

Kotal, Albert

## The Brunswick sketchbox and the Czech art of the eighties of the 14th century

*Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. F, Řada uměnovědná.* 1961, vol. 10, iss. F5, pp. [205]-228

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/110648>

Access Date: 29. 11. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

ALBERT KUTAL

THE BRUNSWICK SKETCHBOOK AND THE CZECH  
ART OF THE EIGHTIES OF THE 14th CENTURY

I

Since the year 1897, when Joseph Neuwirth's volume was published,<sup>1</sup> the Sketchbook in the Brunswick Museum has never been examined in detail. And yet it is one of the most interesting and most characteristic works of the end of the 14th century to have been preserved, and casts a keen light on some of the characteristic features of the art of the period. According to Neuwirth, the book contains sketch material for carrying out paintings dealing with secular and religious themes. The Sketchbook drawings originated at least in part from the copying of originals either in the field of panel or of wall-painting. Until now, however, no direct original has been found. The costumes of the male and female figures in the Sketchbook correspond to the fashion of the last quarter of the 14th century. The greatest similarities (and not only with regard to costume) can be ascertained in the illuminated manuscripts of King Wenceslas IV. The ideological circle from which the secular and religious motifs of the Sketchbook arose also corresponds to the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th century. The artist was accustomed, then, to carrying out orders within the limits of this circle. According to the costumes and subjects, whose authenticity for Bohemia in the period of Wenceslas IV can be established beyond doubt, it is possible to reach the conclusion that the Sketchbook originated in Bohemia. We can say with certainty that the Sketchbook dates from the years 1380 to 1400. The drawings in it are with regard both to form and content very close to the work of the Czech painters of the period of Wenceslas IV.

This was the general state reached by research on the Brunswick Sketchbook up to the present. The only advance had been to define more closely its relation to Czech painting. A. Stange<sup>2</sup> considers that the best Brunswick drawings are particularly close to the Golden Bull and the Astronomical Work in Vienna which originated in the library of Wenceslas IV. Certain individual figures were probably taken direct from these illuminated manuscripts. Stange also noted the relationship connecting the Sketchbook with the Graudenz altar in Malbork. He considers the Sketchbook to be a collection of individual figures and groups,

drawn from celebrated originals and serving as examples. Z. Drobná<sup>3</sup> considers that a specially close relationship exists to the so-called Master of Genesis in the Vienna Bible of Wenceslas IV and to the painted ornaments in the Vienna Astronomy. K. Stejskal,<sup>4</sup> who after Neuwirth has devoted the most detailed attention to the Sketchbook, recognised its relationship to the figures of saints on the frame of the Aracoeli Madonna and to other pictures of the Trebon Master and endeavoured to indicate the social significance of the drawings. Following other Czech art historians,<sup>5</sup> Stejskal considers the author of the drawings to be an artist of foreign (Swabian) origin, who had come into contact with Czech painting in Bohemia and had mastered its basic principles.<sup>6</sup> There are many reasons, as we shall see, for doubting the correctness of this opinion.

Thematically the drawings of the Sketchbook can be divided into two clearly differentiated groups: the secular and the somewhat more numerous religious drawings. For the latter, the characteristic feature is the simple placing of two or three figures side by side not otherwise associated than by conversation. The only exception is the seated Madonna with the kneeling king, but even here the entire Adoration scene is not presented. It is true that occasionally we find on one sheet two figures which belong to a single incident (for example Mary and John from the Crucifixion or the sleeping apostles from the Mount of Olives), but the link relating them is missing. There is no Crucified Christ, and the Christ from the Mount of Olives scene is drawn on different pages. The secular group can be divided into two classes. One of these, consisting of six pairs of seated royal figures (two of them female), preserve the principle of grouping and conversation, typical for figures of saints. The figures are always turned towards each other and some are making lively gestures. Originally there were more drawings of this type, but they have been cut out.<sup>7</sup> The second group in distinction to the former is characterised by the fact that the drawings in it describe some definite incident. They are of a decidedly erotic character and their theme is for the most part the act of intimate approach and conquest. On each page there are usually two pairs of men and women, only in three cases is there a group consisting of three figures. The conception of the scenes shows — or rather, strictly speaking, originally showed — considerable reserve, though their subject is quite unmistakable. These drawings however have been, to a greater extent than the others, affected by later — still perhaps Gothic — re-drawing, which unequivocally and with coarse technical means stresses the physical side of the erotic relationship. Wherever the female figure is emphasised beneath the garments, the inconsiderate hand of this toucher-up has been felt. The only exception is fol. 5, where it can be seen that one of the women was naked in the original. But even this figure is completely re-drawn. This too is the only scene which has a strikingly allegorical character. Elsewhere the description of concrete incident prevails.

The individual thematic groups do not follow each other consecutively in the

Sketchbook. The book begins with the erotic scenes, which cover fol. 1 and 3' to 5. From fol. 5 to 12' there follow religious figures. These are all standing figures. From this point up to fol. 21' the figures drawn are either sitting or kneeling, regardless of the fact that up to fol. 18 they are religious and then secular. After a short interruption on fol. 22 to 23, one with holy figures and two with profane standing figures, they are followed once more by seated figures, till these again are succeeded from fol. 27' by standing religious figures. Finally fol. 31 contains the isolated figure of a seated prophet. If we disregard from fol. 22 to 23 and the exceptional final page, we see that the Sketchbook is clearly divided into sections. The first part contains standing figures, the second seated or kneeling figures and the last again standing figures, Pages 22 to 23 belong both thematically and technically to the first third.

\* \* \*

This division also affects the composition. While in the first and last third, single pages are determined by the verticals of the figures, in the middle section the horizontals of the figures are decidedly prevalent. It must be pointed out, however, that the single pages in their entirety are distinguished not only by the placing of the figures, but also by their composition. This is particularly obvious on those pages with three religious figures, which mostly have the character of a compositional sketch for a central altar piece or wall-painting. Elsewhere, too, the compositional connection is also clear, even where we find next to each other figures which do not belong together (e. g. St. Paul and St. Christopher on fol. 22), or where on one page we find the same figure twice. Although they consist of studies for individual figures, nevertheless they are presented compositionally. But not only single pages are conceived in this way. Even the composition of the opposite pages is usually related (e. g. fol. 4' and 5, 5' and 6, 6' and 7, etc.) so far as a new cycle does not begin on the recto page. Even here the composition of the two pages is usually connected. This is particularly clear on fol. 18' and 19, where the movement of the figures and especially the drapery is to a great extent repeated even though the subject is completely unrelated.

These observations are important above all for two reasons. First of all it is obvious that in the composition of these pages, the artist considered not only the theme in question, but also developed in them a particular aesthetic problem more or less independently of the subject. Secondly it is clear that he considered each page and even in certain cases the double pages as units of composition more or less balanced. These two reasons considerably weaken the probability of the opinion that the majority of the drawings evolved as copies of panel- or wall-paintings. Possible borrowings from works of panel, wall- or book-painting cannot

of course he ruled out (later we shall point out some cases of this), but the majority resulted from the artist's own impulse to creative drawing and the conventional formulation typical for a particular artistic circle. The relation of the Brunswick Sketchbook to this circle and its character is the theme of the present article.

It still remains to be said, that all the drawings in the Sketchbook show complete unity of style. The only exceptions are the drawings on fol. 1', 2 and 3, which are perhaps later,<sup>8</sup> and the composition<sup>7</sup> on fol. 1, which represents a naked man and girl(?) fighting with a dragon. In theme it belongs to the group of erotic drawings, but it is carried out in quite a different manner. The form here is firmly limited by a sharp bordering line, which carefully follows the irregular and angular outline of the figures, the modelling of which is exact and without contrast, and carried out by means of small parallel strokes.<sup>9</sup> Neuwirth established that the drawings of the main Master of the Sketchbook can be divided into three groups from the technical point of view.<sup>10</sup> To the first group belong the erotic scenes, which are the most carefully executed (close to them are the single seated holy and royal figures), to the second belong the standing religious figures in the first third of the book, to the third belong the rest of the drawings. Typical of the first two groups is the delicately pencilled preliminary sketch, drawn over with a sharp pen line, which permitted effective modelling of the figures in motifs of movement, while the third group are usually carried out directly by pen, are of a more ordinary nature and pay no attention to the modelling of individual details. Fundamentally however the method of presentation is the same in all three groups. The form is built up not only by lines, but above all by the difference of the light and the shaded parts and the relation between them. The shadows are carried out by coarser or finer cross-hatching, which sometimes in the darkest parts becomes a ground and in the lightest disappears. Even where line is prevalent — as for example in the faces — it does not always indicate the exact shape, is sometimes interrupted, merely suggested, or doubled; line also expresses a quality of light. The drawings thus acquire an etching-like quality and all have a soft pictorial character. A characteristic feature is that of the uncertainly defined shadows, usually ellipse-shaped hollows, especially in the lower parts of the clothing.

