

## Summary

### JAROSLAV VRCHLICKÝ'S DRAMAS INSPIRED BY CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY RECEPTION

Jaroslav Vrchlický (1853–1912), an important Czech Parnassian poet and translator wrote also a number of dramas for the newly established National Theatre in Prague (1883). Ten of these plays are based on topics from Ancient Greece and Rome, thus providing valuable information on the attitude of the Czech society in the autumn of the national revival to classical culture and antiquity in general. In the present study, we review the plays (except for the trilogy of *Hippodamia* which will be addressed in the next study) and their reception in the contemporary press. The conservative theatrical critics mostly highlight the modern approach of Vrchlický to classical themes, and appreciate that characters of his plays are comprehensible to the spectator. In spite of frequent anachronisms and historical inaccuracies, the plays are praised for vividly transmitting the spirit of the remote ancient civilization to the modern audience. On the other hand, the exponents of modern Realism point out that Vrchlický's dramas suffer from illogical and affected plots and unlikely characters and criticize them for not addressing the real problems of the world. This all indicates that the attitude of the Czech public of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the ancient Greek and Roman culture and its reception was less rigid but also more indifferent than presumed.

**Keywords:** Jaroslav Vrchlický; drama; National Theatre; classical tradition; 19<sup>th</sup> century theater criticism

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