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‘I AM WRONG ABOUT MY QUALIFICATIONS, OR I DO NOT HAVE ANY FRIENDS’: ARCHIVAL RESEARCH ON THE FIRST PROFESSORSHIP OF MAX DVOŘÁK

Max Dvořák’s appointment as an associate professor at the University of Vienna in 1905 has become almost a mythical narrative in the historiography of early 20th-century art history: in every survey of Dvořák’s early life, this appointment is referred to as a milestone in his career, but, paradoxically, is mentioned just in passing, as though it were self-evident.¹ This is probably the

¹ So far, this *mythical narrative* has not been supported by the archival materials. To present them is the aim of this study in order to show the more material-based narrative of this part of the history of the so-called Vienna School of Art History. Beside the correspondence and the newspapers articles presented below, the only official archival material connected to this history is generally unknown letter from the Imperial Royal Ministry of Culture and Teaching (*Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht*) to the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Vienna (*Dekanat der philosophischen Fakultät der k. k. Universität in Wien*) from 31st August 1905. This letter confirms that Dvořák had been appointed the associate professor of art history (*außerordentlicher Professor der Kunstgeschichte*) on 26th August with effect from 1st October 1905. This archival document has not been connected with Dvořák’s biography because it is not stored as a part of Dvořák’s estate in the Archive of the University of Vienna, but as the part of *Personalakt* of Julius von Schlosser, Dvořák’s successor at the University of Vienna in 1922, who was in 1905 together with Dvořák appointed the associate professor of art history of the University of Vienna (see the new classification of the document after its discovery: Universität Wien, Universitätsarchiv, PH PA 1514 Dvorak, 1897.12.17-1921.02.28 (Akt)). This letter is the only so far known official document confirming Dvořák’s 1905 professorship – the official decree of appointment has not been discovered yet. The author of this study would like to thank to the staff of the Archive of the University of Vienna for their help to track down this

result of an anachronistic assumption informing historiographic research, which presumes that since Dvořák succeeded Alois Reigl and Franz Wickhoff at the University of Vienna, he must have belonged to the Vienna School of Art History.² However, in this study I would

document. For Dvořák’s biographies see, e.g., H. AURENHAMMER, ‘Max Dvořák (1874–1921). Von der historischen Quellenkritik zur Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte’, in *Österreichische Historiker. Lebensläufe und Karrieren 1900–1945*, ed. K. HRUZA, Wien-Köln-Weimar 2012, pp. 169–200, here p. 177; S. SCARROCCIA, ‘Denkmalpflege und Moderne: Die Lehre Max Dvořáks’, in M. DVOŘÁK, *Schriften zur Denkmalpflege*, ed. S. SCARROCCIA, Wien-Köln-Weimar 2012, pp. 23–210, here p. 24; L. KALINOWSKI, *Max Dvořák i jego metoda badań nad sztuką*, Warszawa 1974, p. 10; K. M. SWOBODA, ‘Vortrag zum 30. Todestag von Max Dvořák’, *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege*, 28, 1974, pp. 74–81, here p. 76; J. PEČÍRKA, ‘Max Dvořák. Životopis’, in *Max Dvořák. Umění jako projev ducha*, ed. J. PEČÍRKA, Praha 1936, pp. VII–XCII, here LVIII–LIX; J. PAVEL, *Max Dvořák, ochránce památek*, Praha 1974, pp. 254–256.

² See, e.g., J. v. SCHLOSSER, ‘Die Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte, Rückblick auf ein Säkulum deutscher Gelehrtenarbeit in Österreich’, *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung*, 13, 1934, pp. 145–225; A. ROSENAUER, ‘Das Rätsel der Kunst der Bruder Van Eyck. Max Dvořák und seine Stellung zu Wickhoff und Riegl’, in *Wien und die Entwicklung der kunsthistorischen Methode. Akten des XXV. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte I/1*, eds. H. FILLITZ, M. PIPPAL, Wien-Köln-Graz 1984, pp. 45–52; R. CHADRABA, ‘Max Dvořák a vídeňská škola dějin umění’, in *Kapitoly z českého dějepisu umění II. Dvacáté století*, ed. idem, Praha 1987, pp. 9–70. J. BAKOŠ, ‘Die epistemologische Wende eines Kunsthistorikers’, in *L’Art et les révolutions, Section 5: Révolution et évolution de l’Histoire de l’Art de Warburg à nos*

like to show that Dvořák's early attempt to obtain a stable position within the academic sphere of art history had a profound impact not only on his personal life but on how we actually understand the Vienna School of Art History as a historiographic concept in early 20th-century art history.