This chiaroscuro method of expressing the artist's feeling for continuity of space is all the more striking because not the slightest hint of the surroundings in which the figures are situated is ever given — with the exception of the water which St. Christopher is fording. This is most striking in the case of the seated or kneeling figures, whose garments are undoubtedly spread out over a seat or on the ground, but both seat and ground are absent. A particularly grotesque effect is produced by the male figures in tight hose, who apparently are pendant in the air as if they were dancing a ballet. This could perhaps be best explained

as the result of copying some model, everything being omitted except the figures. But the thoroughness with which this principle is carried out tells against this interpretation. Besides, it is not characteristic only of the Brunswick Sketchbook. It occurs frequently in study-drawings of the period.<sup>31</sup>

The figures, mostly slim and willowy, are full of movement and action. Their gestures are very lively and vivid, and their movement gives an excellent idea of the transitory moment of the actions, which are quite clearly distinguishable from one another. Particularly characteristic of this feature is the drawing on fol. 3', where a silent pair of lovers, completely wrapped up in each other, stand alongside another pair engaged in excited discussion, an old man carrying a goblet and a woman of experience concealing a whip. The movements usually are somewhat exaggerated and precious, thus contributing an element of the comic to the scenes. Since the artist sometimes uses means of contrast (e. g. on fol. 24 where a young girl and an old man in fashionable clothing with the face of a satyr are depicted sitting opposite each other), there is no doubt that this is deliberate on his part. Further, in the faces, especially the male faces, more than once there appears a tendency to caricatured exaggeration. These faces are markedly individualised and some are repeated several times. For example the beardless youth in fol. 3' appears once more on fol. 26', the old man on fol. 3' appears again on fol. 23, 25' (and perhaps also on 24), the young man on fol. 5 appears on fol. 22' and 25, the man with the projecting chin on fol. 23 appears again on fol. 23', 24', and 27. Some are so like each other that one has the impression that in this play of love certain actual people took part. The female faces are of a more general type, but even in them we can find a tendency to individualisation and even a tendency to caricature. Nor can we deny that the artist had a sense for the psychological state of his figures, which he indicates both by the expression of the faces and by the movements and gestures of the figures. This psychology is not too profound and is rather theatrical, nevertheless it is very effective.

The attempt at a characteristic form, typical of the structure, physiognomy and movements of the figures is also expressed by the exact description of the clothing, which in the erotic scenes is often exaggeratedly fashionable. With obvious enjoyment the artist lingers on the details of clothing and emphasises their contemporary character. Only where the drapery is independent of the physique of the body and breaks up into multitudinous folds, does the decorative tendency prevail and the unrestrained movement of the artist's hand develops the mass of clothing in violently contorted curves. More than once these take the form of a fish's bladder. This can be seen especially in the holy figures, where the conventional conception of the garments prevents the development of a descriptive tendency, but on the other hand permits a freer decorative composition; this of course also serves to increase the expressive quality. The emotive

element is carried by the movement of the curves, which run over the surface of the figures, constantly returning violently upon themselves and breaking up their substance. The artist's imagination is constantly discovering new combinations for a few compositional elements, introducing into the clothing of the holy figures an element of unreal fantasy, very remote from the detailed description of the secular figures. But in the sharpened physiognomy, the eloquent positions and conversational gesticulations, even here we can see the attempt at characterisation. Even the element of genre humour is not lacking, seen above all in the little figure of the Infant Jesus,<sup>12</sup> and the artist's interest in psychology can also be seen, especially in the figures in the Passion scenes.

## II

The ideological and formal relationship of the Sketchbook to the miniatures of the Wenceslas manuscripts, which Neuwirth was the first to point out, is beyond all doubt. The collection of Wenceslas' books, or rather the remnant of them, preserved from his library, does not however show unity of style and originated over a considerable period of time. The relationship between the Sketchbook and the Wenceslas books must thus be more accurately ascertained. The twenty years from the late eighties of the 14th century to the first decade of the next century, from which these manuscripts date, is a period of rapid development in Czech art, which was to influence its plastic character and its very meaning. The dating of the drawings depends on the question of to which of these temporal and stylistic divisions the Sketchbook is to be assigned.

There are above all three manuscripts of the Wenceslas group, in which we can find marked analogies for the drawings in the Sketchbook: Willehalm of Orange in the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum, the six-volume Bible and group of Astronomical Writings in the National Library in Vienna. In Willehalm it is not only the surprising similarity of costume, but also the types of figure, especially of female figure. Their closely clinging garments, revealing the shoulders and part of the bosom, wherever possible rise into broad waves, which frequently have the appearance of backward curving folds. But also the attitudes, gestures, formation of the hands and sometimes even the grouping of the figures are similar. If we for example compare the two women of fol. 5 of the Sketchbook, with the miniature of fol. 201 of Willehalm or the gesture of the seated woman on fol. 27 with the queen on fol. 219 of the manuscript, it will scarcely be possible to doubt the relationship of outlook and conception. This relationship is even more clearly shown by the young seated king on fol. 19, whose draperies could scarcely have originated independently of the king of fol. 208 of the Willehalm (this pattern of folds occurs more often in the Wenceslas manuscripts), while

the queen on fol. 20' could scarcely have developed without the queen on fol. 239 of the manuscript. Even the type of face here is very similar, and the court lady on the right has a hat of a peculiar peaked shape, which is repeated several times both in the Sketchbook and in the manuscript. Similarly the lady seated on the left in the well-known scene of the suckling infant in Willehalm (fol. 227) shows features similar to the two seated women on fol. 20 of the Sketchbook, and the infant on the same page (and other infants in Willehalm) are very similar to the Brunswick Infant Christ on fol. 11', 17, 18'.<sup>12</sup> The similarities are such as to exceed the bounds of mere stylistic parallels. We can deduce from them that the artist of the Brunswick Sketchbook knew very well the artistic background in which the painted ornament of the Willehalm originated. In the Vienna Bible, to which we now turn our attention, we find that it is not the oldest and most conservative of the miniaturists concerned (the so-called Barlaam Master) that our artist is ideologically related to. This master is still too closely bound by the tradition set up by John of Opava, in the plasticity of his forms and the static character of his heavy draperies. On the other hand there are many common features which attach our artist to the later Masters of the Bible, who dealt considerably more freely with the heritage of the third quarter of the century. This is true not only of the Master of Genesis (especially however of his miniatures in the Willehalm),<sup>13</sup> but also of the Master of the Book of Exodus, whose temperamental movement and psychological interests are more than once to be found in the Sketchbook, of the Master of the story of Esther, but above all of the Master of the story of Samson. The artificial movement of the figures and the complicated system of folds (wherever the garment does not cling closely to the body) are very similar. Particularly worthy of attention is the portrait of Wenceslas IV in the second volume of the Bible,<sup>14</sup> which is a variation of the already-mentioned figure on fol. 208 of Willehalm and fol. 19 of the Sketchbook. Another portrait, of the king, on this occasion surprised in a very private situation without ceremonial clothing, in fact without any clothing, and in the company of a female bath attendant, also in the same volume of the Bible (fol. 94)<sup>15</sup> has in its movement much in common with the richly-dressed knight on fol. 25' of the Sketchbook. This conspicuous position scheme is, as we shall see, rather favoured in this artistic circle. The later works of the Master of the Samson tale (the title-page of the Golden Bull), are no longer of significance for the Sketchbook. Their stiff form and the regularity of their composition already takes them into the region of the "fine" style. Finally we find too in the Vienna Astronomical manuscript more than one related figure, as is shown at the very beginning of the book by the King Alfonso,<sup>16</sup> clearly calling to mind the seated figures in the Sketchbook (e. g. 13, 13', 14, 14', 18). Certain similarities also occur of course even in the later Wenceslas manuscripts. But the progressive stiffening of form, the progressive organisation and regularity of composition, the ornamentation of

the garments and the loss of the effort to characterise, in favour of a kind of generalised, idealised typification, removes them considerably from the much freer, more improvisatory, rougher and more natural forms of the older section of the Wenceslas manuscripts and of the Sketchbook. To these belong for example the above-mentioned Golden Bull in the National Library in Vienna, the Astrological Work of Avenarres in the Munich State Library, the Bible of Wenceslas IV in the Plantin Moretus Museum in Antwerp and the so-called Bellifortis in the University Library in Göttingen.

