing about Ostrava wrote also about the Beskydy mountains. The city was symbolically balanced by mountains, the local landscape was both traditional and industrial at the same time.

### So, there is still something to be followed up. What currently occupies you the most?

In the Centre, we are currently preparing a literary map of Ostrava, a web portal about Vojtěch Martínek, and traveling exhibitions depicting one hundred years of literature in the Ostrava region. In 2021 another of the series of symposium publications about the representation of space in literature will be published, this time in cooperation with Slovak and Hungarian colleagues and on the topic of "the country"; in 2022 the extensive Literary Dictionary of North-East Moravia and Silesia (1918–2018) should be published.

**You already have the experience with publishing maps - years ago, you were creating a database of sculptures located in Ostrava as public works of art.**

The map of Sculptures of Ostrava was even published last year in an updated edition. The planned literary map will have a similar structure. It is the debt to Ostrava and its cultural environment that we have not had such a map yet. With that map, you will be able to walk around the city and trace the places that are reflected in literary texts or are linked to the selected regional authors' lives.

**How do you manage to popularize your research among the general public?**

Always in connection with newly published publications, team members prepare related events for the public, during which they present the book. Although the scientific work itself is interesting for the academic community, it will not entertain the public unless it contains visually attractive components.

As far as you only teach at your seminar, only your students know about the topic. As soon as you transfer the same topic for instance to the Fiducia Club, a wider spectrum of people will become interested in it.

**And is it the same with the book?**

When you publish a book, focused on the text only, no matter how good, only enthusiasts will read it. When you enrich it with something, you will attract a much wider range of people. It has been confirmed by our first book about Wallachia, in which the text was supplemented with the illustrations thanks to landscape photographs from the Moravian Museum. This edition has been sold out and is no longer available. When someone sometimes asks us where to buy the first part, we have no choice but to refer them to the search in antiquarian bookshops.



## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

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- the literary images of country and rural landscapes
- the topic of local, agricultural work and livelihoods in literature and fine arts
- the culture and literature of pilgrimage sites
- the depiction of space in poetry, chronicle novels, and travel literature
- the memory of places in literature
- the cultural and historical research of Wallachia
- the documentation of works of art in the architecture and in the public space of the region
- the cross-border regions of Těšín and Hlučín, Czech-Polish-German literary and cultural links
- the political aspects of toponymy and of regional literature
- the key personalities of the literature of the wider Ostrava region - Petr Bezruč, Vilém Závada, Jaromír Šavřda, and others

## THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PUBLICATIONS

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MALURA, Jan – IVÁNEK, Jakub: *Horo krásná, spanilá! Poutní písně na Moravě (1600–1850)*. Brno: Host, 2019.

A monograph dedicated to the phenomenon of religious pilgrimages at the territory of Moravia and of the former Austrian, nowadays Czech Silesia in the Baroque period with overlap to the middle of the 19th century. It focuses mainly on the literature arising in connection with the pilgrimages. It publishes 75 selected pilgrimage songs from chapbooks, hymnbooks, pilgrimage handbooks and provides extensive commentary on them. It is not limited only to the famous Moravian and Silesian places (Křtiny, Svatý Kopeček, Hostýn, Vranov), but also mentions the lesser known places (Rychnov na Moravě, Prašivá, Jalubí), and also represents the significant phenomenon of cross-border pilgrimages (Mariazell, Częstochowa, Šaštín). The rich illustrations comprise reproductions of old prints, graphics and contemporary photographs of pilgrimage sites.

URBANOVÁ, Svatava – DOKOUPIL, Lumír – IVÁNEK, Jakub – PUMPR, Pavel (eds): *Valašsko – historie a kultura II. Obživa*. Ostrava: OU, 2019.

A representative monography on the history and culture of the Wallachia region, which follows the first book of the same title from 2014. Compared to the introductory, more generally focused volume, the second part is especially concentrated on the ways of procuring livelihoods in Wallachia in different historical periods, and on the diets of Wallachians in the past and in the present.

The publication contains 36 studies by experts representing five disciplines (ethnography, history, linguistics, literary history, and art history). The book is supplemented by many illustrations and by DVD with the documentary film

„Říkejte mi strýcu“ (Call Me Uncle) by Aleš Smrček and Vít Smrček, which displays the traditional way of wood collection on a pedestrian sledge in the story of a contemporary witness from Velké Karlovice.

TOMÁŠEK, Martin: *Krajiny tvořené slovy. K topologii české literatury devatenáctého století*. Praha: Nakladatelství Dokořán, s.r.o., 2016.

