

# **BRVKENTHAL. ACTA MVSEI**

## **XIII. 2**





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## THE OBSERVANT FRANCISCANS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LATE MEDIEVAL SAINTHOOD

Carmen FLOREA\*

**Abstract:** *This study wishes to investigate the contribution made by the Observant Franciscans to the development of late medieval sainthood. Existing research has argued that the friars' ministry was first and foremost considering the propagation of universal cults (as represented by the Virgin Mary and Christ – centered devotion) and to a far lesser extent promoted emerging cults. A close scrutiny of the missionary endeavors the reformed friars embarked upon in late medieval Transylvania would reveal the role they played in the dissemination of recently developed Marian devotions, in the veneration shown to the Passions of Christ, as well as the contribution they made in the field of modern sanctity.*

**Key words:** *Observant Franciscans; late medieval sainthood; Transylvania; archaism; modernity*

**Rezumat:** *Analiza de față își propune să discute rolul jucat de franciscanii observanți în domeniul sanctității evului mediu târziu. Deși cercetările recente au subliniat contribuția observanților în propagarea îndeosebi a unor culte universale, cum a fost cel al Fecioarei Maria sau devoțiunea cristică, o privire detaliată asupra apostolatului observant în Transilvania secolelor XV–XVI ar putea aduce mai multe nuanțe semnificative. Franciscanii observanți s-au distins prin propagarea unor devoțiuni mariane recent apărute, prin venerarea arătată sacrificiului cristic și, în modalități specifice, au susținut modernizarea sanctității.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Franciscani observanți; sanctitate medieval-târzie; Transilvania; arhaism; modernitate*

According to William A. Christian there were three different levels according to which the cult of the saints spread: cults originating in the early centuries of Christianity which enjoyed a large-scale popularity and new cults reflecting devotions developed locally that gained official recognition through the papal policy of canonization. In-between these distinct models of sanctity it has been placed the one reflecting universal tendencies and local impulses, a mixture of factors prompting the revival of old, universal cults coupled with the emergence of new devotional models (Christian 1989, 152-177). A close scrutiny of these observations reveals that an understanding of late medieval sainthood cannot be separated from geography and the endorsement provided by the Holy See to the development of devotional models. The detailed, nuanced and highly influential analysis of André Vauchez has placed great emphasis on the interplay between locally emerged cults and the canonized sainthood. As such, in the late Middle Ages the

geography of sanctity has led to the configuration of two different zones: one defined by an archaic and clerical model of saintliness common particularly to regions of East-Central Europe, the other being the result of a modernization process, of innovation in the field of sanctity to be found primarily in the Mediterranean Europe (Vauchez 1997, 134-135). Undoubtedly, the feeble representation of Central Europe in the canonization trials along with the severe decrease in the number of the enquiries the papacy approved to be opened at the very end of the Middle Ages has given further weight to the idea that the less urbanized, rural regions of Central Europe continued to favor the models of saintliness promoted by the royal houses and the high clergy, models that were first of all comprised of the Virgin Mary, the dynastic saints, the apostles and the martyrs (Vauchez 1997; Zarri 2005).

It was with the equally impressive work of Robert Bartlett that the exploration of late medieval sainthood has been given an even more refined understanding that draws the attention to the ability of certain regions during certain times to generate new cults and to revitalize old ones. In

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other words, the research should focus more on particular contexts within which novelty and revival impacted on the development of saints' cults, instead of following how locally produced cults managed to find their way into the official calendar (Bartlett 2013). When placing the case of Central-European sainthood within these debates, it is not at all a surprise that this phenomenon came to be revisited and investigated in a thorough manner after the fall of the Communist regime. The review of the research results achieved has brought to light that while interest for studying the cult of the saints of Central European dynasties continued and even ramified in the last two decades, the role played by the Mendicant Orders as well as the interacting influences with the Byzantine world have also been privileged by the researchers (Klaniczay 2012). In fact, the cult of the saints in Central and Eastern Europe has been recently thoroughly explored within a series of case studies that have tried to demonstrate that there was indeed a specific model of saintliness developed in this part of Europe (De Cevins, Marin 2017). By furthering the investigation on the nature of sanctity common to this region, the concept of *archaïsme innovateur* has been proposed, being considered that it encompasses the dynamism of Central European sainthood (Viallet 2017).

It is within this analytical framework that I intend to study the contribution made by the Observant Franciscans to late medieval sainthood. There are several reasons justifying such an attempt. First of all, the friars were among the main beneficiaries of the canonized sainthood, they managing to obtain papal recognition of their candidates even in the course of the fifteenth century, when the "saints' factory" ceased to function for several decades (Vauchez 1997; Finucane 2011). But the friars were not only prominent with the Curia, they also benefited from an extensive and strong network of houses Europe-wide, something which allowed them to easily disseminate and further propagate the cults of the saints. It is precisely the success they enjoyed with late medieval society that could help explaining what the devotional models they promoted were and by which means.

Therefore, it will be from this particular perspective that the ministry of the Observant Franciscans in Transylvania would be examined. When taking into account the model of sainthood cultivated in this region, it can easily be observed that it was an archaic and clerically oriented one. To this testify the parochial and altar dedications recorded in this region which for their greatest

part illustrate devotion for the Virgin Mary, the apostles, the martyrs, and the saints of the Arpadian dynasty (Entz 1958; Günidsch 1987). This religious landscape seems to have been only to a limited extent modified by the apostolate of the Mendicant Orders. Highly successful in the kingdom of Hungary and indeed, in Transylvania, the friars tended to adapt themselves to the region's preferences in the field of sanctity. As such, both the Dominicans and Franciscans strongly supported the cult of the Virgin Mary, the apostles, devotion for the Holy Cross, whilst also engaging in a revitalization of old cults (Klaniczay 1983).