Of these manuscripts, the Willehalm is assigned to the year 1387, the Vienna Bible originated about that date or possibly slightly later, the Astronomical Work in Vienna between 1392—1393, the Golden Bull in 1400, the Antwerp Bible in 1402, the Munich Astrological Work also at about this date, Bellifortis in the year 1405. Thus if the observations above are correct and adequate, it is clear that the Brunswick Sketchbook belongs to the older section of the Wenceslas manuscripts, which originated towards the end of the eighties and at the beginning of the nineties. None of these new features, which characterise the decoration of books originating about the turn of the century, appear in it. It was not until the nineties that interest in characteristic form unimpeded by conventions, a free fantasy unbound by rules, a tendency to caricatured exaggeration and a feeling for contrast — the very qualities which distinguish the artist of the Sketchbook — began to be replaced by an art which tended towards a somewhat monotonous idealisation and to a delightful form worked out with virtuosity, but which at the same time lost the appreciation of the negative, contradictory and absurd aspects of reality. It is the same process as that which during this period took place in Czech sculpture and which led from the somewhat free pictorial representation and chiaroscuro conception of the Madonna of the Old Town Hall in Prague, of 1381, to the exactly defined form and carefully calculated compositional system of the Plzeň or Krumlov Madonna of the late nineties.<sup>17</sup> Since the artist of the Sketchbook cannot in any way be considered to have lagged behind contemporary development, but can on the contrary be assessed as a personality full of interest in novelty and eagerly accepting all that was new and fashionable, his work can scarcely be assigned otherwise than to the later eighties or the first half of the nineties.<sup>18</sup> The decidedly erotic character of part of his Sketchbook also inclines us to accept the earlier years of Wenceslas's reign.

This is also confirmed by his relation to the greatest artistic personality in the Bohemia of that time, the Třeboň Master. The work of this great painter and his associates, which with great probability originated in the eighties, possibly in the early nineties, certainly differs considerably from the Sketchbook in its profound seriousness, but nevertheless belongs to the same sphere of ideas. It is of course much more complicated, since it is more profound, and thus contains

features which are essentially foreign to the Brunswick artist. If the Sketchbook artist frequently contents himself with a prosaic description of phenomena, the Třeboň painter is concerned to achieve a poetic transposition of reality as a symbol of human fate. His figures and objects are plunged in a strangely suggestive chiaroscuro which renders his forms immaterial and their outlines melting. The passive surrender of his figures is easily subdued to the compositional and expressive intention of the painter. From gathering shadows there stand out the glowing patches of the birds, the dreamy countenances of the figures and the graceful flowing folds of their garments; the red sky, covered with golden stars, increases the mystical atmosphere and unreality of scene. But at the same time the painter is capable of deep psychological introspection, and achieves penetrating characterisation of the faces, and wherever he has an opportunity, he renders contemporary clothing in detail. Nor is he lacking in a sense for the complicated play of the garment-folds, nor — although this aspect is highly controlled — for an exaggeration of physiognomical features amounting to caricature. It is precisely this second feature of his work, tending towards concrete reality and secular beauty, that approaches his work to the artist of the Brunswick Sketchbook. The analogy between them can therefore be seen not in the total conception and basic meaning of the works, but in the details. Thus for example the attitude of the foreground sentinel in the Resurrection<sup>19</sup> is very similar to that of the knights on fol. 25' and 26' (but also to Wenceslas IV. with the female bath attendant in the second volume of the Vienna King's Bible.) Convincing similarities can of course be found above all in the religious figures of the Brunswick Sketchbook. The kneeling Christ on the fly-leaf of the Sketchbook could scarcely have evolved without connection with the same figure in the Třeboň Mount of Olives, although his face is of a different type and though this is a very widely used formula.<sup>20</sup> The connection between the St. Barbara, St. Dorothea, and St. Catherine on fol. 12 of the Sketchbook and the St. Margaret, St. Catherine and St. Ursula on the frame of the Aracoeli Madonna is also obvious.<sup>21</sup> In this instance we cannot doubt that there is a direct connection, since the Brunswick figures repeat in free variation not only the compositional formula, but also the types (St. Barbara in the Brunswick Sketchbook and St. Margaret in the frame). The chiaroscuro method of modelling is here also particularly close to that of the Třeboň Master. Finally something of his lyric quality is also to be found here. Indeed we cannot rule out the possibility that this page reproduces the painter's lost altar side-piece or unites in a new composition some of his figures. In this connection we must also mention the profile of the head of one of the Maries in the Třeboň Burial in the Sepulchre<sup>22</sup> and St. Margaret in the picture of the Madonna with two saints in the Castle of Hluboká.<sup>23</sup> But many other religious figures in the Sketchbook have also sprung from the art of the Třeboň Master. The left-hand saint on fol. 7 recalls the Mary in the Vyšší Brod Crucifixion,<sup>24</sup> the garments of the right-hand saint

on fol. 8' remind us of the figure of St. James on the back of the Třeboň Resurrection,<sup>25</sup> and the face recalls the Madonna and St. Margaret in the Hluboká picture, the old man on fol. 10 is similar to St. John in the Vyšší Brod Crucifixion.<sup>26</sup> From these examples, the number of which could be substantially increased, it is clear that the artist was not only in contact with the art of the Třeboň Master, but directly drew upon it.

The relationship of the artist to the Třeboň Master is not the last of his intimate contacts with Czech art of the last quarter of the 14th century. In Prague there is yet another group of works of art, in this case of sculpture, with which he is closely connected. The outstanding representative of this group is the stone-carving of the Church of the Virgin-before-Týn.<sup>27</sup> It is concentrated mainly on the North Entrance, whose richly moulded architecture is markedly like that of Parlář. It was intended to be richly decorated with figure carvings, for which a large number of pedestals and baldachins remain. The statues have however either been lost, or never were carried out. Judging by the amount of space allotted to them they were or were to have been very slender. It is quite probable that among them was Wenceslas IV and his wife (and perhaps other members of the House of Luxembourg), as on the Ducal Portals at St. Stephen's in Vienna. The Czech and the Imperial badges in the cusps of the pointed arch of the door itself afford evidence that the portal bore some relation to the person of Wenceslas IV, Czech and German King, whose likeness is preserved inside the church. Besides this, in the semi-circular archivolts, pedestals and baldachins are prepared for figures of saints. Of these nothing remains but four pedestals adorned with figures, one or two smaller figures, and most important, of course, the large tympanum arched in a semicircle. This is filled with a relief, representing three Passion scenes: in the centre the Crucifixion, on the left the Scourging, on the right the Crowning with Thorns; in the circular segment above, angels and devils are bearing away the souls of the Two Thieves. The relief is divided into three horizontal belts, of which the central belt, in which Christ appears three times, is restrained and quiet, while the upper and lower belts are full of excited movement. The sensitive design of the composition is enclosed in a regular ellipse, whose course is given by the surmounting arch, divided by three vertical and two horizontal axes and interwoven with a network of diagonals, most of which meet in the loin-cloth of the Crucified Christ and at the height of the heads of the Scourged and the Crowned Christ. Besides this the segment of the ellipse is repeated several times within the tympanum (e. g. in the group below the Cross) and in several symmetrically arranged spots elliptically closed nests are formed.