The first time the term 'Vienna School of Art History' was used to refer to a distinct methodological system was in 1910, in Vincenc Kramář's extensive review of Dvořák's 'habilitation', where Kramář described Dvořák's work as building on the art-historical thought of Riegl and Wickhoff.³ Realising that the Vienna School was formulated as a concept as early as this can enrich our understanding of what it actually means, or it can at least show how unstable its roots are, because, paradoxically, Dvořák at the time of publication of his 'habilitation' was not strictly speaking a representative of the University of Vienna (not until he was appointed a professor there in 1905). On the basis of a study Dvořák wrote in 1903, however, Kramář considered him the leading proponent of the Vienna School's method of art history, which originated in the art history department of the university's Institute of Austrian Historical Research, from which other students not considered today to be proponents of the Vienna School graduated as well.⁴ Looking back at Kramář's 1910 placement of Dvořák's work within the Vienna School, one might ask whether this would have happened if Max Dvořák had not been appointed a professor at the University of Vienna.

In order to resolve this historiographic paradox, before examining what the Vienna School means in terms of its *methodological principles*,⁵ we should reconstruct the principles on which it was founded in order to understand its *methodological origins*. To do this in reference to Max Dvořák's inclusion within the Vienna School, I work with three types of archival materials: the German and Bohemian press around 1900; Dvořák's personal correspondence with his friends Josef Šusta

and Vincenc Kramář;⁶ and Dvořák's letters to Franz Wickhoff.⁷

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The history of Dvořák's effort to obtain his first position as a university professor starts, surprisingly, not in Vienna but in Prague, where, at the beginning of 1903, a university committee suggested that Bohumil Matějka be appointed to the position of associate professor for art history in the Czech part of Charles-Ferdinand University.⁸ Dvořák was informed of this idea by one of the members of the committee of professors convened for the purpose of filling this position, Jaroslav Goll, who had remained in close contact with Dvořák ever since he had been Dvořák's history professor at the University of Prague between 1892 and 1894.⁹ We know that it was Goll who informed Dvořák about the suggestion that Matějka become the professor at the University of Prague from a letter dated 3 April 1903, sent by Dvořák to another of Goll's students, Josef Šusta.¹⁰ In the letter, Dvořák complained that he was surprised that his own name had not even been mentioned in relation to this position. He added, 'I cannot see myself critically enough and I am wrong about my qualifications, or I do not have any friends among Prague University's professors.'¹¹ Dvořák blamed Goll for this oversight, and harsh criticism of Goll appears in Dvořák's letters throughout the year 1903.¹² In a letter to Šusta dated 23 April 1903, Dvořák, after again condemn-

jours, ed. H. Olbrich, Strasbourg 1992, pp. pp. 53–63. M. RAMPLEY, *The Vienna School of Art History. Empire and the Politics of Scholarship, 1847–1918*, University Park PA 2013, p. 54.

³ M. DVOŘÁK, 'Das Rätsel der Kunst der Brüder van Eyck', *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, 14, 1903, pp. 161–319. V. KRAMÁŘ, 'O vídeňské škole dějin umění', *Volné směry*, 14, 1910, pp. 41–43, 75–78, 110–112, 170–174, 209–210.

⁴ For more on Dvořák's colleagues from his university graduation year, see A. LHOTSKY, *Geschichte des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung 1854–1954*, Graz-Köln 1954, pp. 271–276. See also T. WINKELBAUER, *Das Fach Geschichte an der Universität Wien. Von den Anfängen um 1500 bis etwa 1975*, Wien 2018.

⁵ For a recent example of this type of interpretation, see W. BAŁUS, 'Max Dvořák, the (Christian) Architecture and the Limits of Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte', *Artibus et Historiae. An Art Anthology*, 87, 2023, pp. 241–257.

⁶ Dvořák's correspondence with Šusta was published in 1943 and it was significantly redacted. Fortunately, the originals are preserved in the archive of the Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague, where they were compared with the published letters for the purpose of this study. Dvořák's letters to Kramář were published in 2004; in these letters only very minor editorial interventions can be observed. See M. DVOŘÁK, *Listy o životě a umění. Dopisy Jaroslavu Gollovi, Josefu Pekařovi a Josefu Šustovi*, ed. J. PEČÍRKA, Praha 1943; M. KREJČÍ, 'Dopisy Maxe Dvořáka Vincenci Kramářovi', *Umění*, 52, 2004, pp. 353–369.

⁷ I would like to thank Dr Friedrich Polleroß for letting me study Dvořák's letters to Wickhoff in the Archive of the Institute of Art History of the Vienna University.

