

Abstract

The diploma thesis deals with church bells as specific instruments of liturgy and lived faith on the example of today's Karlovy Vary Region, respectively historical regions Loketsko and Chebsko. Part of the text will focus on individual families who were engaged in casting bells. Emphasis is placed on the social and economic status of these families, their social mobility and the level of production in different epochs. These topics are traced from the early Middle Ages to the period of requisitions of bell funds during the world wars. At the same time, the work will attempt the first comprehensive mapping of historical bell collections in today's Karlovy Vary Region and give an explanation of the use of bells in church practice, taking into account the regional specifics of the culture of Egerland. Thanks to the connection to Germany and the important position of Cheb and Locket, there have been many bell-making manufacturers since the Middle Ages. In the early modern period, together with the development of mining activities in the Slavkov Forest and in the Ore Mountains, the prestige of the bell-making craft increased. Therefore, most of the church bells preserved to this day come from this period. Thanks to the parish archives, chronicles and topographies from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the production of regional bell producers can be traced and it is necessary to confront it with the current real state of bell funds. A special part of the work is devoted to war requisitions of bells in the years 1916–1918 and 1940–1945, which represent the most drastic intervention in the bell culture in our country.

Keywords

Bells – Bellfounding – Cheb Region – Locket Region – Karlovy Vary Region