

## **Abstract**

The thesis explores the phenomenon of so-called living pictures, often internationally known under the French translation of the phrase – as tableaux vivants (in singular form a tableau vivant). It is a type of theatrical performance and a paratheatrical genre performed by participants in costumes who, for a short time, motionlessly maintain a certain position, so that the whole scene resembles a work of art – most often a picture, as the term suggests. As templates for the scene composition were selected famous paintings (contemporary audience then amused themselves by identifying them and by the illusion of the picture “brought to life”, which the production evoked), but also sculptures; some scenes were designed from scratch, as in the case of so-called Apotheosis (a living picture meant for glorification of a certain personality) and various allegories, in the Czech milieu often with patriotic overtones. A living picture therefore had many forms, and also a variety of different functions – entertaining, aesthetic, communicating or for instance representational, which is associated with aristocratic families in particular and in our lands very considerably with the Sokol organization.

Attention is focused on the "golden age" of living pictures, i.e. the 19<sup>th</sup> century, specifically in its second half in the context of the Czech milieu. The division into chapters, however, typologically reflects Europe-wide realized kinds of tableaux, which are always discussed at first in general with representative examples of the world, and then in more detail in connection with the Czech lands. (For elemental sorting was chosen distinguishing of tableaux staged on the basis of specific works of art and tableaux without any direct templates.) The thesis aims to approach a living picture in all its diversity, including staging practice reception in the press and so on and to define it (in the form in which it arises at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) in relation to the medium of photography and film and to the borderline genres like, for instance, to the classicist “poses” (attitudes) of lady Emma Hamilton and other kinds of contemporary entertainment. This specification of the term is then used for sorting out practical examples of living pictures on the Czech scene, whose gathering and interpretation were also one of the main objectives.

## **Key Words**

Tableau Vivant, Theatre, Studio Photography, Pictorialism, National Theatre in Prague, Sokol, Aristocratic Celebrations, Genre Painting, Imitation, 19<sup>th</sup> Century