

Portrait silhouettes, which are the subject of the present work, are a peculiar and now forgotten type of portraits. They represent a specific part of the visual culture of the second half of the 18th and 19th centuries and a number of contemporary social, cultural, artistic and scientific phenomena intertwine in them. Technically, these seemingly simple monochrome profile portraits are very diverse. The range of silhouetted persons and persons creating them is equally diverse. The aim of this work is a comprehensive mapping of the phenomenon of portrait silhouettes in the Czech lands with an overlap to more general levels concerning the philosophical aspects of this type of portraiture. The text is based on knowledge gained from detailed research of domestic collections of silhouettes, which are part of museum, gallery and castle collections. A large amount of pictorial material has been preserved in the Czech Republic, which made it possible to formulate the necessary more general conclusions. The complex approach mixes from a methodological point of view the approaches of art history with its formal analysis and cultural history, some topics overlap with the content of Bild-Anthropology studies. The oldest Czech specimens of silhouettes come from the turn of the 70s and 80s of the 19th century, which is almost analogous to the main flourishing of silhouettes in European countries. The first mentions of silhouettes in domestic literature and the press also appear relatively soon. Thanks to the role of the neighboring German states and Vienna, the Czech lands quickly became involved in this pan-European phenomenon, to which they also contributed with their minor technical innovations. The creation of silhouette portraits has experienced a really great boom here and achieved great diversity both in the field of techniques used and in the field of creators and portraits, that represent a surprisingly diverse range of inhabitants of the Czech lands.