⁸ Archive of the Charles University, Personal Folders, The Personal Folder of B. Matějka (further as ACU BM), 'The Letter of the Professorial Committee from 9 March 1903'. See also J. VYBÍRAL, 'Why Max Dvořák did not Become a Professor in Prague', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 17, 2017.

⁹ See B. JIROUŠEK, *Jaroslav Goll: role historika v české společnosti*, České Budějovice 2006.

¹⁰ Archive of the Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, The Estate of J. Pečírka, Box 10 Correspondence (further as AIAH JP), 'Dvořák to Šusta on 3 April 1903'. See also J. ŠUSTA, *Mladá léta učňovská a vandrovní, Praha – Vídeň – Řím*, Praha 1963.

¹¹ AIAH JP, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 3 April 1903'.

¹² See, e.g., AIAH JP, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 14 May 1903'. Cf. M. DVOŘÁK, *Listy o životě a umění*, p. 118 (as in note 6).

ing Goll, complained 'that the ministry itself might appoint me at its own initiative is out of the question, especially since the faculty doesn't even know about me. Because of the complete omission of my name, it is almost impossible for me to get into Prague [University]'.¹³

Yet two months later, on 23 June 1903, the ministry of education responded to the University of Prague's proposal to appoint Matějka that it seemed odd to nominate only one candidate and asked why Max Dvořák was not also being considered for the job. At the end of its reply, the ministry included a direct order that the committee draw up an expert report on Dvořák's scholarly work.¹⁴ Not long after that Dvořák went to Vienna and met Antonín Rezek,¹⁵ his second history professor at the University of Prague, who from 1900 to 1903 served as the minister for Czech affairs in the Austro-Hungarian parliament. According to a letter Dvořák wrote to Wickhoff on 29 July 1903, the first thing Rezek said to Dvořák at this meeting was, 'so, you are going to become a professor'.¹⁶ In the letter, Dvořák said that he thanked Rezek for interceding on his behalf at the ministry of education, indicating that it was Rezek, acting at the instigation of Wickhoff, who had seen to it that the ministry would respond to the university in the way it did. In a letter to Šusta from the following day, 30 July 1903, Dvořák referred to his meeting with Rezek and added that Goll had in the meantime asked him for a list of his scholarly work in art history.¹⁷ In a letter to Wickhoff from 18 August 1903 Dvořák reported Goll's claim that 'there was nothing that could be done with the first proposal' for the professorship in Prague,¹⁸ but that Goll then assured Dvořák that he had done everything he could to get the ministry of education to propose Dvořák as a candidate. However, Dvořák knew that it had been Wickhoff and Rezek who had been instrumental in getting the ministry to mention his name, and he thus considered Goll's claim to be merely laughable. Nevertheless, on 10 October 1904 the Prague professorial appointment committee, including Goll, submitted a positive appraisal of Dvořák's scholarly work,¹⁹ even though the committee was still convinced that the professorship in art history at the University of Prague should be given to Matějka,

mostly because he was already teaching at the university and had been doing so since 1896. Dvořák knew by February 1904 that he was not going to get the professorship in art history because Wickhoff told him of the ministry's intention to appoint Matějka, which Wickhoff had learned directly from the minister of education, Wilhelm von Hartel,²⁰ who had been Wickhoff's friend since 1895 when they published the *Wiener Genesis* together.²¹

Another opportunity for Dvořák to become a university professor came a short time later, at the beginning of March 1904, when he was sent an offer by telegraph to take up an art history professorship at the university at Fribourg in Switzerland. Dvořák discussed this offer in letters to Wickhoff dated 9 March 1904,²² to Šusta dated 10 March 1904,²³ and to Kramář dated 13 March 1904.²⁴ In all of these letters Dvořák informed his friends that he would accept this offer, even though, as he wrote to Kramář, he would 'be leaving Vienna with a heavy heart, almost as though I were going into exile'.²⁵ He went on, however, to say, 'what else can I do? They do not want me in Prague and it is impossible for the ministry to establish a third professorship in art history in Vienna; what should I then be waiting for?'²⁶ In the letter to Šusta, Dvořák praised the conditions in Fribourg – he was supposed to

¹³ AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 23 April 1903'.

¹⁴ The reply from the ministry of education is reproduced in a letter dated 1 July 1905 dealing with Dvořák's appointment to the position of associate professor at Prague University. This process was stopped at Dvořák's request in October 1905. See ACU BM, 'A Letter from the Professorial Committee from 1 July 1905'.

¹⁵ See F. KUTNAR, J. MAREK, *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepiscetví*, Praha 1997, pp. 403–416.