This tendency to closed sectional compositional units (especially in those cases where the movement is strongly developed), is just as typical of the tympanum as is the softly pictorial presentation of the forms. The sculptor counted upon

the effect of light penetrating the shadow and lighting up in the transparent gloom the chiaroscuro development of the forms. He thus conceives the figures as forming part of space, which is indeed homogeneous and continuous, but not in perspective. It is actually represented by the basic ground of the relief, which is not conceived as a material boundary, even although most of the matter is situated in front of it and the greater part of the movement takes place parallel with it. In the scenes of the Scourging and the Crowning with Thorns this ground is however deepened into an alcove and in this way its function of isolating is disturbed. Besides this, the figures in both these scenes are partly situated in the alcoves and in addition to this the angels in the upper part of the relief at least partially rise out of the depth of the basic ground, whose material reality is thus negated. This indefinite conception of space is also confirmed by the conception of the figures, which are certainly sufficiently corporeal, but move uncertainly over inclined strips of earth or rather float above them, carrying out a kind of dancing movement.<sup>28</sup> In the lower band especially the movements sometimes are even of a grotesque nature. God the Father, Christ, Mary and John are clothed in traditional timeless garments, but the clothing of the others is of an entirely contemporary, fashionable character and the sculptor dwelt lovingly on their detailed description. Even in the garments of the angels we can observe fashionable details. The same attempt at characteristic form can be seen in the faces of the persons, above all again in the lower band, in which there is developed a wide scale of psychological expression ranging from dumb despair and tears to hideous grimace and bestial coarseness in countenances which at the same time show sharply differentiated physiognomy.

It will now be clear from this description that the sculptor of the Týn tympanum moved in a sphere of ideas very close to that of the author of the Sketchbook. This close relationship of ideas can be confirmed by detailed comparison. The movements of the guards, for example, are markedly similar to those of the knights on fol. 22', 25, 26' of the Sketchbook, the kneeling Magdalene at the foot of the Cross corresponds to the compositional pattern of the Christ on the fly-leaf and on fol. 16, the face of John with characteristic irregularities at the base of the nose and half-open mouth, the corners of which are drawn down, (a form typical also of other forms in the tympanum and in the Sketchbook) is similar to more than one face in the Sketchbook (fol. 5' and others). Even in the works whose relationship to the Sketchbook has already been demonstrated, we can find analogies for the Týn tympanum. It is sufficient for example to compare the left-hand lower soldier in the Coronation with the young king in one of the miniatures of the Samson Master in the second volume of the Vienna Bible of Wenceslas IV,<sup>29</sup> or the centurion in the Týn Crucifixion, with the same figure from the Crucifixion of the village of Sv. Barbora (South of Bohemia),<sup>30</sup> to make it clear that here throughout we have the same attitude to the human figure.

The familiarity of the Týn sculptor with the background of the Třeboň Master is also supported by his group of St. John and Mary; its composition is dependent on the formula well-known from the Narbonne altar-cloth, to which the Crucifixion from Sv. Barbora is also related.

This observation is also supported by another work carried out by the tympanum Master in the Týn Church; the sedilia of the north side choir. In the upper corners of the tracery which hangs like a lace border in front of the shadowed wall, there are two symbolical figures with a sword and cross; it is the second of these which is of particular interest to us in this connection. There can be no doubt that it is the work of the tympanum Master. At the same time, however, it is, in its type of form, especially in the upper part of the drapery, very close to the left-hand old man on fol. 15 of the Sketchbook and to the Sketchbook head of St. Paul on fol. 22. The tracery is supported by two brackets with busts of a king and queen. The names of Wenceslas IV and his wife suggest themselves automatically. Our supposition becomes a certitude when we observe that beneath the king the figure of a wild man is carved. More than once in the Wenceslas manuscripts this figure represents the king. He often appears as an armour-bearer with the Czech and Imperial badges and sometimes wears on his head a helmet with the Imperial crown. Less clear is the symbolical significance of the hooded man beneath the queen. Even he however appears together with the female bath attendant — the queen — in the Vienna Wenceslas Bible<sup>31</sup> and thus perhaps has some connection with her. The use in the Týn Church of symbols familiar from the Wenceslas manuscripts is not perhaps without significance for the sculptor's relationship to court art. We are thus not surprised to find a parallel for the Týn queen in the Vienna Bible, e. g. the crowned woman between two kingfishers.<sup>32</sup> But more convincing parallels for her good-humoured smiling type are to be found in the Sketchbook, e. g. fol. 7 and 17.

The relationship between the artist of the Sketchbook and the sculptor of the Týn tympanum was, then, a very close one. Since this is a case of works entirely different in technique, function and significance, this relationship cannot be defined more closely. For the artistic circle to which the Sketchbook belongs, it is not however without importance, that the Týn sculptor worked on orders for the Court. One of these may have been the decorative carvings in the Týn Church, even although this was a municipal church. The hand of this Master also appears however in the tower of the Old Town Bridge, which was built by the king. The Master was responsible for at least two brackets with erotic subjects on the ground floor of the east front<sup>33</sup> and very probably was also the author of the busts of St. Cyril, Methodius, Prokop and Vojtěch in the upper triforium of the Cathedral of St. Vitus.<sup>34</sup> These could scarcely have originated by the early date of 1375 at the hand of the stone-carver Herman, as was supposed,<sup>35</sup> but

actually not until the first half of the following decade. Only thus can we explain their unusually advanced character, their pictorially undefined total form, their striking individualisation and psychological differentiation.<sup>36</sup>

Yet another piece of carving in Prague is close to the trend of the Master of the Týn tympanum, though it may not have come directly from his hand: the Madonna of the Old Town Hall.<sup>37</sup> It differs from his work in its feeling for the tectonics and the logic of the physical structure, but the entire conception of its form is very close to him. It is also of importance because it can be dated with great probability. The year 1381 was that in which the Town Hall Chapel was consecrated and clearly this carving already stood on the corner of it. This dating, along with the dated manuscripts of the Wenceslas group provide a sufficiently firm chronological frame for the group of works with which we are here dealing, especially of course for the work of the Týn tympanum Master. If the Old Town Hall Madonna has its provenance in the very beginning of the eighties, this would explain the material and compact character which still connects it with the preceding decades; at the same time it is clear that we can find in it tendencies to a soft pictorial form, which in the subsequent works was developed as far as possible. One further detail must be noted: in the garments of the Madonna there appear unusual, very characteristic hollows of elliptical form. These are almost identical with similar shapes already noted in the Brunswick Sketchbook.

Apart from the Old Town Hall Madonna there are no other large-scale works of stone-carving in Bohemia which could be assigned to the trend represented by the author of the Týn tympanum.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand we can find significant expression of it in Vienna, where the contemporary, brother-in-law and rival of Wenceslas IV, the Duke Albrecht III, endeavoured to build up an important cultural centre. The influence of the Prague example was very effective here and Viennese stone-carving of the second half of the century took over more than one significant suggestion from Prague, without losing contact with its own great past. The Prague sculpture of Parlér clearly left traces here in a series of noteworthy works, among which the theme of the present study is most concerned with the carved ornament of the Ducal Door of St. Stephen's.<sup>39</sup> In the first place there come into question the tympanum and figures of Rudolf IV and his wife on the moulding of the Singers' Door and of Albrecht III and his wife on the Bishop's Door. Both the ducal pairs are accompanied by armour-bearers. To them we can add Charles IV with his Empress and a further four ducal figures from the west front and the high tower, which today are in the Vienna Municipal Museum.<sup>40</sup> The closest of these to the Týn carvings is the relief of the Conversion of St. Paul in the tympanum of the Singers' Door, which in view of its spatial values is one of the most important sculptural monuments of the late 14th century in Central Europe. Here we encounter a similar pictorial conception of the whole,

a similar delight in complicated and violent movements, a similar interest in the detailed description of contemporary clothing, a related attempt to differentiate the figures physiognomically and psychologically and even the use of the same means of compositional connection as in Prague. Like the Prague sculptor, the Vienna artist, too, is concerned rather with the strength of total effect than with exactitude and correctness of relationships.<sup>41</sup>

