

SUMMARY

This dissertation examines the relationship between national and Nordic identity in the art of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden during the so-called “long 19th century”. The author investigates how the development of nationalism and the idea of Scandinavism influenced the formation of artistic identity in the Nordic region. To this end, the dissertation broadly discusses the historical and cultural context, specifically the process of the creation of modern nation-states (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland) and Scandinavism. The author also analyzes the influence of artistic theories that shaped Scandinavian art, highlighting early theoretical trends related to national identity and the formation of national art at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The research employs historical methods, particularly from the field of social art history and history of ideas, as well as cultural studies approaches, stemming from the author’s background in Scandinavian studies.

The analysis primarily focuses on 19th- and early 20th-century painting, with particular emphasis on historical, mythological, genre scenes, and landscape paintings, as well as primary sources: the theories of contemporary art historians and critics, and manifestos by artists. The material is divided into three main sections: Romantic painting (the first three-quarters of the 19th century), the art of the Modern Breakthrough (the 1880s and 1890s), and Neoromantic painting (the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries). Using numerous examples, the development of national iconography is examined, starting from the visualization of motifs from mythology and folk beliefs, the depiction of key historical events and figures, and the construction of national symbolism in representations of the people (the countryside) and landscapes. The chosen works are placed in their socio-cultural context, taking into account important phenomena that contributed to the formation of Nordic identity, such as the sense of peripheral status and the emergence of the *école scandinave*, a style common among Scandinavian artists living in France.

The author concludes that one of the central elements of national art in Scandinavia was the development of a ‘national landscape’ that reflected the specificity of the Nordic landscape, which played an important role in constructing national identities in individual countries. Similarly, Scandinavian artists frequently employed techniques such as the heroization of the people and reinterpretation of mythological and historical motifs, reflecting changing attitudes towards the people, the nation, and society, as well as the idea of Scandinavian unity. The entire work represents an attempt to illustrate the impact of political, social, and cultural changes on the characteristics of national art in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, and offers a synthesis of artistic cooperation within the Nordic region throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries.