

Abstract:

The main subject of the thesis are the beginnings of the studio founded by J. V. Myslbek at the Academy of Arts in Prague in 1896. Firstly, the personality of J. V. Myslbek and his evolution as an artist since the early sixties of the 19th century are being discussed. This part covers Myslbek's trip to Paris in 1878 and his friendship with Vojtech Hynais, which helped him gain a deeper understanding of the contemporary French sculpture and which was vital to the stylistic formation of his sculpture "Music" (created between 1891 and 1907, during Myslbek's presence at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design and at the Academy of Arts). Myslbek's first students at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design were influenced by his lyrical conception; the generation of Maratka's classmates have followed their teacher to the newly established Academy of Arts. Around 1900 sharp controversies between the teacher and his students have arisen - these in retrograde seem to be essential for their future success. Graduates of the College of Stonemasonry and Sculpture in Horice were among the students of the sculpture studio at the Academy of Arts in Prague. Their previous training laid an ideal foundation for artistic growth under the tuition of Myslbek, who have stressed the importance of craft, which they have been acquiring also during their work on the St. Wenceslaus monument. Particularly after the exhibition of works of August Rodin in Prague in 1902, the collisions between Myslbek and the new generation over the issues of modernity started to arise.

The next aim of the thesis is to explore the activity of Czech Germans who studied (Karl Wilfert jr., Alois Rieber) at the Myslbek's studio at the Academy of Arts in 1898–1902 (Karl Wilfert jr., Alois Rieber) and to introduce Josefina Christen, a largely forgotten Myslbek's German speaking student. In 1908, many problems arose during the construction of the St. Wenceslaus monument; those were accompanied by Myslbek's family difficulties and health inconveniences. Jan Stursa became the assistant of the studio, while Myslbek started to be less concerned with his students and he was becoming more and more introvert.

The thesis can be read as an attempt to outline the beginnings of the art of sculpture in Bohemia and the related discussion on the modern conception of sculpture, informed by foreign influences. International backgrounds of Myslbek's students was important for the modern development, however, it was perceived as controversial by the nationalist society. Due to the following historical events and intentional discarding of relevant sources, particularly Czech Germans were disregarded as an integral part of Myslbek's atelier.