The decisive date of origin for the Vienna reliefs is given by the bronze equestrian statue of St. George on the Prague Hradčany, which dates from the year 1373. Its direct influence is shown in the figure of the rearing horse at the left edge of the tympanum. The eventful scene, in which St. Paul appears three times, reminds us of the equestrian scenes in the Wenceslas manuscripts (Willehalm), with which the harness of the horse is also strikingly identical. But even in details we can ascertain the connection with Prague. Thus the Vienna Ananias is not unrelated to the Prague Crowning with Thorns on the Týn tympanum and the faces of St. Paul and the man in the high hat are not without relation to the two left-hand guards in the same Prague work. In particular the clothing of St. Paul is reminiscent of the centurion on the Theodorik picture of the Emaus Crucifixion,<sup>43</sup> from which the figure on the above-mentioned Crucifixion from Sv. Barbora is developed. Even more clearly do we see the connection with Prague sculpture in the statue of Albrecht III, who along with his wife Elizabeth and two armour-bearers is carved on the moulding of the Bishop's Gate. It is worked out according to the model of Parlér's St. Wenceslas, at St. Vitus's in Prague,<sup>44</sup> dating from the year 1373. Elizabeth, sister of Wenceslas IV, received the feudal lands of Silesia, whose badge is woven into her garment, in the year 1373 and in 1375 the Duke married for a second time. Thus the statues of Albrecht and Elizabeth probably originated between these years. But do their armour-bearers belong to the same period? That on the left with its quality of movement and lability recalls work of the eighties, especially the left-hand upper guard in the Týn Scourging. This sculpture is important for our subject for the further reason that its clothing is repeated in detail in that of the soldiers who are unbinding the Just Thief in the Týn Crucifixion. A variant of this figure also appears on the Singers' Door, where it accompanies the Czech Princess Catherine, wife of Rudolf IV. In this case there is a particularly striking resemblance between its face and that of the knight on fol. 26' of the Brunswick Sketchbook. All the figures on the moulding of the Singers' Door are slender and lithe; they move with ease, scarcely touching the ground, and extend freely into space. Clearly they come from the same hand as the relief of the Conversion of St. Paul which stands above them. If we consider further, that certain figures of male and female saints in the archivolts of both doorways offer features close to the Třeboň Master and the Brunswick Sketchbook,<sup>45</sup> scarcely any doubt can remain of the connection of the St. Stephen sculptures with the Prague artistic circle which is

the subject of the present study. That this connection must be explained as the dependence of the Vienna carvings on those of Prague follows from the general situation of artistic development at this time, when Prague undoubtedly held the leading position of initiative. Nevertheless we cannot consider the Vienna carvings to be merely a derivative of the Prague ones. Although we must take into consideration the fluctuation of artists between Vienna and Prague, the old domestic tradition is preserved stubbornly even in works in which the Prague influence can be clearly seen. This is true not only of the Madonna in the Chapel of St. Giles in St. Stephen's<sup>46</sup> which is a variant and probably a replica of the Madonna of the Prague Old Town Hall of 1381, but also of other works of the eighties. To them belong the work of the Master of the Conversion of St. Paul relief, which later, in the figures of the west facade and the high tower, developed in a direction which cannot be compared to anything in Czech sculpture. The spatial tendencies here were carried on till they led to the complete break-up of matter and the utter disembodiment of the figures, which acquired in the process an unreal, visionary character. Even in these there can however still be found traces of the Prague influence and tradition of the eighties.<sup>47</sup>

The relation between the relief of the Conversion of St. Paul and the Týn tympanum was recognised by Tietze.<sup>48</sup> But while he places them — and the ducal figures of the Singers' Door along with them — at as late a date as about 1400,<sup>49</sup> it will scarcely be possible for us to agree with him. At this period the Týn carvings would already have been anachronistic in Prague. At the turn of the century there arose in Bohemia a quite definite new stylistic phase, known as the "fine" style. It is not to be expected that in such an important building as the Týn doorway an attitude already superseded could have been employed, when one of the most significant characteristics of this period was the longing for the new and the very latest. Since the Týn carvings can be assigned to the category of court art, it is certainly not without significance that the new outlook prevailed very clearly in the manuscripts of Wenceslas IV about the year 1400. The ornament of the Golden Bull, the Antwerp Bible, the Munich Astrological Work and the Bellifortis have already considerably departed from the direct approach and the improvisatory freedom of the older section of manuscripts, and these qualities have been replaced by the virtuosity of perfectly worked-out form.

## III

If we now once more survey the relationships which connect the Brunswick Sketchbook with the Czech art of the eighties, two facts stand out clearly; the first of these is the Czech, the Prague roots of this Master's art. There is no reason to suppose that the Sketchbook is the work of an artist who has travelled

from Western Germany; neither in the plastic composition nor in the painting is there anything preserved which could show such a degree of relationship with West Germany as we have managed to show with Bohemia (not even excepting the older Parlerian sculpture or the work which had already developed under the counter-influence of Prague).<sup>50</sup> The second fact is the recognition that this relationship commits the Sketchbook above all to the works of the eighties and beginning of the nineties. This is undoubtedly the case with regard to the Wenceslas manuscripts and it can scarcely be otherwise in the case of the work and circle of the Třeboň Master. The least clear case is that of the Týn carvings. Should we however accept the opinion that these are the work of the same sculptor who created several of the busts of saints in the upper triforium of St. Vitus's, even here we can reach a satisfactory conclusion. We may assume that the busts in the triforium were already finished in 1385, when the choir of the Cathedral was consecrated. Then we find this Master in the Old Tower Bridge Tower, and precisely in the lowest part, which certainly was erected in the early eighties. Later perhaps came the sculptural ornament of the Týn Church, which cannot be too remote in time from this. To this stream of Czech art of the eighties (for other streams also existed), we can most naturally assign the Brunswick Sketchbook.

If we now consider the social background for which the work of this artistic circle was evolved, we shall see that it was the royal court and the upper ranks of the aristocracy. The Wenceslas manuscripts were executed for the King himself. The work of the Třeboň Master and his circle were preserved, it is true, above all in Southern Bohemia and some of them were perhaps intended for the Church of the Augustine Monastery in Třeboň. The founder and benefactors of the Monastery were however members of the powerful family of Rožmberk, who ruled in Southern Bohemia almost like sovereign lords and competed with the Prague court in supporting artistic activity. Further it is very probable that this, the greatest Czech painter of the end of the 14th century, lived in Prague. It is true that we cannot prove that he worked for the court, but it can scarcely be supposed that his work would not have been used for the main Church of the Czech kingdom. In this connection it is important that Peter of Rožmberk, a benefactor of the Třeboň Monastery, was a Canon of Prague and in addition the Provost of All Saints' in the Hradčany, which was an office closely associated with the person of the sovereign. Finally the Master of the Týn tympanum was also employed on the royal buildings. If we consider further that the secular part of the Brunswick Sketchbook is closely connected with the atmosphere of dynastic portraiture and courtly behaviour, the thought suggests itself that the author of the Brunswick Sketchbook may also have been connected with the artistic circle of the Prague court. If this is the case, it would be possible to consider the royal figures and the scenes of love in the Sketchbook as a sketch or preparation for

some unexecuted or lost work of painting for Wenceslas IV or for someone from his close entourage. That there did exist wallpaintings with erotic subject-matter in Prague, is known.<sup>51</sup>

All the works of which we have here spoken are mutually connected by markedly similar characteristics. Above all it is the chiaroscuro conception of the form of objects, which are not conceived as closed, isolated, independently existing pieces of matter, but as quantitatively different parts of the whole surroundings, dependent on light and given their form by light. Space is thus qualitatively homogeneous and potentially endless; it is not however in perspective. The pictorial structure is still based on significant relationships and not on the optics of the beholder's eye. Although here and there in the painted works hints of the throwing of shadows do occur, not even the light is natural. It does not flow, but glows. Nevertheless objects do not have an absolute value. They are relative both to the space on which they are dependent, and to the time which forms them. They seek to express characteristic shape, psychological introspection, the transitory nature of movements, approximation, incompleteness, in which there are sometimes preserved traces of the sculptor's, painter's or drawer's hand, a tendency towards the comic, to irony, caricature and the grotesque,<sup>51a</sup> a delight in the newest modes, even in the extremes of contemporary fashion, all of which qualities bear witness to the increased relativity of objects and the growing role of cognition. Before the artist there opened up a world of concrete, interdependent objects, but the system of this world is still abstract and symbolic.

