

The Final Report on the Project n. 92p5

Max Dvořák's Art History from the Standpoint of Unpublished Archival Sources. In Accordance, or in Disagreement with Posthumous Historiographical Concepts?

The project led by **PhDr. Tomáš Murár, Ph.D.** from the Department of Art History of Charles University and supervised by **PhDr. Friedrich Polleroß, Ph.D.** from the Department of Art History of the Vienna University, showed that the thesis of the project – that we know only a small fraction of Max Dvořák's actual approach to art history as an academic discipline as it was formed at the beginning of the 20th century – was correct.

In the archive of the Department of Art History of the Vienna University, the researcher of the project with an assistance of Dr. Polleroß as the head of the archive went through the so far unknown correspondence of Max Dvořák with his professor and mentor, Viennese art historian Franz Wickhoff. A closer look at their relationship through this correspondence shows new possibilities how to understand formation of Max Dvořák's art history outside the so-far still valid historiographical concepts formed after Dvořák's death by his students. The most valuable part of the correspondence shows Wickhoff's uncompromising tactics in enforcing Dvořák as the new professor of art history at the Vienna University after the death of Dvořák's second professor of art history, Alois Riegl. Wickhoff asserted Dvořák as Riegl's successor despite the nationalistic protests of the German-speaking students attending the Vienna University. These students and their supporters attacked Dvořák and his Bohemian origins as an inappropriate condition for teaching at the “German” university in Vienna, emphasizing for example Dvořák's poor ability to speak German or his insufficient knowledge of art history in his only 31 years of age. These attacks were not limited to the shout outs at Dvořák's lectures, but were also published in the daily newspapers – the case of Dvořák's appointment became so noticeable that it was also debated at the Austrian Parliament. There, as well as in the lecture halls and in newspapers, Wickhoff protected and defended Dvořák as he held his position in his decision to have Dvořák as the next professor of art history at the Vienna university.

Dvořák, on the other hand, took badly the months when the protests occurred and the correspondence shows that the main support for him was Wickhoff. As the research shows, we should ask a question not only why Dvořák was grateful to Wickhoff, but also why Wickhoff wanted Dvořák as the professor of art history at the Vienna University? As the archive materials suggest, it was because Dvořák directly followed the footsteps of Wickhoff's art historical method in his own art historical methodology, and Wickhoff wanted this way to be the main form of the Viennese art history of the early 20th century. However, this crucial bond between Wickhoff and Dvořák leading to their shared art historical methodology went so far unnoticed in the historiographical research of the so-called Vienna School of Art History, because so far the historiographical research focused only on the intellectual relationship between Dvořák and Riegl, his second professor at the Vienna University whom Dvořák replaced in 1905. With the knowledge of the influence of Wickhoff on Dvořák not only on personal, but also on the intellectual level, parts of Dvořák's as well as Wickhoff's estates were compared. It was searched for new eventual similarities in the topics and methodologies that Dvořák and Wickhoff produced at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries; this comparison shows the actual similarities in their thinking that were then documented also in published texts of both Viennese art historians. Therefore, the research was beside the archive of the Department of Art History

of the Vienna University conducted in the institute's library. This comparison of the published and unpublished sources regarding Max Dvořák's intellectual legacy, in the view of the researcher, was highly fruitful, because it showed Dvořák's art historical thinking in a completely new point of view in a meaning that Dvořák in his thinking rather draw on Wickhoff's than Riegl's thinking that is ordinarily connected to Dvořák' methodological sources of his art history.

Hence, the archival research of the estate of Max Dvořák and its comparison with Franz Wickhoff's papers through the lenses of their personal as well as intellectual relationship can be understood as the essential first step toward the new formulation not only of Max Dvořák's art history, but also of the core of the Central European art history rooted in the bequest of the so-called Vienna School of Art History how it was in a great part formed on the Bohemian-Austrian mixture of Max Dvořák's and Franz Wickhoff's thinking.

Concluded, the goals of the project were fulfilled and they are suggesting opportunities for further research regarding historiography of art history as well as intellectual history of Austrian and Bohemian lands in the beginning of the 20th century.



PhDr. Tomáš Murár, Ph.D.

Department of Art History, Faculty of Arts, Charles University
Celetná 20, Praha 1, 116 21, Czech Republic
Tel.: +420 776 254 716 E-Mail: tomas.murar@ff.cuni.cz

Dr. Friedrich Polleroß, Ph.D.

Department of Art History, Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies, Vienna University
Garnisongasse 13, Wien, 1090, Austria
Tel.: +43-1-427741450 E-Mail: friedrich.polleross@inivie.ac.at