

ABSTRACT

In the thesis I have tried to capture the shifts in the perception of the Karlštejn Castle in the historical memory of the Czech and German society in a wider political-cultural context. The Czech nationalists saw the castle as a symbol of the Czech nation's fate, because the nation lived through the time of its foremost glory during the reign of Emperor Charles IV. But their symbol was mostly neglected and forgotten in their time. Amongst the Germans, the romantic idea of the Karlštejn Castle having been built according to a mythical castle known from the Holy Grail legends was widespread. The building, then in decay, was thoroughly reconstructed between the 1880s – 1890s. The reconstruction was done by the renowned architects of that time, Friedrich Schmidt and Josef Mocker. The Czech political representation promoted the renovation of the Karlštejn Castle in connection with their State-law demands, which were supposed to culminate in the reconstruction of this medieval castle and the royal coronation of the Austrian emperor with the Crown of St. Wenceslas. The medieval building was wrongly said to have been the original place where the crown jewels had been kept. In the historical memory of the German society, the Karlštejn Castle remained the remembrance of the glory of the Holy Roman Empire and proof of the German medieval architects and painters' ability. However, Czech society perceived the castle as a stone guard of the royal crown. The symbol of Karlštejn became a living place of memory nourished not only by the support for the reconstruction of this medieval building, but also by the organizing of nationalistic assemblies, groups or individual trips and the new exposition commemorating the most glorious era of the national history.

KEYWORDS

Historical memory, place of memory, creation of modern nations, State-law program, the Crown of St. Wenceslas, heritage preservation, neo-gothic, purism