

## Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the motif of Pietà in the painting and graphic by the Czech and Czech-German artists in the first half of the twentieth century. It explores the inspirations and influences of the religiously oriented pieces of this set of painters. At the beginning there is summarized the evolution of the iconographic motif of Pietà which was isolated from the motifs of the Lamentation of Christ and the Descent from the Cross. The thesis has two parts. First one focuses on the Czech artists and the second one on the Czech-German artists belonging to the Czech artistic scene in this period. The chapters are named after the intellectual basis and the similarity of expression of the included artists. In the early 20th century Rudolf Adámek was occupied by the motif of Pietà in the association with the contemporary symbolism. Karel Holý shifted the meaning of Pietà to the formulation of the hard human deal as well as František Tichý in his compositions of the Good Samaritan quite similar to the wooden gothic statues of Pietà. The existentialist ideas appeared in the work of Jan Autengruber. Vojtěch Tittelbach mixed the existentialist anxiety with the joyful circus performances. The theme of Pietà became actual in the wartime. Karel Černý responded with several paintings of Weepers with monumental figures which raised the intensity of expression. Endre Nemes embodied his antiwar metaphors to the metaphysical pictures of Prague Madonna which consist of pieces of architecture of Prague in the style of Arcimboldo. Certain kind of historicism appeared by Alois Wachsman. Very characterful kind of formulation of this theme we can see by Bohuslav Reynek who placed his compositions to his immediate everyday environment. German speaking part of the Czech artistic scene was influenced much more by the old master's style. Many works of Mathias Grünewald, El Greco, Tintoretto and others became popular and actual. A spiritual head of range of many Czech-German artists became August Brömse. Edgar Jantsch was inspired by Andrea Mantegna's extreme perspective. The crystalline forms derived from individual modification of cubism played an important role. They were used by Vratislav Hugo Brunner and Franz Urban. Totally unique are Maxim Kopf's „light cages“ which move the meaning of his composition to the symbolistic level. Thanks to a wide range of artists and their artistic ways we can see, that the use of the motif of Pietà wasn't just connected with the wartime, but it was common across different political, religious and national opinion.

**Key words:** Motif of Pietà, the Lamentation of Christ, the Descent from the Cross, First Half of the 20th century, Czech-German artists, painting, religious motifs, Jan Autengruber, Endre Nemes, František Tichý, Bohuslav Reynek, Karel Černý, August Brömse, Maxim Kopf