These trends became even more important in their ministry with the adoption of the Observant ideals in mid-fifteenth-century. For example, the Friars Preachers introduced the cult of St. Anthony within their convent in the town of Cluj (Koložsvár, Klausenburg), by transforming the hermit into a co-patron of this house, evidence about such a development occurring after the adoption of the Observant way of life. Similarly, the Observant Dominican houses of Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Szeben) and Bistrița (Bistriz, Beszterce) contributed to the flourishing of the cults of Mary Magdalene, the penitential saint being chosen as patron of the nunnery of Sibiu, whilst a confraternity of the Rosary is attested as becoming highly popular at the end of the fifteenth-century in the town of Bistrița (Florea 2011; Gross 2004, 170-180). As such, it can be observed that the reformation of the Mendicant houses was also reflected in what concerns the cult of the saints in as much as old cults, suitable to the pristine ideal of poverty, humility and charity were revitalized alongside with the support provided to the dissemination of newly emerged Marian devotions.

Similar tendencies can be detected in the apostolate pursued by the Observant Franciscans. The establishment of their vicariate in Hungary (officially sanctioned in 1448) was the result of and benefited from the activity of the Bosnian vicariate whose friars' missionary undertakings in the Balkans and in the kingdom intensified since the second half of the fourteenth century and of the active and energetic missions carried out in this region by the two noteworthy Observant friars James of the Marches (1436–1439) and John of Capistran (1455–1456). Devoted to the papacy's ideal of enforcing and reinstating the unity of the church, "the two pillars" of the Observance considered in their missionary endeavors the fight against heresy, involvement in the anti-Ottoman

campaigns, the evangelization of the “schismatics”, as well as the creation and strengthening of the Observant network in the kingdom of Hungary (Galamb 2002; Andrić 2000, 11-27; De Cevins 2008, 132-139). Enjoying constant and significant support from the royal house, the aristocracy and the nobility, the reformed friars managed to become the most important religious community, their houses totaling to seventy at the beginning of the sixteenth century (De Cevins 2008; Kertész 2014).

The Observant Franciscans' presence in Transylvania is an integral part of their more general spread in the kingdom, one of the main traits characterizing their strategy of settlement being related to their missionary goals (De Cevins 2015; Soós 2003). Even before the Observants gained official recognition of their autonomy in 1448, there were three houses founded in Transylvania, those of Hațeg (Hacsak), Coșeu (Kusaly) and Suseni (Felfalu) that were established in the first three decades of the fifteenth century thanks to the support provided by the royal house and by the powerful and highly influential noble family Jakcs of Coșeu and the Losonci family (Karácsonyi 1924, 45-47, 72-73, 110-112; Romhányi 2016).

The most numerous friaries however were established in mid fifteenth - century, precisely at the time when the Observant vicariate was formed in the kingdom. The foundation of the convents from Șumuleu Ciuc (Csíksomlyó) (1441–1448), Teiuș (Tövis, Dreikirchen) (1444–1449), Albești (Fehéregyház) (1440–1448), and the transfer of Tg. Mureș (Marosvásárhely) friary from the Conventuals to the reformed branch in 1444 was primarily the work of John of Hunedoara, who not only initiated the construction of some of these friaries, but also sought to provide them with indulgences obtained from the papacy and privileges that would allow their functioning (Karácsonyi 1924, 26-28, 197-198; De Cevins 2008, 579, 598). With the foundations of the Observant friaries from Mediaș (Mediasch, Medgyes) (1444; 1500), Hunedoara (Vajdahunyad, Eisenmarkt) (1465), Cluj (1486) and Brașov (Kronstadt, Brassó) (1507) in the second half of the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the following one, the Observant apostolate took firm roots, particularly with the help of the royal house, also in an urban environment (De Cevins 2008, 577, 587, 589, 599).

Therefore, the Transylvanian custody became an important one within the Observant vicariate of the kingdom of Hungary, according to the surviving information from the first half of the sixteenth century large-size and well-populated convents functioning in this region (Karácsonyi 1924, 26-26, 102-103, 115, 116-118). Furthermore, existing documentation reveals the establishment of several houses of the Third Order (see Table 1), the majority of them being dated in the third and the fourth decade of the sixteenth century. These were female religious communities which continued to exist well after the spread of the Evangelical ideas and the expulsion of the friars from Transylvania in 1556, thus additionally illustrating the profound impact of the Observant ideals within the religious life of this region (De Cevins 2008, 396-397).

The ministry and preaching of the Observant Franciscans is well reflected by the geography of their convents, they being located on noble domains, in *oppida* and large urban centers, from where the friars' missions of conversion among the Orthodox populations (such as it was the case with the friaries from Teiuș, Suseni, Hunedoara) or of the Hussites from the southern parts of Transylvania and Moldavia (Șumuleu Ciuc, Coșeu, Brașov, Hațeg, Teiuș) could be initiated (Soós 2003).

But what connections could be established between the Observant ministry and the cult of the saints? In order to find an answer to this question it would be worth enquiring the titular dedications of the Transylvanian Franciscan friaries. The majority of the attested dedications belong to the Virgin Mary (Tg. Mureș, Șumuleu Ciuc, Hunedoara, Cluj and Teiuș), whilst the remaining ones consider traditional saints such as St. Michael (Suseni) and St. John the Baptist (possibly the patron saint of the friary in Brașov), modern saints such as St. Francis (Albești) and St. Elizabeth (Mediaș) or doctrines of the faith such as the Holy Trinity (Coșeu) (Karácsonyi 1924, De Cevins 2008; Lupescu 2003). When this group of holy figures is compared to that made available by Marie-Madeleine de Cevins regarding the Observant Franciscan friaries from the entire kingdom some interesting observations emerge. On the one hand, the preeminence of the Marian dedications is confirmed for the entire province where the Virgin Mary can be found in no less than twenty-nine cases out of the forty-three dedications that could be identified based on the surviving sources (De Cevins 2008, 507-602). On the other, the central role Mary played with the

Observant Franciscans is also proven by the fact that it was the only saint gathering such a high number of dedications, both in the Transylvanian custody and in the entire vicariate.

The Virgin Mary was a universal saint not only because her cult spread Europe wide since early Christianity. The popularity of her cult is further revealed by church and altar dedications, confraternities, the number of her feast days, visual representations, sermons and devotional literature (Warner 1983). Devotion for the Virgin Mary is considered to have developed in the kingdom since the Christianization of the country and, with the exception of Christ – centered devotion, it has been unparalleled by any other cult at the very end of the Middle Ages (Pásztor 1940). Of key importance in this growth were considered to be the Dominican and Franciscan friars who were giving strong impulses to the development of the Marian cult. Indeed, when taking again as an example the titular dedications, it can be seen that the Transylvanian Dominican *patrocinia* were as much concerned with Mary as those of the Franciscans. The Mother of God was the favorite patron saint of the Dominican convents in Transylvania, she of all saints being most frequently encountered as the friars' protector (Salontai 2002).