¹⁶ Archive of the Institute of Art History of the Vienna University, Estate of F. Wickhoff, Correspondence of M. Dvořák (further as AIAHVU FW), 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 29 July 1903'.

¹⁷ AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 30 July 1903'.

¹⁸ AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 18 August 1903'.

¹⁹ ACU BM, 'The Professorial Appraisal of M. Dvořák's scholarly work in art history from 10 October 1904'.

²⁰ AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 27 February 1904'.

²¹ F. WICKHOFF, W. v. HARTEL, *Die Wiener Genesis*, Wien 1895.

²² AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 9 March 1904'.

²³ AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 10 March 1904'.

²⁴ Archive of the National Gallery in Prague, Estate of V. Kramář, Personal Correspondence – M. Dvořák (further as ANG VK), 'Dvořák to Kramář on 13 March 1904'.

²⁵ Ibidem. So far, it is not clear on which basis the university of Fribourg decided to appoint Dvořák. The most likely explanation is that it could have been connected to Dominican Catholic Biblical scholar Vincent Zapletal, born near Olmütz in 1867, who was studying in Vienna around 1890. As a Czech, he most likely came into a contact (so far we do not know if personal or through the academic work) with young Dvořák, also Catholic, referencing to his Czech origin in many occasions as Zapletal did, who e.g. was writing into Czech Catholic journals (*Vlast*). Zapletal could have been the key connection between university in Fribourg and Dvořák, since Zapletal was appointed the professor of the exegesis of the Old Testament at the Theological Faculty of this newly founded university in 1893, coming through a personal crisis around 1898 connected with the leave of German professors. However, this thesis needs to be examined more from the archival point of view. The author is thankful to Martin Bedřich and Tomáš Petráček for their notice on this possible connection. See, T. PETRÁČEK, *Od vědecké exegeze k psaní beletrie. Biblické romány Vincenta Zapletala OP*, 'Studia Theologica' 11, 2009, pp. 48–62; idem, *Výklad Bible v době (anti-)modernistické krize: Život a dílo Vincenta Zapletala OP*, Praha 2006. See also, U. ALTERMATT, *Die Universität Freiburg auf der Suche nach Identität. Essays zur Kultur- und Sozialgeschichte der Universität Fribourg im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Fribourg 2009.

²⁶ ANG VK, 'Dvořák to Kramář on 13 March 1904'.

teach a four-hour lecture and a two-hour seminar and would thus, as he stated in the letter to Wickhoff, be more independent in his work than he would have been in Prague or Vienna. What is more, he noted to Šusta that he was glad that he was going to have a steady job, one that, in addition, was close to Italy and Paris. Dvořák also highlighted that his religion presented no obstacle to his obtaining this post, even though, as he wrote to Kramář, Fribourg was a clerical university and religion could have been an issue. Luckily, however, in art history it was not. Dvořák also knew, as he wrote to Šusta, that if his name had been put forward for the position of professor of art history in Vienna, this would have sparked national outrage, which, he thought, was highly unlikely in Switzerland. Dvořák could not have known at the time, however, that his plans were to be disrupted by fears of nationalist demonstrations even in Switzerland, and that this time it would be fears connected with the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904.²⁷

It was a mass held in a Russian church in Prague on 22 February 1904 that triggered the events that prevented Dvořák from being given the professorship in Fribourg. The mass was held to express support for Russia to be successful in the war.²⁸ The mass was followed by a procession that went from the church to the German House on Na Příkopě Street, where people stopped and chanted expressions of shame and disgust, because, unlike the Czechs, the Germans were on the side of the Japanese. A few days later, a response from German nationalist students was organised: members of the student association called 'Burschenschaft' at Charles-Ferdinand University started accosting Czech citizens in the streets of Prague, and on Sunday, 6 March 1904, they organised huge protests that escalated into fights in the city centre and only stopped after the police and the army arrived on the scene.²⁹ These nationalist tensions were widely covered in the press and continued until the end of March.³⁰ They were also the reason why the rector of Fribourg University, C. Decurtius, wrote to Dvořák at the end of March, a letter Dvořák quoted in his own correspondence to Šusta on 5 April 1904 and to Kramář on 20 April 1904: 'As a result of recent events, your candidacy in the election for the professorship of art history was rejected.'³¹ Dvořák added in the letter to Šusta that he knew the professorship decision had been influenced by the demonstrations in Prague, mostly

out of the fear that similar demonstrations would occur in Fribourg. With the loss of the second opportunity to become a professor, Dvořák was relieved that at least he did not have to leave Vienna – he could not have known that the nationalist tensions brewing in the Austro-Hungarian Empire would impact his third attempt to get a professorship at the University of Vienna as well.

