

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to make a clear reflection of folklorism in the Czech Art Nouveau painting at the turn of 19th and 20th century. This era is characterized by the effort of artists to follow the development in western art as well as to find their own Czech way to the modern art. The establishment of new societies of art and the impact of art critics - leading personalities of cultural life – is another feature of this period.

The last quarter of 19th century is the time connected with the national revival era, when the folk culture is seen as pure and original. The culmination of so called “ethnographic movement” is the Czech-Slavonic Ethnographical Exhibition which took place in Prague in 1895. This event was the main reason for the fact that many artist suddenly started to feel sympathies for the folk topics even though in the past they were interested in different themes. In the middle of these two tendencies: desire to follow the western development and the attempt to find an inspiration in folk culture, grew the work of so called “regional painters”. This thesis aims to characterize this phenomenon and to exemplify it on the basis of artwork of selected regional artists.

Main part of this thesis is dedicated to the life and work of Jaroslav Špillar who was the significant figure of region Chodsko. He will be depicted next to the other Czech and Moravian artists inspired by folklorism (Augustin Němejc, Joža Uprka). The comparison of these painters will show the correspondence between their life and work and the validity of using the term “regionalists”. In the end there is an evaluation of the significance of regionalism within the context of Czech fine art.