If concrete reality (or rather concrete objects) have entered the field of art, we cannot fail to note that at the same time its stylisation was unusually strengthened. If on the one hand the differences between individuals were increased to a striking degree, and their qualities of age, character, intellect and emotion were exploited, on the other hand there can be seen a tendency to idealise their types. This is particularly obvious in the pictures on religious themes, where the contrast between the unreal beauty of the divine and saintly figures and the earthly hideousness of Christ's enemies is used to increase the ideological conviction of the scenes.<sup>52</sup> This ugliness is in itself in a certain sense stylised, by being increased by caricature. While the mobility of the figures is unusually developed, even this is stylised into stereotyped dance poses. While on the one hand careful attention was paid to the exact description of garments, especially those of the secular figures, the drapery on the other hand acquired a considerably ornamental character. If the shape of solid bodies is opened up to the surrounding atmosphere, it can also be observed that their concrete matter is swept into calligraphically conceived streams, which prepare a renewal of the significance of line. If colour is determined by the penetration of light and shade, in its glow there is concealed the possibility of its becoming independent and absolute.

This art full of contradictions has approached closely to the sensuous world

of colour and light; at the same time, however, it has renewed old conventions and has not renounced the symbolic way of thinking. The recognition of reality has been carried out experimentally and without a rational system. Therefore we have in it this violent conjunction of the world of experience, based on natural relationships, with the world of secret significances, based on the abstract symbolism of similarities, and ignoring causal relationships. Therefore in the pictures of the Třeboň Master the colours of the birds glow with a light which endows them with intense vitality, but the red background of the same pictures, and the blue ribbon of the female bath attendant in the Wenceslas manuscripts still signify love and faithfulness. The dual nature of this attitude to the world is most clearly expressed in the ease with which this art moves from the sphere of the spiritual, which consumes all that is physical, to the region of the erotic, whose naive sincerity is remarkable even to the unprudish eyes of today. Both these territories frequently (or, rather, regularly), meet in a single work and their boundaries are quite indistinct. Even in the profoundly serious work of the Třeboň Master, mystic devotion passes imperceptibly to a sensuousness which is of quite a secular character.<sup>53</sup>

This eroticism is not usually expressed directly, but takes the form of a stylised game, which has its rules, which must be observed, and ceremonies, which must be carried out. In the same way the emotional excitement of the individuals taking part in the religious scenes often has a theatrically heightened, pantomimic character. Only the really outstanding works remain reserved even in the expression of emotion. This reserve appears to us today to be appropriate, but then it rather tended to be unconventional. For at the end of the Middle Ages life was bound by conventions far stronger than those of today, and love and death were surrounded by elaborate ceremonials, which were intended to express their sensual and emotional content by the most graphic means. If the works of which we are treating frequently affect us in the same way as a play or a ballet, it is because the background from which they sprung and which they served, had a similar character.

The way of life of aristocratic society, which rapidly spread into other classes of the population and aroused the disgust of the religious reformers,<sup>54</sup> was not of course confined to Bohemia. (Similarly, the Czech art of this group forms part of a broad stream, which is now termed the international style.) Its place of origin was the French and Burgundian court, whence it penetrated to England and the Netherlands as well as to Central Europe and to Italy. In Bohemia it developed just at the moment when Wenceslas IV, a sovereign of completely different interests from his predecessor, ascended the Czech throne. His private amusements meant far more to him than the duties of representation and administration of the state and matters of international politics. He was more interested in the building of his castles than of churches, he preferred to collect

the books which delighted him, rather than relics of saints which might spread the fame of his kingdom, and spent more time in hunting than at his prayers. Apart from the Old Town Bridge Tower, whose foundations had already been laid by the old king, Charles IV, there is no building connected with the name of Wenceslas IV, that would have the representative or state character of the building enterprises of his father. When with his young wife Joan of Bavaria he became the first in the kingdom, there must have been merry doings at the court of Prague. That in this life erotic play had an important part, can scarcely be doubted, since we know that this was the case not only in France, but also at courts far less brilliant than that of Prague. Maréchal Boucicaud founded the Order d'écu verd á la dame blanche, and somewhat later, on the initiative of the old and cunning politician Philip of Burgundy, there was set up in the Hotel d'Artois a Court of Love. At the court of Albrecht of Bavaria, father of Wenceslas' wife Joan, which for the most part was seated at The Hague, there originated the chivalric orders of St. Anthony and the garden, Albrecht III, Duke of Austria founded in honour of his wife the Order of the Plait and Swan. To Richard II of England,<sup>55</sup> brother-in-law of Wenceslas IV, is attributed the foundation of the Order of the Bath, which exists to this day. The last of these is of particular interest to us, since the motif of the female bath attendant, so often repeated in the Wenceslas manuscripts (it also occurred in public buildings, as is shown by the completely renovated painting on the arch of the passage of the Old Town Bridge Tower) and the ceremonial of the bath, relate to a similar institution at the court of Prague.<sup>56</sup> The basic principles of these orders were of course highly honourable, but the erotic sub-text for the most part comes through quite clearly.

The idea of Panofsky,<sup>57</sup> that these Orders which originated in the second half of the 14th century brought together groups of people from the highest social class under the banner of the ideas whose purpose was to maintain the power of this class, and that their significance lay in their exclusiveness, is highly appropriate for the society which produced them. Awareness of uncertainty, fear of social troubles — which threatened to break out and did in fact break out from time to time, — strengthened the longing for social exclusiveness, based rather on artificial rules of social intercourse than on real power. This artificial character of forms of living is expressed also in art. And just as in life the desire to experience to the full its sensual gifts mingled with the awareness of the vanity of all human things and fear of the fate after death, so too in art a sharpened sensuality, which discovered new aspects of the world, mingled with an irrational mysticism, which turned away from sensuous values. It is no mere chance that it was precisely at this moment that the conception of melancholy took on its modern meaning<sup>58</sup> and that in this period the romantic idea of the Dance of Death took shape.<sup>59</sup> The discovery of ordinary life, which appears in

poetry and in art, also has a romantic character. The queen, dressed as a bath attendant, is an expression of this romanticism, even though the bath attendant would scarcely be a representative of the simple pleasures of life. Such games were nothing other than a retreat from a reality which was attacking the bastions of social privilege and which was pregnant with the storm that was approaching.

When this storm a few decades later broke out in Bohemia, with unheard-of intensity, in the Hussite revolution, it swept away from its foundations the existing social system. Before this could happen, Czech art still was to go through the period of the so-called "fine" style, which although it follows on from the creative work of the eighties and carries some of its characteristics as far as they can go, nevertheless is fundamentally different from it. What is shown above all by the art of about the year 1400 is the weakening of the contradictory vision of the world. The antithesis of the sensual and the spiritual, the real and the ideal, the ugly and the beautiful, the good and the evil, approach each other in order to form a kind of idealised picture of the world, in which there are scarcely any contradictions. The dramatic accent, which characterises the art of the eighties — in spite of its basically lyric character — completely disappeared, giving way to a growing idyllic character and a languid sweetness, too passive for anything to remain in it of that ironic attitude to the world which was not lacking in the previous period.

The capricious fantasy which was carried on from the eighties, now expresses itself above all in rich ornamental drapery and in complicated patterns of movement, which are not capable of giving the figures the appearance of energy and activity. As the social and ideological crisis deepened, all the more clearly there stand out the dreamy, playful features of this style, in which there is not a trace of the passionate struggle which was then being entered upon in Bohemia. And yet this art — it would appear — was from the beginning very popular. Although the impulse for its development probably arose from the ranks of the upper secular and clerical aristocracy, it rapidly spread to the widest sections of the population and in the end became an art which was in truth a popular art. How this came about, is a question which is outwith the bounds of this paper.

*Translated by Jessie Kocmanová.*

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> J. Neuwirth, *Das Braunschweiger Skizzenbuch eines mittelalterlichen Malers*, Prague, 1897.

<sup>2</sup> A. Stange, *Deutsche Malerei der Gotik II*, Berlin, 1936, 52, 90.

<sup>3</sup> Z. Drobňá, *Die gotische Zeichnung in Böhmen*, Prague, 1956, 48 n.

<sup>4</sup> K. Stejskal, review of the above book, *Umění V*, (Art V), 1957, 390 n.

- <sup>5</sup> A. Matějček, *Dějepis výtvarného umění v Čechách I* (History of Fine Art in Bohemia I), Prague, 1931, 316; P. Kropáček, *Malířství doby husitské* (Painting in Hussite Times), Prague, 1946, 25.
- <sup>6</sup> In this he bases his opinion on Nouwirth's finding, that the inscription on fol. 1', dealing with events in the family of the book's owner, is written in the Swabian dialect. It is however by no means certain that this was the first owner, i. e. the author of the drawings, and as Neuwirth already demonstrated, this is rather improbable. The Sketchbook could have reached Swabia later, for more than one artist from Bohemia went abroad, where Czech art was in great demand, and many of them emigrated when the Hussite Revolution had made artistic activity difficult.
- <sup>7</sup> Altogether 13 pages have been cut out of the book from a total of 44. cf. Neuwirth, l. c., 2.
- <sup>8</sup> Neuwirth, l. c., 17.
- <sup>9</sup> A certain similarity can be seen in the miniatures of the *Bellafortis* of 1405, one of the manuscripts of King Wenceslas IV, which are dealt with later. Illustrated by Stange, l. c., ill. 54.
- <sup>10</sup> l. c., 24.
- <sup>11</sup> cf. for example Drobná, l. c., tab. 62, 165, and elsewhere, Stange, l. c., ill. 151, 152, 257.
- <sup>12</sup> The unceremonious behaviour of these children can also be found in Czech carving, especially in the wooden Madonnas.
- <sup>13</sup> H. Jerchel already pointed out this relationship in *Das Hasenburgische Missale von 1409, die Wenzelswerkstatt und die Mettener Malereien von 1414*, ZDVK IV, 1937, 225.
- <sup>14</sup> Stange, l. c., ill. 37. The pattern also appears in the figure of the Swedish King Albrecht III in the *Chronicle of Ernst of Kirchberg in the Mecklenburg-Schwerin Geheimes Hauptarchiv*, Stange, l. c., ill. 192, which is quite foreign to the local Hamburg-Lübeck circle of painters, but on the other hand close to the Czech painting of the eighties. According to Stange, l. c., 154, the manuscript dates from the year 1378.
- <sup>15</sup> Jerchel, l. c., ill. on p. 229.
- <sup>16</sup> J. Schlosser, *Die Bilderhandschriften Königs Wenzel I, Jahrbuch d. Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses, XIV, 1893, hl. XXV.*
- <sup>17</sup> This difference can be well illustrated by comparing the Brunswick Sketchbook with the sketchbook in the form of small boards in the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum, illustrated by Drobná, l. c., ill. 69, n. Here everything is smoother, more definite and more graceful. It is typical work of the "fine" style, and undoubtedly comes from Bohemia. To this period also belongs the well-known drawing with three high-born ladies in the Louvre (*Cabinet des dessins*), ill. Drobná, l. c., 112. This is usually considered to be French, but its unusually close relationship to the drolleries of the Antwerp Bible of Wenceslas IV, renders its Czech origin more than likely. cf. Schlosser, l. c., ill. on p. 255. It was at one time the property of A. Posonyi, who in the second half of last century had an art shop in Vienna. It was not until 1880 that he removed to Paris.
- <sup>18</sup> These comparisons give a better idea of the character of the Sketchbook than comparison with Czech paintings of the beginning of the 15th century, as Matějček suggested, l. c., 317.
- <sup>19</sup> A. Matějček — J. Pešina. *Czech Gothic Painting, 1350—1450*, Prague, 1950, ill. 101.
- <sup>20</sup> cf. for example the same scene on the Altar from Graudenz in Malbork or the angel from the Annunciation from the same place, Stange, l. c., ill. 107, 105. The altar of course belongs to the sphere of influence of the Třebon Master.
- <sup>21</sup> Matějček — Pešina, l. c., ill. 120—123.
- Some analogies were quoted already by Stejskal, l. c., 390 n.

- <sup>22</sup> Matějček—Pešina, l. c., ill. 105.
- <sup>23</sup> Matějček—Pešina, l. c., ill. 130, 132.
- <sup>24</sup> Matějček—Pešina, l. c., tab. 127.  
The St. Catherine on the altar from Graudenz is also close to this, Stange, l. c., ill. 110.
- <sup>25</sup> Matějček—Pešina, l. c., ill. 102.
- <sup>26</sup> Also the St. Bartholomew on the Epitaph on John of Jeřen of the year 1395, Matějček—Pešina, l. c., ill. 133.
- <sup>27</sup> Detailed photographs by J. Opitz, Sochařství v Čechách za doby Lucemburků I (Stone-carving in Bohemia in the Period of the Luxemburgs, I), Prague, 1936, ill. 89—97.
- <sup>28</sup> This insufficient contact of the figures with the ground on which they move perhaps also helps to explain the fact that in the Brunswick Sketchbook the ground is completely missing.
- <sup>29</sup> Illustrated Jerchel, l. c., 228.
- <sup>30</sup> Matějček—Pešina, l. c., ill. 114.
- <sup>31</sup> Illustrated Schlosser, l. c., 274.
- <sup>32</sup> Illustrated Schlosser, l. c., 294, cf. also 295.
- <sup>33</sup> Illustrated Opitz, l. c., ill. 85, 86.
- <sup>34</sup> Illustrated Opitz, l. c., ill. 52 nn.
- <sup>35</sup> Opitz, l. c., 78 nn.
- <sup>36</sup> The reasons supporting this thesis are quoted in the writer's book on Czech stone-carving, 1350—1450, which is in the press. The main point is as follows: according to the Cathedral accounts Herman carried out weekly 2 to 3 "capita", pieces which it would be possible to consider as busts of saints. These busts are part of an ornamentally decorated great block. Since it is difficult to suppose that one stone-mason would be able during a single week to produce not only three ornamentally decorated pieces, but three busts as well, which have the character of portraits and in addition are of outstanding quality, it is probable that rough blocks were left on the stones, which were not carved into busts till later. This process was usual in the guild workshop and undoubtedly applies to the majority of the busts in the lower triforium.
- <sup>37</sup> Opitz, l. c., ill. 99, 100.
- <sup>38</sup> On the other hand there are sufficient in the field of small architectonic carving. Here for example belongs the stone-carving on the arcade of the Karolinum — a building which even at that time already belonged to the University.
- <sup>39</sup> Illustrated by R. Ernst—E. Garger, Die früh- und hochgotische Plastik des Stefandoms, Munich, 1927, ill. 60—88.
- <sup>40</sup> Ernst—Garger, l. c., ill. 91—120. Two of them (ill. 111, n.) are now assigned to the latter part of the first half of the 15th century.
- <sup>41</sup> The conception of space is of course quite different here. The mass of the figures and animals are placed within a real, non-artificial space, whose depth is emphasised by plastic abbreviations. The background plane is conceived as a solid wall, bearing the consoles of the baldachin, decorated by panels of tracery and with a break for the figure of God, who looks on at the scene as if he were leaning out of a window.
- <sup>42</sup> Illustrated by A. Kutál, D. Líbal, A. Matějček, České umění gotické I (Czech Gothic Art, I), Prague, 1949, ill. 194.
- <sup>43</sup> Matějček—Pešina, l. c., ill. 81.
- <sup>44</sup> Opitz, l. c., ill. 31, 33.
- <sup>45</sup> This is the case also of the four upper apostles in the archivolt of the Singers' Portal, but especially of the crowned saints of the Bishop's Portal. cf. for example the St. Margaret there with the Saint Catherine on the frame of the Araceli Madonna or the Vienna Elizabeth (or Hedwiga?) with the St. Barbara in the Coronation of the Virgin on the

