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Changes in the social status of architects and builders in the Czech lands in the second half of the 19th century

This paper aims to contribute to the research of Czech elite of the 19th century and to elaborate a previously neglected topic. Until now, only partial art history studies of individual buildings or architects have been published on this subject which only marginally affect wider contexts and relationships with other social groups. In the concept of these works, architects are understood either as artists (architect and representative architecture) or as technicians (architect and engineering architecture). However, the essential is also another conception of architects as entrepreneurs who, thanks to the accumulation of capital, have achieved an important social status at this time. Architects and builders consider as a single and at the same time internally hierarchized socioprofessional group according to the socioprofessional code of Austrian occupational statistics. In my work, I ask myself the following questions: Why did this happen during this period? What circumstances contributed to this? What was that change?

At this time there is a change in the previous education of architects and builders and the overall perception of this social group. Thanks to the social, economic and social changes of the process of modernization, architects and builders ceased to be perceived as a group, dependent on the orders of their employers from higher circles (aristocracy, bourgeoisie), and became a separate and independent layer with business and political aspirations (this is related to the achievement of a degree of professionalisation). At the beginning of this transformation were external objective factors in the form of modernization processes of the industrial revolution that started state reforms at the end of the 18th century and during the first half of the 19th century. These factors include, in particular, the abolition of guilds and the emergence of state educational system with a unified study program, reforms in the field of building law and administration and, naturally, a huge construction boom (supported by state) in the second half of the 19th century. State reforms have made it possible for builders from different social environments to have common starting conditions and positions (due to education, the possibility of building license, business, etc.) at the beginning of their careers.

In my research I would like to focus on the schematic models of personal careers of selected generationally related personalities and to explore how these models differed in success.

Due to the torsionality and incompleteness of the sources on this topic, the prosopographic **method of the collective biography of the elite**, described by historian Martin Myška in his research on the entrepreneur class in the Ostrava region, could be used as a research method. Its advantage is that, on the basis of the search for essential (specific) characters with the highest frequency, it affects everything that is important across the social stratification spectrum of the given social group. It also allows an analytic-comparative approach, consisting in differentiation from other groups, and in the knowledge of the internal stratification of the group itself. The use of this method is also acknowledged by the fact that the social group of architects and builders, like the group of entrepreneurs, crossed vertically across almost all the social strata of the society. In addition, the collective biography respects the multiplicity of social behavior. Unlike the method of socio-historical biographies, which deals only with the accumulation of data on individual personalities, it is possible to achieve, on the basis of carefully selected case studies and traced characters, despite the limited possibilities of heuristic investigation, a high degree of comparability and representativeness of the results.

Based on the application of so called personality biogram, I have tracked the areas of interest for the professional growth of architects and builders according to the standardized curriculum vitae of individual figures:

A. Information on person and social origin. An important criterion for this research area is social origin. Under this criterion is the professional focus of the builder's father, whether the builder originated from the environment of an established construction company or came from another environment (initial material conditions and initial capital), what was his nationality and religion, whether he was coming to Prague from a larger town or from the countryside, whether he worked in the nobility, etc. The social background interferes with other research areas and significantly influences the builders' social rise and includes, for example, the place of architect's residence, family life, illness, the place of architect's last rest, newspaper obituaries etc.

B. Education. In the case of selected personalities, the successful graduating of the study of the Prague Polytechnic Institute - the initial educational institution for all builders and

architects in the Czech lands - is a condition of inclusion in the sample. Next, I will follow whether the builder went on to study at one of the Art Academies (Vienna or Munich) after completing the Polytechnic, whether he participated in student competitions, whether he gained experience as a masonry poller during his studies, whether he had received a scholarship for a foreign study visit, whether himself gained teaching practice etc.

C. The course of a career. The key feature in building the personal career of a builder is the profit of burglary and business (for buildings) license. Another important factor is the activity in the state administration (building offices, supervision during building actions, licensing), ownership of a specialized private company, participation in public competitions, auditions and exhibitions, mutual cooperation of individual entities in the profit and implementation of municipal building contracts etc.

D. Other non-professional activities. This category includes a variety of federal activities and public activities, teaching and publishing activities, membership and functions in specialized professional institutions, membership and functions in social organizations, clubs and political parties, activities in municipal regional and national authorities of self-government, humanitarian activity and mecenate (art, science, education etc.), gained recognition and honors (industrial and world exhibitions, awards from competitions, orders, medals, honorary membership and citizenship etc.)

At the conference, I would like to focus, on the specific cases from my own research, on the possibilities of collecting sources for individual personalities (works of contemporary authors, period testimonies, periodicals, archive materials), and discussed the above-mentioned methodological problems and approaches.