When trying to understand the contribution made by the Mendicant friars to the development of the saints' cults, the competition which existed between the Dominicans and the Franciscans should also be taken into account. The Dominican and the Franciscan houses were located at distance one from another, a situation well reflected in the localities where the two orders settled (De Cevins 2003). Furthermore, the emergence of the Observant vicariate in Hungary occurred at the time when the reformation of the Dominican convents was also put in place by the activity of Jacobus Richer (nominated as vicar of the Dominicans in Transylvania between 1444 and 1447 by Pope Eugene IV) and Leonardus of Brixenthal (Harsányi 1938; De Cevins 2008). As it has been mentioned earlier, the adoption of the Observance by the Transylvanian Dominicans contributed to the promotion of traditional cults embodying ascetic and penitential ideals such as St. Anthony, St. Egidius and St. Mary Magdalene. But the Friars Preachers were also disseminating recently emerged Marian devotion, as it was that of the Rosary. Evidence in this regard is the above mentioned Rosary confraternity of Bistrița, and the Rosary chapel that has been founded at the end of the fifteenth century in the Friars

Preachers' church of Cluj (Gross 2004; Salontai 2002).

The competition between Dominicans and the Observant Franciscans is particularly reflected by the case of Cluj. The mentioning in 1455 of St. Anthony as co-patron next to the Virgin Mary of the Dominicans most likely occurred in the aftermath of the Observant reform (Florea 2010). When three decades later, the Observant Franciscans finally managed to start the construction of their house in the town, first of all because of the personal involvement of King Mathias, their patron became the Virgin Mary. But, significantly enough, Cluj Observant friary was placed under the protection of Our Lady of the Snows. According to the list put together by Marie Madeleine de Cevins, there were two such dedications in the entire Observant vicariate: the friary in Szeged (1480) and that from Cluj (1486) (De Cevins 587, 596).

There is not much information concerning devotion for Our Lady of the Snows that has survived from medieval Hungary. The cult has developed in strong connection to the diffusion of the legendary foundation of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome and its popularity starting with the second half of the fourteenth century reached its peak in the course of the following one (Bartlett 2013, 97). It has been suggested that cardinal Julien Cesarini, who vigorously supported the Observant Franciscans in mid-fifteenth century, may have introduced this cult in Hungary (Bálint 1977, 170). The celebration of Our Lady of the Snows is recorded among the feasts to be held in the diocese of Oradea (Nagyvárad) starting with 1524. Significantly enough, the *Maria ad Nives* observed on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August seems to be a local development, as this feast day was not considered by other surviving lists of feast days from the kingdom (Jaczkó 2011, 125-126). It can be supposed that this new Marian devotion might have been introduced in the diocese by mediation of the Observant Franciscans who managed to found a house in Oradea, benefiting from Episcopal support, at the turn of the fifteenth to sixteenth century (De Cevins 2008, 590).

With more certainty, however, can be argued that King Mathias who has been profoundly devoted to the Virgin Mary, the patron of the country (Kubinyi 1999, 335-341), and who has decisively contributed to the foundation of the Observant convents from Szeged and Cluj might have chosen or at least favored this particular



dedication. As this was a devotion spread and introduced in the liturgical calendar by the Observant Franciscans it can be argued that the King's preference for the Marian cult and the friars' propagation of recently emerged Marian devotions justified the transformation of Our Lady of the Snows into the protector of these two Observant friaries in the last quarter of the fifteenth century (De Cevins 2011).

For Cluj, where the Dominicans were already popular with the townspeople, as illustrated by a good number of last wills and donations made on behalf of the Friars Preachers (Lupescu 2001), the selection of a newly introduced cult associated to the Virgin Mary by the Observant Franciscans reveals the goals of their mission. Whilst the Marian cult, including the recently emerged devotion for the Rosary, have been promoted in the town by the Dominicans' apostolate, the Observant Franciscans on their part sought at making their own contribution to the ramification of the veneration shown to the Mother of God.

When reading further the list of the Observant *patrocinia*, it can be observed that the reformed friars were indeed interested in promoting new Marian devotions. Highly relevant in this regard is the Visitation of the Virgin. Already included in the Franciscan calendar in 1263, this devotion was actively disseminated from then on, gaining ever growing success at the end of the Middle Ages. Officially confirmed at the Council of Basel (1441), the feast was additionally endorsed by the papal support (Zarri 2005, 238-243; Bartlett 2013, 175). This tendency is well exemplified by the indulgence Eugene IV granted in 1444 to the Observant friary of Șumuleu Ciuc that was under construction at that time. According to the papal charter, Mary's perpetual virginity, her status as Queen of Heaven, her qualities as Mother of God were all emphasized in a way that highlighted the precious mediation she could provide for her devotees (Szabó 1872, 153-154).

The transformation of the Visitation of the Virgin into the patronal feast of the friary from Șumuleu Ciuc undoubtedly contributed to the shaping of the Observant Franciscan identity in the field of saints' cults. It was not only that their church became the site *par excellence* where this devotion could be developed, but it is most likely that it has been disseminated well outside the wall of their friary. A first hint in this regard can be found on one of the feast-day side panels of the so-called "smaller altarpiece" from the parish church of Șumuleu Ciuc where the Visitation of

the Virgin is represented (Sarkadi Nagy, 2011, 161-164, Fig. II.62).

Ernő Marosi has suggested several decades ago that the art of the medieval kingdom of Hungary in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries cannot be understood but within the framework of the cultural transfers from other European regions, as well as of intra- and inter-regional influences. He argued further that this process of exchange is particularly relevant in what concerns the understanding of both the spread of different cults and the agency of the Mendicant Orders which made a high impact on the artistic production of towns and of the nearby areas of their places of settlement (Marosi 1973, 33-50). Such an analytical attempt has been successfully concluded by Marie Lionnet who has proven that a particular way of representing the Mother of Mercy by including her into the Last Judgment scene originated in a Franciscan environment. Several mural paintings of the churches from Ghelinta, Sic, Mugeni, Chilieni are presenting the Mother of Mercy who intercedes successfully for her devotees at the moment of Last Judgment, being considered that such a role has been devised for her by the apostolate of the Observant friars from Șumuleu Ciuc and Tg. Mureș (Lionnet 2005, 25-49).