As Dvořák informed Šusta in a letter from 28 March 1905, Wickhoff started a campaign to give him a professorship at the University of Vienna.³² Wickhoff's motivation for doing this was not only his close personal relationship with Dvořák,³³ but also the fact that Riegl's health had quickly declined and it was obvious that he was going to need someone soon to step in and take over his lectures. A few months later, on 19 June 1905, Alois Riegl died, and, as Dvořák wrote to Šusta the following day, Wickhoff started doing everything he could to secure Riegl's professorship for Dvořák.³⁴ As Dvořák wrote to Šusta on 9 July 1905, Wickhoff was quite successful in this endeavour – by 8 July 1905 Dvořák's name had already been put forward for the professorship 'primo loco'.³⁵ However, as Dvořák added, the proposal was not accepted unreservedly by the university professorial committee, because it was only agreed to after some 'difficult fights', during which Dvořák was accused of not being able to speak German properly and of being connected to the dangerous Slavic movement within the empire.³⁶ Dvořák was at first convinced that these attacks originated with Josef Neuwirth,³⁷ a professor of art history at the Technical School in Vienna and from 1905 Dvořák's colleague at the Central Commission for the Research and Preservation of Architectural Monuments, with whom Dvořák had had a difficult relationship ever since he had critically reviewed Neuwirth's study on paintings in Karlstein in 1899.³⁸ Nevertheless, in a letter

²⁷ See, e.g., 'Válka rusko-japonská', *Čech*, 11 February 1904, p. 4.

²⁸ 'Demonstrace pro Rusko v Praze', *Lidové noviny*, 23 February 1904, p. 8.

²⁹ 'Pražské demonstrace', *Čech*, 7 March 1904, pp. 1–2.

³⁰ See e.g. 'Buršácké provokace v Praze', *Národní listy*, 8 March 1904, p. 1. 'Die deutschfeindlichen Ausschreitungen in Prag', *Bohemia*, 8 March 1904, p. 1.

³¹ AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 5 April 1904'. ANG VK, 'Dvořák to Kramář on 20 April 1904'. Wickhoff was by that time in Vienna, as Dvořák mentioned to Kramář, thus there are no letters between them on this matter.

³² AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 28 March 1905'.

³³ See T. MURÁR, 'Notes on Franz Wickhoff's School and Max Dvořák's Italian Renaissance Studies Based on New Archival Material', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 29, 2023.

³⁴ AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 20 June 1905'.

³⁵ AIAH JB, 'Transcript of Dvořák's Letter to Šusta from 9 July 1905'.

³⁶ Similar accusations later appeared in newspapers. See e.g. 'Das Deutsch des Herrn Professors Dvorak', *Wiener Deutsches Tagblatt*, 21 December 1905, p. 6. The earliest attacks on Dvořák due to his professorship appointment occurred in July and August 1905. See 'Von der Wiener Universität', *Freie Stimmen*, 19 July 1905, p. 6; 'Ein Czeche als Professor der Kunstgeschichte an der Wiener Universität', *Deutsches Nordmährerblatt*, 23 July 1905, p. 5; 'Die Lehrkanzel für Kunstgeschichte an der Universität', *Neues Wiener Journal*, 9 August 1905, p. 6; 'Ein tschechischer Candidat für eine Wiener Lehrkanzel', *Mährisches Tagblatt*, 10 August 1905, p. 3.

³⁷ See J. KOUKAL, 'Josef Neuwirth', in *Století Ústavu pro dějiny umění na Filozofické fakultě Univerzity Karlovy*, ed. R. BIEGEL, R. PRAHL, J. BACHTÍK, Praha 2020, pp. 280–284.

³⁸ J. NEUWIRTH, *Mittelalterliche Wandgemälde und Tafelbilder der Burg Karlstein in Böhmen*, Prag 1896. M. DVOŘÁK, 'K dějinám

from 11 August 1905,³⁹ Dvořák agreed with Wickhoff's suspicion that the person behind the attacks was actually Moritz Dreger,⁴⁰ who had been a student of both Wickhoff and Riegl and a 'Privatdozent' at the University of Vienna since 1901; the main reason for Dreger's effort to discredit Dvořák's reputation was that he himself had been suggested for Riegl's professorship 'secondo loco'.⁴¹ Dvořák wrote to Šusta of this suspicion as well on 13 August 1905, and he underlined that the nationalist arguments against him were only a pretext, and that the real reason for the attempts to discredit him was rooted in the personal conflict between Dreger and him.⁴²

