

This rigorous thesis uses the archival sources on the barbers' and surgeons' guild and the papers of the central authorities to explore the position of the surgeons within the medical structure during several centuries from Early Modern period till the half of the 19th century. All the materials are taken from Prague City Archives, The National Archives and Archive of Charles University in Prague (e.g. laws and statutes, registers of all types, statutes of the guilds or university charters, personal documents of the guilds' members). The text is focused on gaining independence of surgeons compared with doctors of medicine and moving away from barbers craft organization where could be found their origin. The process of their transition under the supervision of the medical faculty and the official start of surgical studies at the university are examined. Furthermore, the study includes an analysis of the role of the guild, the social status of the Prague surgeons and the character of their education including transformation in this field during the Enlightenment reforms till the year 1848. The information extracted from the sources allows following the development of surgery from disrespected profession into an inherent part of medical sciences by exploring all the phenomena concerned with the education of surgeons and legal aspects of their status.