Furthermore, the ground – breaking research of Maria Crăciun has demonstrated that recently emerged doctrines and devotions supported by the Mendicants found their way in the panel – paintings of dozens of parish churches from Saxon villages and towns from southern Transylvania as a result of the friars' missionary undertakings (Crăciun 2011, Crăciun 2012a, Crăciun 2012b, Crăciun 2012c). The greatest majority of the altarpieces that have survived were produced in the time frame between 1450 and 1550, precisely the time when both the Dominicans and the Franciscans adopted the Observant way of life.

As it has previously been argued, these were the decades when the Observant Franciscans actively pursued their mission as reflected by the strong institutional network they managed to establish. It has been pointed out above that the Visitation of the Virgin, a feast celebrated with high reverence in the friary of Șumuleu Ciuc became popular in this market – town as exemplified by one of the surviving altarpieces. But the Observant friars were very active in propagating other Marian-related devotions, among all the most interesting case being represented by the Immaculate

Conception. This doctrine remained a matter of dispute throughout the Middle Ages, particularly between the Dominicans who firmly opposed it and the Observant Franciscans who became the major advocates of the belief that Mary was exempted from the original sin.

John of Capistran defended and propagated the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary as it is illustrated by his theological works *Tractatus de utraque conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis* and *Questio de conceptione B. M. V.*, as well as by the sermons he delivered (Bölcskey 1923, 103-109). Visual expressions such as the Virgin of the Apocalypse (*Maria in Sole*) represented on the polyptich of Biertan (Birthälm, Berethalom) (Fig. 1) and the statues from the shrines of the altarpieces in Sebeş (Mühlbach, Szászsebes) and Băgaciu (Bogeschdorf, Szászbogács), the Anne Threesome composition to be found on the panel paintings from Biertan, Şmig (Schmiegen, Somogyom), Şaeş (Schaas, Segesd) (Fig. 2), Armăşeni (Csíkmenaság) and Lelicieni (Csíkszentlélek), and the Bodily Assumption of the Virgin depicted on the altarpieces from Mălâncrav (Malmkrog, Almakerék) (Fig. 3), Sântimbru (Csíkszentimre) and Lelicieni ingeniously promoted by Franciscan mediation belief in the Immaculate Conception (Crăciun 2011, 76-81).

In 1511, the head of the Transylvanian custody entrusted friar Peter, son of Fabian of Sighişoara to bring from Moldavia the renown work *Mariale eximii virii Bernardini de Busti* to the friary of Albeşti (Fehéregyháza) (Karácsonyi 1924, 46). That this work also included an office for the feast of the Immaculate Conception is further evidence of the Observant friars' strategy concerning the propagation of this belief. The two most famous Observant preachers in the kingdom, Pelbartus of Timişoara and Osvaldus of Laska have also disseminated through their sermon collections the devotion that Mary was preserved from the original sin. Given the strong impact made by Osvaldus's work on the codices written primarily in the first half of the sixteenth century for the use of the Poor Claires and the tertiaries, the Immaculate Conception became one of the main themes of the devotional literature in vernacular. No less than nine codices compiled in a Franciscan milieu instructed the nuns and tertiaries about this belief and prompted them to pray to the Immaculate Virgin as it is exemplified by the Teleki codex (Dám 1955 24-37, 51-69).

The Immaculate Conception has been of key importance in the missionary strategy of the Observant Franciscans as it has been revealed by the thorough analysis of both textual and visual evidence. The Teleki codex compiled for the use of Tg. Mureş tertiaries contains the most elaborated version of the legend of St. Anne (another cult assiduously promoted by the Franciscans in close connection to that of Mary) to have survived from medieval Hungary, detailed explanations of each letter composing Mary's name and frequent references to her exemption from the original sin (Nagy 2015, 73-77; Dám 1955, 56-57). Similar devotional ideas were represented on the polyptich of Biertan, where the Anne Threesome composition was meant to re-enforce Mary's invaluable mediation on Heaven and Earth (Crăciun 2012c; Nagy 2015, 114-129).

The Observant Franciscan dedications referring to various Marian feast days from the liturgical year such as the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the Assumption (Fig. 3) found visual and textual expressions, thus reflecting with accuracy the friars' missionary strategy in their settlement region. When looking at the map detailing the spread of the Observant friaries and the provenance of the surviving altarpieces which depicted devotions the reformed friars supported, their role is even better highlighted. The friary of Mediaş established in the second half of the fifteenth century was less than 15 km away from Biertan, Şmig, and Băgaciu, whilst the friary of Albeşti was placed at a very short distance from Şaeş (less than 10 km) and Mălâncrav (around 18 km). Similar geographical proximity is evident in the case of the panel paintings survived from the Szekler counties, where the friary of Şumuleu Ciuc was less than 10 km from Lelicieni and Armăşeni (see the Map).

There is not much information survived about the territory on which the Observant friars were allowed to pursue their missionary goals. However, scarce reference concerning the areas from where they could collect the almsgiving was estimated at around 50–60 km from their convents, the friars being allowed to embark on such missions three times every year (Romhányi, 2013, 202-207). This involvement is further confirmed by the recruitment of the Observant Franciscans that in the fourth decade of the sixteenth-century was predominantly local, from the villages and *oppida* and to a lesser extent from large urban centers (Romhányi 2014, 131-135). The surviving list of guardians, friars and lay brothers from the friaries of Mediaş, Albeşti and

Șumuleu Ciuc additionally confirms this localism both in terms of recruitment and mobility (Karácsonyi 1924, 46, 115, 117). At the same time, the close scrutiny of the Observant Franciscans' impact on specific devotional patterns has revealed that attitudes and gestures to be followed and made during prayer were largely the result of the friars' ministry (Crăciun 2012a).