Because of these 'difficult fights', as Dvořák wrote to Wickhoff on 16 July 1905,⁴³ Count Ferdinand Zdeněk of Lobkowitz from Raudnitz in Bohemia (present-day Roudnice nad Labem in the Czech Republic), for whom Dvořák's father worked as a librarian and family archivist,⁴⁴ had a word with the minister Hartel in order to secure Dvořák's professorship. Dvořák wrote to Wickhoff on 22 August 1905 that the count's intercession was important, because the attacks against him had been partly successful – the ministry had already been prepared to award Dvořák the professorship but the official decision had been deliberately delayed.⁴⁵ We can surmise that Wickhoff also planned to write directly to the emperor, knowing that Count Lobkowitz had already mentioned Dvořák's name at the imperial court, because Dvořák thanked Wickhoff for this suggestion in a letter to him dated 24 August 1905.⁴⁶ A few days later, in a letter from 30 August, Dvořák thanked Wickhoff for the suggestion that he, Wickhoff, would at the ministry mention the plan to write to the emperor.⁴⁷ Thus we may suppose that when Wickhoff at the beginning of September mentioned at the ministry his intention to send (or the fact that he had already written) a letter directly to the emperor, the process was set in motion, and by 5 September 1905 the newspapers printed that the emperor had appointed Maxmilian Dvořák as the new professor of art history at the University of Vienna.⁴⁸ A week after the announcement, on 12 September 1905, Dvořák wrote to Wickhoff that he had

got his professorial certificate that very day and it would be effective from 1 October.⁴⁹ Then, on 16 September, in *Neue Freie Presse*, Wickhoff published an article celebrating Dvořák, in which he called him an 'österreichischer Forscher'.⁵⁰ Dvořák was thrilled and it seemed he would finally be able to focus on his work. However, the peace was only temporary. In an unpublished letter, preserved only in the form of an editor's transcript and stored in the archive of the Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague, Dvořák wrote to Šusta on 25 September 1905 that Wickhoff had told him that Hartel had informed him, Wickhoff, that the fight against Dvořák's appointment would start again when the Imperial Council next convened. In addition, even if the fight against him failed, demonstrations were planned to take place at the beginning of the academic year to prevent Dvořák from teaching at the University of Vienna.⁵¹

Already on 2 October 1905, Rudolf Berger, a member of the Imperial Council in Vienna, demanded to speak on the case of Dvořák's appointment as professor of art history and presented it as a typical example of a provocation by the minority nations that were trying to dismantle the empire, drawing attention to the fact that Dvořák had been born into the family of 'a fanatical Czech archivist [...]' and that he had been 'brought up in the Czech milieu and "armed" with exclusively Czech schooling'.⁵² In his speech, among the other insults he directed against Dvořák, Berger pointed to the speed with which Dvořák had been appointed as Riegl's successor, even though he had been rejected as a candidate for professorships at the universities in Prague and Fribourg only a few years earlier, and described this new appointment as a calculated move to prevent a true expert from applying for the professorship. Berger claimed that there were therefore grounds to challenge Dvořák's appointment, and he suggested that Dvořák should rather be sent to one of the 'Slavic' universities in Prague, Cracow, or Lviv, arguing that there was no need for two professorships of art history at the Viennese university at all, because the empire should instead be increasing the number of professorships it offered in hygiene, medicine, or pharmacology.⁵³ Dvořák described Berger's interpellation speech in detail to Wickhoff in a letter from 7 October 1905,⁵⁴ and he concluded that a lot

malířství českého doby Karlovy', *Český časopis historický*, 5, 1899, p. 5.

³⁹ AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 11 August 1905'.

⁴⁰ Dreger was a member of the Viennese 'Burschenschaft' association which pushed the needs of the German professors at the Vienna University. See *Biographisches Lexikon der Deutschen Burschenschaft II: Künstler*, eds. H. DVORAK, P. KAUPP, Heidelberg 2018, pp. 148–149.

⁴¹ AIAH JB, 'Transcript of Dvořák's Letter to Šusta from 9 July 1905'.

⁴² AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 13 August 1905'.

⁴³ AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 16 July 1905'.

⁴⁴ J. PEČÍRKA, 'Max Dvořák. Životopis', p. VIII (as in note 1).

⁴⁵ AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 22 August 1905'.

⁴⁶ AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 24 August 1905'.

⁴⁷ AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 30 August 1905'.

⁴⁸ *Die Zeit*, 5 September 1905, p. 1.

⁴⁹ AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 12 September 1905'.

