

Abstract

This work aims to contribute to the research of Czech elites of the 19th century and to write up the hitherto neglected topic of professional and social rise of Czech architects and builders in the 19th century. At this time, as a result of state reforms of the educational, administrative and legal system, the professional perception and social status of this class changed. In the introduction, architects and builders are included in the process of modernization of the construction industry and defined on the basis of their relationship to art, engineering and business. Subsequently, architects and builders are defined as a socio-professional group that has reached a certain degree of professionalism during this period. Against the background of the formation of a modern system of building and architectural education, law and administration, individual features of professionalization are monitored on specific cases of architects and builders using the method of collective biography of elites in research areas of their social background, education, construction practice and other public activities.

Thus, two levels intersect in the work - general and personal. In general, the interconnection of construction education, law and administration since the establishment of construction disciplines at polytechnics and academies and the issuance of provincial regulations and the first building codes at the beginning of the 19th century, through the promulgation of trade regulations, growth of interest in polytechnic education as a condition for gaining a construction licence around the middle of the 19th century, until the formation of modern construction-technical and architectural-artistic education, the definition of the competences of the participants in the construction process and the creation of territorial and professional self-government in the second half of the 19th century.

The factors of this transformation are examined on four members of the Josef Hlávka generation (Josef Korel, Josef Niklas, Adolf Siegmund, Karl Schlimp), who became the first graduates of the newly reformed education and who entered active professional life during the economic and construction boom of the 1860s. Based on a comparison of their career paths and the degree of achieved social status, a typology of three different levels of professional careers (regional, provincial and state architect and builder) is then created. At the same time, other related phenomena are monitored in individual cases, such as the formation of the city's Bildungsbürgertum, the connection between construction business and politics, the issue of creating theater architecture against the background of the national movement, the importance of railway architecture for self-government, etc.