It is therefore worth emphasizing that the Observant Franciscans actively and efficiently promoted the cult of the Virgin Mary in late medieval Transylvania. This was part of their more general strategy of supporting universal cults that could bring unity to a divided Christendom. But at the same time, they left their particular imprint on this cult by transforming it into a multifaceted one. By favoring certain moments from the Virgin's life, as well as by vigorously defending and disseminating belief in Mary's Immaculate Conception the apostolate of the Observant Franciscans made a decisive contribution in the field of sainthood.

At this point I would like to further my enquiry by discussing the way the Observant Franciscans promoted the cult of their founder, St. Francis. This was a modern saint, whose cult was largely disseminated by the friars' ministry, the foundation of the friary in Albești and its dedication to St. Francis could be considered as contributing to the shaping of the Observant Franciscan identity. The establishment of this friary in the timeframe between 1440–1448 by one of the members of the high nobility belonging to the family of Nadasd (or perhaps that of Vizakna / Ocna Sibiului) (De Cevins 2008, 581) occurred at the same time with the creation of a separate vicariate of the Hungarian Observants and when two other friaries were founded in Transylvania as a result of the initiatives of John of Hunedoara.

Devotion for St. Francis was first of all connected to the order he founded. Illustrative in this regard is the vow taken by the novices who, when making their profession, submitted themselves to the Almighty God, to the Virgin Mary and to St. Francis (Batthyány 1827, 619-620). It was by institutional means that his cult could be promoted not only more widely, but also more successfully. In mid-fifteenth century an indulgence has been granted to an altar of St. Francis of St. Michael's parish church from Cluj (Gündisch 1975, 310-311). A decade later the vicar of the Observant Franciscans from Hungary, Michael *Siculus* accepted the entrance of tailors' wives and

children into a fraternity who pursued its devotional goals at the same altar of St. Francis (Zimmermann et al. 1981, 154). Despite the fact that in the town there was no Franciscan friary at that time, it can be argued that such a devotional community could have emerged as a result of the Observant ministry in a town that was undergoing rapid development and where the friars' mission could attain its goals through the promotion of the cult of St. Francis (Florea 2010).

The association to the merits which have been bestowed on his order by the exceptional way of life Francis embodied is even better illustrated by the affiliation with the Observant Franciscans. The great increase in the number of the lay persons who were associated with the friars in the last decades of the fifteenth century and the first decades of the following one, is an eloquent proof of the way the propagation of St. Francis's cult has been furthered. This was also the time when the laity wished to become even more closely connected to the founder of the order as it is testified by the case of the cobblers' guild who gained permission from the vicar provincial to celebrate all the feast days at the altar of St. Francis in the friars' church of Hunedoara, the masters of this profession being granted the privilege to be buried in the same church (De Cevins 2008, 544).

According to the Constitutions of Atya approved in 1499, the guardians of the friaries could allow pious lay people to have their resting place in the Observant churches, but only wearing the Order's habit (Batthyány 1827, 622). Such decisions were undoubtedly the result of an increasing demand on the laity's part to become associated in the after life to the merits of St. Francis and his Order, as it is proven by the case of Dionisius Veres of Sfăraș and Leonard Barlabási of Idrifaia who wished to be buried in the Observant friary of Tg. Mureș (Lupescu Makó 2012, 216, 221).

Visual and textual evidence eloquently prove the efficient ministry of the Observant Franciscans in regard with the cult of the saints of their order. In Mălâncrav, the Virgin Mary church founded on their estates by the noble family Apafi, bears strong evidence of the Franciscan influence. The preserved panel and mural paintings are depicting St. Claire, St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Francis, including the episode of his stigmatization (Crăciun 2011; Crăciun 2012a). The proximity of the Observant friary of Albești and the more general support provided by the nobles to the Observant Franciscans additionally explain this

influence. A quite similar explanation that refers to the Observant ministry in the propagation of devotion for St. Francis is revealed by the representation of the stigmatization of St. Francis in the parish church of Sighișoara, a town located less than 10 km from St. Francis friary of Albești (Vătășianu 1959, 765). The idea that the Observant apostolate contributed to the propagation of devotions they supported in the nearby area is also demonstrated by the depiction of the stigmatization of St. Francis in the Holy Spirit Church of Lelicieni, a locality also at a very short distance from the friary of Șumuleu Ciuc.

The stigmatization of St. Francis had also become one of the main traits characterizing Franciscan spirituality. The literal imitation of Christ as reflected by the stigmata of St. Francis was meant to enforce the role of the friars within the Church. The feast of the stigmatization has been introduced in the Franciscan calendar by the decision taken at the Chapter of Assisi in 1340. In fact, through the institutionalization of the devotion for Francis' stigmata, particularly the friars attached to the Spiritual branch of the Order displayed the belief that the stigmatization of their founder represented nothing less than identification to the Rule and the apostolic way of life (Vauchez 1968, 620-621).

The appropriation of the stigmatization of St. Francis as mark of identity by the reformed friars is well illustrated by the codices written in Hungarian. It was considered that the main aim of these works was that of promoting the Observant ideals (both within a Dominican and a Franciscan realm) being meant to instruct the nuns and the tertiaries (Korondi 2016). Among all the Mendicant saints, Francis was the most popular holy figure to be found in these writings. Virginia and Lázár-Zelma codices narrate the stigmatization taking place on Mount Alverna, by using as their source of inspiration the *Speculum vite beati Francisci et sociorum eius* (published at the beginning of the sixteenth century) and one of the sermons authored by the famous Observant preacher Pelbartus of Timișoar (Konrád 2017a, 187). Of interest to my purpose is the Lázár-Zelma codex which has been considered to have been used by the tertiaries from Tg. Mureș (Abaffy 1992). Recent research has convincingly argued that the stigmatization of St. Francis was fulfilling the role of a prayer and consequently contributed to the spiritual edification of these pious women (Korondi 2016, 185). It should thus be observed that the Observant Franciscans in Hungary produced works which made widely

available the stigmatization of St. Francis, both in Latin and in Hungarian, devising thus means through which the exceptional nature of Francis's sanctity shaped their identity.