⁵⁰ F. WICKHOFF, 'Max Dvorak', *Neue Freie Presse*, 16 September 1905, pp. 21–22. For this appraisal Dvořák thanked Wickhoff in a letter from 18 September 1905.

⁵¹ AIAH JB, 'Transcript of Dvořák's Letter to Šusta on 25 September 1905'. Dvořák's first lecture was announced on 26 October 1905 on the topic of Baroque art in Italy in *Die Zeit*, 30 September 1905, p. 4.

⁵² *Stenographische Protokolle über Sitzungen des Hauses der Abgeordneten des österreichischen Reichsrathes 351*, Sitzung der XVIII Session am Oktober 1905, pp. 31742–31745, here 31743.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 31754.

⁵⁴ AIAHVU FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 7 October 1905'.

of noise had been made but that no one had actually found any reason to block his appointment. That was good news for both Dvořák and Wickhoff, but it also meant that, as anticipated, there would be demonstrations.

The first demonstration was held against Wickhoff at his opening lecture on 24 October 1905 in a corridor inside the Institute of Austrian Historical Research.⁵⁵ The protestors sang German nationalist songs, through which Wickhoff continued his lecture. When he finished his talk, the protesters were waiting for him in the corridor, but Wickhoff stayed in his university office, and after half an hour the protesters left. On the following day, the rector of the university condemned the demonstration and warned against organising others.⁵⁶ That did not stop the protesters, and on 26 October 1905 a demonstration against Dvořák took place during his first lecture. The press reported that the university had been expecting the protests,⁵⁷ and there were security guards in front of the lecture hall who only admitted people with a valid student card. Since many of the people protesting against Dvořák's appointment were students at the university, most of them connected with the 'Burschenschaft' association, many protestors were able to get into the lecture hall. As 'Die Zeit' reported, almost four hundred more German-nationalist students gathered in the corridors outside the hall singing German-nationalist songs, and as soon as Dvořák began his lecture, the students inside the lecture hall started shouting insults at him, and they had even brought toy trumpets to disturb his speech.⁵⁸ This went on for almost the whole duration of the lecture.⁵⁹

Another demonstration took place on 28 October,⁶⁰ when Dvořák held his second lecture. He and Wickhoff later cancelled their scheduled classes when the university had to be shut down in early November⁶¹ after the demonstrations went beyond what were deemed customary displays of dissatisfaction: two days after a protest was organised in the main lecture hall on 5 November 1905⁶² fights erupted between German-nationalist students and

non-German students on the ramp at the entrance to the university building on the Ringstrasse.⁶³ Around the same time, protests against Dvořák's professorship in Vienna were being organised in Prague as well.⁶⁴ In a letter to Šusta from 29 November 1905,⁶⁵ Dvořák wrote that he and Wickhoff knew who was behind the November protests – it was neither Dreger nor Neuwirth, but a history professor at the Institute of Austrian Historical Research named Alphons Dopsch (his name is omitted from the published version of the letter, because he was still alive when the letter was published in 1943).⁶⁶ Since his student years Dopsch had been involved in German-nationalist circles and he probably used the Dvořák affair to foreground the question of the 'Germanness' of the University of Vienna. For these reasons Dvořák suspected that Dopsch was also the person who had initiated Berger's interpellation in the Viennese Imperial Council.⁶⁷

As has been shown, the dramatic events at the beginning of the fall semester in 1905 were recorded in Dvořák's letters to Šusta and they are partly traceable in his letters to Kramář.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, most of the information about what was going on at the time must be sought from the daily press, because at that time Dvořák was with Wickhoff in Vienna and they probably discussed everything in person. Luckily, we also have some memoirs from Dvořák's students at that time – besides the well-known text by Erica Tietze-Conrat, in which she writes that Dvořák suggested she not attend his first lecture because, he said, 'it will be grim',⁶⁹ the recollections of Dvořák's student Josef Borovička were discovered just a few years ago and these have been published.⁷⁰ He remembered the fights on the university ramp and he mentioned that the university closed after that. Borovička added that in the middle of November political pressure led to the reopening of the university and Dvořák started to lecture again. But this time no one protested during his lectures, because

'Wickhoff entered the lecture hall, he strode very slowly through the hall and sat down on a chair in front of the teacher's desk; [...] then Dvořák entered, and with him like his Paladins the whole art-historical apparatus [and] the teacher listened with attention and affection to his student for the whole hour (fillius spiritualis they called

⁵⁵ 'Eine Demonstration auf der Universität', *Neue Freie Presse*, 24 October 1905, p. 4; 'Demonstration gegen Hofrat Wickhoff', *Die Zeit*, 24 October 1905, p. 2.