The first literary-historical work about the landscape phenomenon in the Czech environment. The theoretical introduction offers a reflection on the sensory perception of the world and on the essence of the literary depiction of space. In the literary-historical part, the canonical works of Czech literature of the 19th century are reinterpreted, but less known texts are getting into the spotlight as well. A book published by a prestigious publishing house specialized in environmental issues investigates the relationship of a man to a specific landscape and unique places - e.g. the Šumava mountains, Wallachia, Giant Mountains, Prague, Brno and their surroundings.

MÁLKOVÁ, Iva: *Jaromír Šavřda. Tvůrce v zástupu i v opozici*. Praha: Pulchra, 2017.

The book introduces Jaromír Šavřda (1931–1988), the Ostrava poet, novelist, journalist, publisher of a samizdat edition, dissident and political prisoner. The author presents individual stages of Šavřda's work. It is based on archive materials and it presents the evidence of the background of the samizdat edition Libri Prohibiti, which Šavřda founded and led in the 1980s. The book also reconstructs the circumstances surrounding his trials, custody and repeated imprisonment. In the final passages, Šavřda is also introduced as a diligent advocate of freedom of speech.

IVÁNEK, Jakub: *Ostravské sochy. Databáze uměleckých děl v architektuře a veřejném prostoru města Ostravy*. Ostrava: Fiducia – Okrašlovací spolek Za krásnou Ostravu – Jakub Ivánek, 2015. Accessible online at: [www.ostravskesochoy.cz](http://www.ostravskesochoy.cz)

The database tries to present, if possible, a complete view of the artistic decoration of the city of Ostrava in the present and in history. Interested persons will find there the entries of existing as well as lost works. Both exterior and interior realizations of important city buildings are present. The Sculptures of Ostrava include not only sculpture works (sculptures, reliefs), but also mosaics, sgraffito, stained glass and murals.

The freely accessible web database seeks to popularize the art and highlight its importance within public space of Ostrava.

URBANOVÁ, Svatava: *Współrzędne czasu i miejsc*. Bohemica Posnaniensia 15. Poznań 2016.

The monography, intended especially for the Polish audience, elaborates the category of the so-called new regionalism. It is based on Czech and Polish research and the latest knowledge in the field of cultural memory studies. It maps wider cultural contexts but also searches common elements between the Central European area and the literature of North Moravia and Czech Silesia. The interpretations of works by selected authors (J. Strnadel, M. Stoniš, O. Filip, J. Balabán, P. Hruška; P. Motýl, P. Čichoň, E. Tvrdá) are also directed towards this region.

IVÁNEK, Jakub – SMOLKA, Zdeněk (red.): *Kulturně-historická encyklopedie českého Slezska a severovýchodní Moravy*. 2. vydání (upravené a rozšířené). Ostrava: FF OU, 2013.

The unique two-volume encyclopedia contains explanatory and supplementary entries related to historical stages, institutions, events, localities, key personalities, magazines and associations of Czech Silesia and Northeast Moravia. It includes the fields of history, ethnography and folklore, geography, Czech, Polish and German literature, music, visual arts, architecture and mass media. 66 authors from various universities and scientific workplaces of the Czech Republic participated in the creation of the modified and extended form of the older encyclopedia (2005).

URBANOVÁ, Svatava – DOKOUPIL, Lumír – IVÁNEK, Jakub – KADLEC, Petr (eds): *Valašsko – historie a kultura*. Ostrava – Rožnov pod Radhoštěm: FF OU – Valašské muzeum v přírodě, 2014.

Thematically defined collective monography of 45 Czech and foreign experts representing the fields of ethnography, history, geography, literary science, linguistics and art history, will captivate the reader by new perspectives and questions, that are, among others, interlinked by the interest in the transforming Wallachian countryside. The publication, which raised considerable interest of the professional public, is accompanied by unique landscape photographs.

## SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS

- Literary image of the region 1918–2018 (Northeast Moravia and Czech Silesia) personalities, events, institutions, places, texts.  
Ident. project code: DG20P02OVV020.  
Research leader: prof. PaedDr. Iva Málková, Ph.D.  
Period 3/2020 - 12/2022.  
Provider: Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic (NAKI II).
- Portraying Countryside in Central European Literature.  
Research leader: Mgr. Jakub Ivánek, Ph.D.  
Period 4/2020 - 9/2021.  
Provider: VisegradFund2019.
- Pilgrimage songs in Moravia and in Czech Silesia from the 17th to the 19th century.  
Research leader: prof. Mgr. Jan Malura, Ph.D.  
Period 1/2017 - 12/2018.  
Standard project of GA ČR.
- Protection and documentation of Polish cultural heritage in the Czech Republic.  
Silva Rerum Polonarum Foundation (Częstochowa).  
Research leader on behalf of UO: prof. PhDr. Aleš Zářický, Ph.D.



## THE STAFF

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