A noteworthy evolution in regard with the stigmatization of St. Francis has been related to the frequent representation of the saint in the scenes of Last Judgment, as it happened with the mural paintings executed in 1448 for the church in Șumuleu Ciuc giving thus further weight to the belief in Francis likeness to Christ (Konrád 2017b, 191). As the stigmatization itself revealed the bodily imitation of Christ, the Observant Franciscans placed a tremendous emphasis in their ministry on the Passions of Christ.

Evidence about the pursuing of a penitential way of life within the institutional framework provided by the Observant Franciscans is revealed by the success enjoyed by the fraternities of the flagellants from Pápa and Baia-Mare, as well as by the rules drawn for the tertiaries (De Cevins 2008, 284). Such regulations survived from the third decade of the sixteenth century, the time when the number of the tertiaries increased in the kingdom and they provided instructions to female religious that were focusing on obedience, chastity, and humility in order to continuously be able to do penance (Volf 1884; Korányi 2005). The rules compiled by Francis of Sepsiszentgyörgy for the use of the tertiaries in Tg. Mureș enforced Christ – centred devotion by instructing the tertiaries to keep Christ crucified in their minds and hearts at all time and by revering Christ's sufferings through meditating constantly on the holy way in which Christ's blood was shed on the cross (Volf 1884, 400-401; Roest 2005).

Thus, it can be observed that based on the surviving evidence, the cult of St. Francis was used in late medieval Transylvania by the Observant Franciscans within the process of identity construction. By emphasizing Francis likeness to Christ, the reformed friars actively supported and disseminated devotion for Christ's sufferings (Fig. 4). The visual representation of Christ's sufferings in a way that focused on humility and obedience are strongly marked by an Observant influence as it was the case with the representations of *Christus Patiens* to be found on the altarpieces from Mediaș (Fig. 5), Biertan, Prejmer, and Sibiu (Crăciun 2011, 84-87). By visual and textual means that were produced in an Observant Franciscan environment in Transylvania or have been permeated by the reformed friars' ministry, the Passions became

constantly depicted in panel and mural paintings of the parish churches, whilst remembering and commemorating Christ's sacrifice became the focus of tertiaries' way of life.

Very recently, Eszter Konrád has comprehensively analyzed the cult of the Mendicant saints in the Kingdom of Hungary, her research being not limited only to saints whose cults were imported to this region by the friars' mission, but also to those holy figures originating from the kingdom who were regarded as blessed and venerated as such by the two orders (Konrád 2017b). Such an analytical endeavour has the merit of highlighting the dynamics, "the saintly politics of the two great Mendicant Orders" as it has been called, which largely depended on the decision taken centrally by the governing bodies of the friars and the local conditions to which these decisions were adapted and adjusted (Konrád 2017b, 423-439).

In what concerns the Observant Franciscans and the cult of the saints, existing literature has distinguished different stages in the way the cult of the saints was included in the friars' ministry. Whilst the first generation of the Spirituals was interested almost exclusively in promoting the traditional saints of the Order, the Regular Observants, such as Bernardino of Siena and his followers were rather not interested in the cult of the saints, insisting in their preaching on moral reform and, as it has become well known, popularizing including by visual aids, devotion for the Name of Jesus (Klaniczay 2014, 231-247). With the beginning of the canonization campaign of Bernardino, in which John of Capistran played a tremendous, perhaps the most important role for its successful completion, a renewed interest in the field of sainthood gained the attention of the reformed friars. Such an opportunity emerged relatively soon, with the death of John of Capistran in October 1456, after the victorious battle of Belgrade. The efforts made in order to promote and further the case of Capistran, particularly in the first decades after his death, were thus illustrating the friars' interest in the cult of the saints (Solvi 2013; Andrić, 2000).

It would be thus worth exploring the way the Observant friars disseminated the cults of Bernardino and John of Capistran in Transylvania. These were recently emerged cults, one of them obtaining the papal approval, whereas the other one was under scrutiny. Furthermore, John of Capistran has spent several months in Transylvania in late autumn of 1455 and the early

winter of 1456, giving thus further justification for such an enquiry. In the spring of 1453, John of Capistran has been prompted by King Ladislas to support John of Hunedoara in establishing a friary dedicated to St. Bernardino of Siena in Chilia (Pettkó 1901, 164-165). At that time, Capistran was in a preaching tour in Silezia, its most important and immediate consequence being considered to be the foundation of a friary in Wrocław that has been dedicated to the same Bernardino (Gecser 2003, 6-8).

John of Capistran has not only been the main advocate of Bernardino's cult, his Central European missionary undertakings made a similar contribution in spreading further this devotion. Significantly enough, several friaries founded in Silezia and Poland were dedicated to the renown Observant preacher whose fame was embodied even in the name taken by the reformed friars of these regions, the *Bernardins*. From the point of view of the relationship between the apostolate of the Observant Franciscans and the cult of the saints, it has been considered that the newly emerged branch shaped its identity by employing to this end the cult of the modern saint Bernardino (Viallet, 2017).

Returning to the case of Chilia friary to which establishment both John of Hunedoara and John of Capistran worked, it should be mentioned that it was founded in a region where the friars' apostolate was very active since the thirteenth century (Dobre 2003). The choice of Bernardino as holy protector of Chilia friary could be integrated into the similar trend of spreading the cult of this pillar of the Observance into a far remote land, where the Observant mission was oriented towards both Catholic and non-Catholic communities. An indulgence procured in 1489 by members of the family Jakcs of Coșeu for an altar dedicated to St. Bernardino whose cult was to be endorsed at this site on his feast day, that of St. Francis, as well as the feasts of Easter and Pentecost (Romhányi, 2013, 236) helps bringing into closer focus the Transylvanian supporters of St. Bernardino's cult.

Bernardino became well-known in Hungary as early as 1433, on the occasion of Sigismund of Luxemburg's coronation as emperor in Rome, a ceremony attended by the would be saint. In fact, it was from the king's retinue that the most numerous supporters of the Observant Franciscans and of the cult of St. Bernardino itself originated, such as John of Hunedoara, János Marcali, the family Jakcs of Coșeu, the Losonczy family, to

name a few among many other representatives of the kingdom's political and social elite (Konrád 2017b, 372-374; Romhányi, 2016).