⁵⁶ 'Demonstrationen gegen Hofrat Wickhof' [sic!], *Das Vaterland*, 25 October 1905, p. 5.

⁵⁷ 'Eine neuerliche Demonstration auf der Universität', *Neue Freie Presse*, 26 October 1905, p. 4; 'Demonstrationen an der Universität', *Die Zeit*, 26 October 1905, p. 2.

⁵⁸ 'Die Kindertrompete auf der Universität', *Reichspost*, 28 October 1905, p. 4.

⁵⁹ See also, 'Der Rector und der deutsche Hochschulausschuss', *Neue Freie Presse*, 28 October 1905, p. 9; 'Die Vorgänge an der Universität', *Das Vaterland*, 10 November 1905, p. 5.

⁶⁰ 'Von der Wiener Universität', *Das Vaterland*, 28 Oktober 1905, p. 5.

⁶¹ 'Die Vorgänge an der Universität', *Das Vaterland*, 11 November 1905, p. 3.

⁶² 'Die Protestversammlung der deutschnationalen Studenten', *Die Zeit*, 11 November 1905, p. 5.

⁶³ 'Die Vorgänge an der Universität', *Neue Freie Presse*, 5 November 1905, p. 11; 'Die Vorgänge an der Universität', *Das Vaterland*, 7 November 1905, p. 5.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁵ AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 29 November 1905'.

⁶⁶ Cf. M. DVOŘÁK, *Listy o životě a umění*, p. 152 (as in note 6). Alphons Dopsch died in 1953 at the age of 85. See Lhotsky, pp. 228–231.

⁶⁷ AIAH JB, 'Dvořák to Šusta on 29 November 1905'.

⁶⁸ ANG VK, 'Dvořák to Kramář on 28 September 1904'.

⁶⁹ E. TIETZE-CONRAT, 'I then asked myself: what is the Wiener Schule? Erinnerungen an die Studienjahre in Wien', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 59, 2011, pp. 207–218, here 213.

⁷⁰ J. BOROVIČKA, 'Můj učitel Max Dvořák', *Sborník archivních prací*, 2, 2020, pp. 507–536.

it at the university). [...] This demonstration by Wickhoff – he attended Dvořák's lectures for the whole week – had its effect. Dvořák lectured in total silence.⁷¹

Thus, as we conclude our survey of Max Dvořák's first university professorship, it is possible to present archival findings that show that the institutional mechanics of early 20th-century art history defined who would and who would not have an opportunity to contribute to the development of the Vienna School method of art history. In other words, Max Dvořák was only able to become the leading representative of the Vienna School, as Kramář referred to him in 1910, because he was appointed an associate professor of art history at the University of Vienna in 1905, and not at Prague University in 1903 or at Fribourg University in 1904. This turn of events was, as the archival findings suggest, more or less accidental and, in all likelihood, was not especially defined by any methodological connections with any other proponents of what the contemporary historiography of art history has constructed to be the 'Vienna School'. This understanding, I believe, can provide us with a vital impulse for newly reviewing the history and meaning of the Vienna School of Art History from the viewpoint of its methodological origins.⁷²

SUMMARY

Tomáš Murár

'I AM WRONG ABOUT MY QUALIFICATIONS, OR I DO NOT HAVE ANY FRIENDS': ARCHIVAL RESEARCH ON THE FIRST PROFESSORSHIP OF MAX DVOŘÁK

The study presents the results of archival research on the circumstances in which Max Dvořák was appointed associate professor for art history at the University of Vienna in 1905. The archival materials studied include correspondence relating to two previous but unsuccessful attempts by Dvořák to become a professor at the universities in Prague at Bohemia and at Fribourg in Switzerland. The institutional mechanics that form the backdrop against which Dvořák struggled to find a steady university job as an art historian in the early 20th century are then presented as a lens through which to newly examine and understand the historiographic concept of the so-called Vienna School of Art History.

⁷¹ Ibidem, p. 521. Dvořák knew about Wickhoff's importance for his career, as he stated in his letter on 29 December 1905, see АИАВУ FW, 'Dvořák to Wickhoff on 29 December 1905': 'Du hast jedes Jahr seit dem wir uns können so viel mich getan, dass mehr kaum möglich gewesen wäre, doch was ich Dir [...] verdanke, lässt sich gar nicht sagen. Möge mir vergönnt sein es Dir lange durch Liebe und Dankbarkeit so weit es in meinen Kräften steht zu entlohnen.'

⁷² This study was produced with financial assistance from the Support for the Long-term Conceptual Development of the Research Organisation, Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, v. v. i., RVO: 68378033.