

Anotace v anglickém jazyce

Art of tombs and the sepulchral estetic of the turn of the 19th and 20th century; selected aspects

My work deals with the sepulchral art. Unlike some other people I do admire the atmosphere of cemeteries. The way they can make me contemplate. I am also fascinated by the wide scale of artistic monuments we can find among the graves. The turn of the 19th and 20th was a fascinating period when different styles had been changing but also could have been coexisting next to each other. My work wants to show the artistic trends and tendencies, taste of the architects as well as the ordinary people. I also want to give information about the types of graves or tombs which can be found in cemeteries. To show the important and fascinating works of our main artists like František Bílek and Jan Kotěra etc. is needed too. The cooperation between different artists was a common thing in the world of art and the situation in the funeral art is a good evidence of results of it.

The strongest accent I put on two necropolises. Olšanské and Vyšehradský cemeteries. My favourite one is Olšanské cemetery which was founded in the 17th century as a large nekropolis for the victims of plague epidemic. It used to be and still is the largest and most outstanding place where people dream their eternal dreams one can ever imagine. Visitor can be surprised by the wide variety of different styles of simple crosses which decorate old graves of unknown deads as well as pompous and self confident rich architectures that remind important persons of the Bohemian history. Olšanské hřbitovy is the place where many of Czech politics, scientists and artists are buried.

Vyšehradský cemetery has the similar purpose. It is also the pantheon where the most outstanding Czechs were buried so that anybody could come to their graves and honour their deeds. The most important place of Vyšehradský cemetery, Slavín,¹³⁹ was founded at the end of the 19th century. It is a common burial area of the topgun Czech personalities

To explain the situation of the burial art of those days is not a simple task. As I have said the style was not unified. There were two completely opposite artistic expressions. On one hand the traditional and representative neorenaissance which reminds us the pathetic buildings like the National Theatre etc. On the other hand more and more popular art nouveau which eventually brought the fresh air into the boring and rotten artistic rules.

¹³⁹ Sláva is in English glory

I tried to do some kind of systém during my excursions to the cemeteries. I divided the funeral production into couple of specific kinds with the own specific features. Those groups can be called :

- 1) common graves and crosses and mostly used types of tombs
- 2) pompous and expensive vaults
- 3)funeral jewelry-art nouveau graves and vaults
- 4) figure sculptures
- 5)busts of the people

I wrote a couple of lines on the theme of death which was expressed by some sophisticated artistic means like closed eyes, sleep or deep contemplation.

I also tried to map the terrain of funeral symbolic which can be found on the graves. I came with some interesting information about the flowers and plants popular to express the topic of death. Above this all I found another important symbol of people who crossed the Styx river, opened doors or angels of death.

I tried to show lightly the storming atmosphere in the funeral art at the times of the passionative turn of those two amazing centuries. The funeral topic may be slightly morbid for many people but I am sure that it is worth studying.

Pět klíčových pojmů

Five key expressions

Sepulchral/funeral art

Architecture and sculpture

Cemetery

Tomb/grave/vault

Decoration