

## **Abstract**

This work focuses on forms of presentation and self-presentation of two important artists living at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries – a Czech painter Mikuláš Aleš and a French sculptor Auguste Rodin. It can be described as the so called cult of both artists, which means a perception of artist as an outstanding genius. This type of thinking about artists and their work was widely spread in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mikoláš Aleš (1852-1913) is known for his individual artistic style which was based on the Czech romanticism and folk art, his style also partly anticipates Czech Art Nouveau. Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) was one of the most important French sculptors working at the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He is considered to be a founder of modern sculpture. Many of his statues caused scandals which made him famous and well-known also among the Czech artists.

Both artists were highly appreciated by young members of the Manes Association of Fine Artists. This Association was established in 1887, since 1897 the *Volné směry* journal were published. Mikoláš Aleš became the first elected president of this Association. Members of this Association were highly interested in modern trends in Czech and European art. It may be surprising that young members of the Manes Association were interested in such different types of artists as M. Aleš and A. Rodin. Max Švabinský (1873-1962) was one of the members of the Manes Association of Fine Artists, his drawings and paintings initiated the beginnings of Czech modern art. He is well-known for his figural symbolic works and he became famous for his portraits of outstanding Czech personalities.

The aim of this work is a comparison of the “cults” of M. Aleš and A. Rodin and the situation of Czech and French cultures. In spite of the huge attention which was paid to both artists, the topic of their “cults” has not been discussed and they have not been compared from this view point.

## **Key words**

the Cult of Artist, Auguste Rodin, Mikoláš Aleš, Max Švabinský, Rodin’s Inspiration, Portraits, Self-portraits, Caricature, the Manes Association of Fine Arts