

Abstract

One of the main goals of this thesis is to better understand Czech Neo-Baroque tendencies and their placement within the context of Czech sculpture in general. To be able to better understand the role of Neo-Baroque in this artistic branch it is important to first cover the process of Baroque's revival in Czech lands which triggered creative approach to Baroque motifs and the birth of Neo-Baroque at the end of the 19th century. This is covered in the first part of the thesis. The opening chapter mentions different perceptions of the term Neo-Baroque and how its understanding evolved from the 19th century until present. Chapter that follows elaborates on the topic of Neo-Baroque being one of the historicizing styles and discusses the cultural and ideological circumstances which led to its widespread use.

The topic that strongly resonates here is the Prague urban sanitation which turned most of the sculptors into modelers who would transform Neo-Baroque facades of new buildings into complex decorative schemes. The topic in question also covers periodical swatches of Celda Klouček and Friedrich Ohmann, a very valuable ideological impulse which significantly contributed to raising awareness of the Baroque beauties of Czech provenience as an inspirational source for decorative sculpture and plaster ornament.

The initial part is directly extended by the fourth chapter which focuses on stimuli raised by well-known Baroque sculptors Matyáš Bernard Braun and Ferdinand Maxmilián Brokoff whose artwork appealed to the young generation of sculptors by its monumentality, effort to form figures with expression and realistic execution. The aforementioned traits can also be found in František Bílek's work.

Key part of the thesis is mainly dedicated to the 1890s when the Neo-Baroque tendencies and sculpture production peaked. Subchapters in this part of the thesis focus on searching for Neo-Baroque realizations which were often presented at expositions organized by Art Union in Prague or categorized under the decorative sculpture. Some of the sculptors were influenced by Neo-Baroque tendencies including Vilím Amort, Josef Pekárek, Antonín Popp, František Hergessel, Quido Kocián and others.

The final chapter attempts to assess the development potential of Baroque and the role that Czech Neo-Baroque played in contrast to foreign production. Suggested development analogies strive to highlight specific traits of Czech Neo-Baroque sculpture and integrate it within a broader context of the production of the time. The text is followed by a relevant graphical annex, list of references and archive documents and a list of artworks.