The cult of Bernardino has been disseminated in the kingdom by John of Capistran who used various means in order to further promote this recently emerged devotion. Thus, the friar's successful advocating to Bernardino eased the performance of miracles as it was the case with a certain priest Matthew *de Sent-Endreas*. The cleric was suffering from a severe illness for more than four months and was cured by St. Bernardino through the mediation of John of Capistran on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December of the year 1455 in the town of Hunedoara (Konrád 2017b, 380). This miracle story was part of the *Liber miraculorum* compiled by one of Capistran's disciple, Conrad of Freyestadth who gathered 2517 miracle stories, two third of the miracles being in fact performed by Capistran (Jansen 1984, 130-140).

This example is highly illustrative for the way one saint's qualities enhanced those of a future candidate for sanctity, a trend highly visible in the working of the saintly pair Bernardino – Capistran (Andrić 2000, 194-196). Even the town where this miracle took place Hunedoara is highly relevant from this point of view. In fact, Capistran's Transylvanian tour was prompted not only by his wish to meet John of Hunedoara and devise the anti-Ottoman campaign or the Bishop's request for the friar's preaching against the heretics and the "schismatics", but also by Elizabeth Szilágy. In a letter sent to Capistran from Hunedoara on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1455, the governor's wife appealed to the merits of the would-be-saint in order to secure the cure of her daughter-in-law, whose health was in a such bad condition that she could not live, neither die (Pettkó 1901, 183). And, indeed, Capistran did go to Hunedoara and did perform miracles there, most likely on his own, but also by appealing to St. Bernardino.

In 1455 there was no Observant friary in Hunedoara, but the friars' undertakings were highly valued in the region that was part of John of Hunedoara's properties. It could also be that priest Matthew, Bernardino's miraculé, was from the same county, where a locality named after St. Andrew (*Zenthandreas*) has been mentioned already at the end of the fourteenth century (Vizauer 2012, 79). An Observant friary will be established in Hunedoara starting with 1465 thanks to the strong support provided to this end by Elizabeth Szilágy and her son, King Mathias (Karácsonyi 1924, 75). Unfortunately not much

information has survived up to these days about the extent to which Hunedoara became a place where devotion for John of Capistran developed. It would suffice to say that the King and his mother (who even offered her financial support to the canonization campaign of Capistran in the eight decade of the fifteenth century) were among the main promoters of this cult (Andrić 2000, 157-159; Klaniczay 2013, 3-6).

The Transylvanian cult of John of Capistran seems to have been related particularly to the political elite and the Observant friars. One of his closest companions, John of Geszti who has also fulfilled the office of guardian of the friary in Teiuș authored two miracle collections after Capistran's death in Ilok. Among the beneficiaries of these miracles was also George, a student in Alba-Iulia (Andrić 2000, 276-277). The Episcopal town has also been visited by Capistran in late 1455, something which might explain his fame within the city walls. Another former collaborator of the friar, Gabriel of Verona has been Transylvanian Bishop (1472–1475) and also a firm supporter of Capistran's cause (Bölcskey 1923, 591-592). Among the manuscripts once belonging to the cathedral there was a copy of Nicholas of Fara's *Vita et gesta beati Joannis de Capistrano*, something which gives further weight to the idea that Alba-Iulia might have been a place where devotion for one of the pillars of the Observance grew in the late Middle Ages (Vekov 2003, 339).

But the focus should be alternated from the particular Transylvanian context within which the Capistranean cult has developed to the more general policy the Observant Franciscans followed in relation to the cult of the saints in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. It was particularly in the field of hagiography that a significant change occurred and reverberated through ministry and preaching within the community of believers. Instead of promoting local saints, the renewed strategy concerned the propagation of cults which could enforce the unity of Christendom. *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* authored by Caracciolo da Lecce (a Conventual, former Observant friar) and published in 1489 reveals a typology of sainthood which mirrors the celestial hierarchy, a prominent role being ascribed to the Virgin Mary and then to Bernardino, Capistran, the Holy Trinity, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Martyrs, the Doctors of the Church, the Bishops and the Virgins, with equal attention paid to both

Franciscan and Dominicans saints (Solvi 2013, 148-157).

The *sermonaria* of the local Observant preachers Pelbartus of Timișoara and Osvaldus of Laska while being highly influenced by the work of Caracciolo da Lece as it has been observed present some marked differences. The first one consists in the great importance attached to the “Hungarian” saints Stephen, Emeric, Ladislas, Elisabeth, Gerald, Adalbert and Martin, a trait that could be well explained by the friars’ adaptability to the local sainthood. The other difference is that unlike Caracciolo da Lecce, the two most famous Hungarian Observant preachers did not allow any of the Dominican saints to benefit from their attention. From the 221 sermons composed by Pelbartus for the entire liturgical year fourteen have considered Franciscans saints, whilst from the 122 sermons compiled, Osvaldus has dedicated nine to the Franciscans saints (Klaniczay 2014, 244-245).

The change in the strategy the Observants followed occurred during the pontificate of Sixtus IV, the former Minister General of the Franciscans who opened in 1474 the canonization process of Bonaventure, a process which was successfully completed in 1482. As Ronald Finucane put it, Bonaventure was an old, yet according to the criterion of canonized sainthood a modern saint, whose cause was supported by both branches of the Order St. Francis founded (Finucane 2011, 33-71). It would be thus interesting to explore the way the cult of the Seraphic Doctor was supported by the Observant Franciscans in Hungary. On the one hand, such an enquiry would shed more light on the friars’ contribution at local level when a recent cult came to be disseminated. On the other, it would be equally interesting to decipher the modalities within which a new saint, a highly respected figure among the Franciscans despite their allegiance to one of the two branches of the Order, was appropriated by the reformed friars.

Recent research has pointed out the great impact made by the theological and mystical works of Bonaventure on the sermons and devotional literature produced in Hungary at the very end of the fifteenth century and the first decades of the following one. Whilst for Pelbartus of Timișoara, Bonaventure’s example was worth following by the believers given his outstanding qualities as theologian, as a professor of Scripture who has been endowed with many graces by Christ, the most important one being the true wisdom,

Osvaldus paints a slightly different image of the Seraphic Doctor in his sermons. Thus, great emphasis is placed on Bonaventure’s merits as Minister General of the Franciscans and on the ways he strove to impose on the friars the literal Observance of the Rule (Konrád 2017b, 400-406). For Osvaldus who filled three times the office of the vicar of the Hungarian Observants (1497, 1499, 1507), negotiated the re-integration of his province within the cismontane family and authored the Atya Constitution of 1499 (which also regulated the celebration of the feast of St. Bonaventure on the next day after the feast of St. Margaret) (Kertész 2014, 175-182; Batthyány 1827, 621), Bonaventure could not be but the perfect embodiment of the original ideal of the Franciscan community, a true forerunner of the Observant family.