- Graudenz altar (ill. by Stange, l. c., 110). There are also analogous cases in the Brunswick Sketchbook, cf. for example fol. 8' and 12.
- <sup>46</sup> Ernst—Garger, l. c., ill. 89, 90.
- <sup>47</sup> cf. for example the Duchess from the west front, Ernst—Garger, l. c., ill. 96, and the miniature on fol. 205 of Willehalm.
- <sup>48</sup> H. Tietze, *Geschichte und Beschreibung des St. Stephansdomes in Wien*, Vienna, 1931, 160.
- <sup>49</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>50</sup> e. g. part of the archivolt of the Portal of St. Peter in the Cathedral of Cologne-on-Rhine, which is close to the trend of the Týn Master.
- <sup>51</sup> Stejskal, l. c., 391, indicated similar paintings in the house of Wenceslas' favourite John Hájek of Hoděmín.
- <sup>51a</sup> These features appear particularly clearly in the drawings of the manuscript from the Chapter Library in Prague, G 42, which represent the different estates of the society of the time, ill. by Drobná, l. c., ill. 141—152. This is usually dated to the beginning of the 15th century, but is still connected with the stylistic level of the Brunswick Sketchbook. The ironical and caricaturing tendency here affects all the classes except the king, but especially the peasant, the dice-player and the female bath attendant.
- <sup>52</sup> This feeling for contrast is lacking in the previous period of Czech art.
- <sup>53</sup> The religious reformers were well aware of this. Especially characteristic is Hus's remark on religious sculptures and paintings, which people admire for their beauty and which arouse in men erotic excitement. Quoted by K. Stejskal, *Archa rajhradská a její místo ve vývoji českého umění první poloviny 15. století* (The Rajhrad Sheet and its Place in the Development of Czech Art in the First Half of the 15th Century), Universitas Carolina, Philosophica, vol. I, no. 1, p. 66.
- <sup>54</sup> It is known that Hus, for example, protested against contemporary fashions, which too clearly emphasised the erotic function of clothing. Quoted Neuwirth, l. c., 13.
- <sup>55</sup> Or Henry IV. This is that Henry, who in 1392 when still the Duke of Derby spent some time in Prague and bought pictures there.
- <sup>56</sup> For this see especially Schlosser, i. c., 299 n., and more recently F. M. Bartoš, *Čechy v době Husově* (Bohemia in Hussite Times), Prague, 1947, 486 n., who gives good reason for placing the foundation of the Order in the time of Queen Joan of Bavaria. Most recently A. Friedl, *Ledňáček a labeznice, Kniha o Praze 1959* (The Kingfisher and the Female Bath Attendant, The Book of Prague, 1959), Prague, 1959, 61 n., doubts the existence of such an Order in Prague and considers that the pictures of the female bath attendant and the bath refer to the King's second wife Sophia, whom he did not marry till 1389, but whose acquaintance he may have made as early as 1387 on his journey to Germany. Willehalm, in which the bath attendant is already found, dates from 1387. Since however Wenceslas IV in 1388 was still seeking the hand of the Princess Joan, daughter of King John of Aragon, this hypothesis is not too convincing.
- <sup>57</sup> E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting, its Origin and Character*, Cambridge, Mass., 1953, 68.
- <sup>58</sup> J. Huizinga, *Herbst des Mittelalters*, Stuttgart, 1938, 42, Panofsky, l. c., 72.
- <sup>59</sup> Huizinga, l. c., 202 n.

BRUNSVICKÝ NÁČRTNÍK A ČESKÉ UMĚNÍ  
OSMDESÁTÝCH LET 14. STOLETÍ

Autor analysuje kresby náčrtníku musea v Brunšviku po stránce tematické, formální a technické a dochází k názoru, že je nelze považovat za soubor kopií podle deskových a nástěnných.

ných obrazů. Příležitostné výpůjčky z monumentálního a knižního malířství nelze sice vyloučit, většinou to však byly jen impulsy k vlastní kreslířové tvorbě nebo konvenční formulace, příznačné pro jistý výtvarný okruh. Komparaci zjišťuje, že náčrtník má zvláště blízko k těmto českým malířským a sochařským pracím ze sklonku 14. století: k starší vrstvě rukopisů Václava IV., k okruhu Třeboňského mistra a k mistru tympanonu severního portálu kostela P. Marie před Týnem, kterýž pracoval také na Staroměstské mostecké věži a v horním triforiu u Sv. Víta. Slohově příbuzná je mu také madona Staroměstské radnice z r. 1381 a k jeho směru patří také sochařská výzdoba Knižecích bran u Sv. Štěpána ve Vidni. Všechny tyto práce lze datovat do osmdesátých, popřípadě do raných devadesátých let. Obrátiv pozornost k společenskému prostředí, pro něž toto umění vznikalo, zjišťuje autor, že to byl především královský dvůr. Shrnuje poznatky, získané rozбором umění tohoto okruhu, shledává v něm hluboký rozpor mezi intenzivním smyslovým vztahem k světu a silnou tradicí symbolického myšlení. Podvojnost vztahu ke skutečnosti se zvláště zřetelně projevuje v tom, jak se v něm stýkají a pronikají sféra zduchovnění a oblast vyhraněné erotičnosti. Výrazná stylisující složka a romantisující rysy, které se v něm objevují, souvisí s životním stylem společnosti, pro niž bylo vytvářeno. Formalismus tohoto stylu je výrazem společenské krize, která měla brzo propuknout v husitské revoluci.

#### БРУНШВИЦКИЙ АЛЬБОМ ЭСКИЗОВ И ЧЕШСКОЕ ИСКУССТВО 80 ГОДОВ XIV В.

Автор, анализируя рисунки альбома эскизов, хранящегося в музее г. Бруншвик, с тематической, формальной и технической сторон, приходит к выводу, что их нельзя считать собранием копий с фреск и картин, изображенных на досках. Нельзя, правда, исключить, что в отдельных случаях эскизы списаны с произведений монументальной и книжной живописи, но в большинстве случаев она явилась импульсом к оригинальному творчеству художника; отчасти художник заимствовал общие мотивы, показательные для того или иного вида изобразительного искусства. Путем сравнительного метода было установлено, что рисунки альбома эскизов стоят особенно близко к следующим памятникам чешской живописи и ваятельства конца XIV в.: к более ранним рукописям времени правления Вацлава IV, к школе Тржебоньского художника и к творчеству автора тимпанона северного портала костела Девы Марии на Староместской площади, работавшего также на Староместской башне Карлова моста и на верхней галерее храма Св. Вита. По стилю близка к эскизам статуя Девы Марии 1381 г. в Староместской ратуше, а в этом отношении сюда относятся также скульптурные украшения княжеских ворот в церкви собора Св. Стефана в Вене. Все эти произведения относятся к 80-ым годам или к началу 90-х годов. Автор устанавливает, что среда, для которой это искусство предназначалось, был королевский двор. Подытоживая результаты анализа произведений искусства такого вида, автор находит в нем глубокое противоречие между интенсивным чувственным отношением к миру и сильной традицией символического мышления. Такая двойственность отношения к действительности особенно выразительно проявляется в том, как в произведениях соприкасаются и взаимно проникают друг в друга духовное начало и область ярко выраженного эротизма. Выразительная стилизация и черты романтизма, проявившиеся в этих произведениях, были связаны с жизненным стилем общества, для которого они создавались. Формализм этого стиля является выражением общественного кризиса, который вскоре должен был вылиться в гуситскую революцию.

Перевод: Языкова Л. С.