Bonaventure’s normative role has also been highlighted in relation to the impact made by the rules he authored, such as *Regula novitiorum* and *De perfectione vitae ad sorores*, on the regulations devised for the use of the Poor Claires and the tertiaries (Korondi 2016, 145-168). Particularly relevant in this regard are the rules composed by friar Francis Sepsiszentgyörgy for the house of the Third Order from Tg. Mureș. The community of the tertiaries was established there at the beginning of the sixteenth century and the Teleki codex, compiled between 1525–1531 was a local product. The friary of Tg. Mureș was among the most important Transylvanian ones, benefiting from a papal indulgence granted in 1400 which gave strong impulses to the solemn celebration of the feast of the Annunciation, played an important economic role and surely not least the reformed friars were regarded as precious mediators within the scheme of salvation as testified by testamentary clauses (Soós 2003; De Cevins 2008, 144, 198, 227, 255, 402, 405).

The rules for the tertiaries compiled by friar Francis Sepsiszentgyörgy were considering a community of female religious which needed constant guidance and instruction in order to be able to live a penitential life. By taking as his source of inspiration Bonaventure’s works which insisted on monastic discipline, on obedience and humility, the friar devised for the tertiaries of Tg. Mureș a daily conduct that would continuously illustrate these virtues. Moreover, Francis Sepsiszentgyörgy praises several times Bonaventure’s outstanding qualities as master of the Franciscans, by calling him our Father or Doctor. In order to transform Bonaventure into the true, authoritative voice the tertiaries must obey at

all times, friar Francis insists on drawing the female religious' attention to the usefulness and beauty of the teachings the Seraphic Doctor has provided them with (Volf 1884, 400-403).

There is scarce reference in the surviving sources of the decisions taken by the governing bodies of the Observant Franciscans from Hungary in regard with the tertiaries, a reluctance which gained more proeminence after the defeat of Mohács and the spread of the Evangelical ideas. Starting with the fourth decade of the sixteenth century, the entrance into the Third Order was prohibited, the friars were not allowed anymore to visit the houses of female religious and their enclosure was even more severely enforced (De Cevins 2008, 274, 289, 391, 395, 396).

Thus, the rules devised for the tertiaries of Tg. Mureș capture with accuracy the efforts made by the Observant Franciscans to promote the cult of St. Bonaventure in a way that would endorse the way of life of these pious women. Furthermore, they not only transformed the Seraphic Doctor into the Father of these female religious, but also by this very process the reformed friars managed to appropriate Bonaventure's cult in a manner that would strengthen their identity.

This analysis has taken as its starting point the titular dedications of the Transylvanian Observant Franciscans and it evolved towards integrating a more focused discussion on the Marian cult, Christ-centered devotion, as well as the modern cults of Francis, Bernardino, Capistran and Bonaventure. Future research must necessarily consider not only the competition which existed between the Dominicans and the Observants in what concerns the Marian cult, but also the possibility of tension in the field of sainthood between the Conventuals and the Observant Franciscans. In Transylvania, this might be reflected by the same dedication, that of Elizabeth, a highly popular saint in the kingdom, in the case of the friary in Sibiu (that remained attached to the Conventual branch of the Franciscans) and that from Mediaș, a friary established by the Observant Franciscans in the second half of the fifteenth century. A more detailed discussion would also deserve the friary of Brașov, most likely dedicated to St. John the Baptist. Despite being established in the first decade of the sixteenth century and under very difficult circumstances which eventually led to its abandonment by the friars in late 1520s, the missionary undertakings of the Observants of

Brașov in what concerns the cult of the saints could shed more light on the typology of sainthood cultivated in this region.

At this point, it is important to emphasize that the Observant Franciscans' strategy in the field of sainthood presents some noteworthy features. On the one hand, the reformed friars propagated in Transylvania recently emerged Marian devotions (such as the Immaculate Conception, the Visitation of the Virgin, Our Lady of the Snows). This was well adjusted to the region's profile where the cult of the saints was largely dominated by the popularity of the Virgin Mary and the archaic saints. Yet, the Observant Franciscans used and ramified an old cult, such as the Marian one and managed to disseminate it well beyond the walls of their friaries. A similar trend can be deciphered in the propagation of Christ – centered devotion, focusing primarily on identification with Christ's sufferings in ways that emphasized the virtues of humility and obedience and St. Francis's likeness to Christ.

In fact, with the propagation of the stigmatization of St. Francis, the reformed friars started to employ the cults of the saints within the process of identity formation. The emergence of the Transylvanian custody occurred within a context marked by competition with the Observant Dominicans, as well as with the parish clergy. Therefore, by appealing to cults which could enforce their specific way of life, the Observant Franciscans identified useful means to further promote their identity. The cults of Bernardino, Capistran and Bonaventure were not only best-suited examples in this regard. They were equally construed as models to be followed in their daily conduct by both friars and tertiaries.

Most likely this latter aspect regarding the Observant Franciscans' strategy concerning the cult of the saints touches one of the very sensitive, yet highly relevant traits of their apostolate. Whilst Marian and Christocentric devotion were diversified and largely disseminated not only within the walls of the friaries, but also within a parochial milieu, the saints of the reformed branch were primarily confined to the Observant friaries and houses of the tertiaries. This course of action ultimately reveals that the agency of the Observant Franciscans not only adapted itself to a region where a traditional type of sainthood prevailed, but also that ingeniously established paths for its further development.



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**Table 1 Observant Friaries and Houses of the Third Order**

Locality	Friary (date of Foundation)	Titular Dedication	House of the Third Order (date of foundation)
Albești	1448	St. Francis	1535
Brașov	1507	St. John the Baptist	1534
Cluj	1486	The Virgin Mary	1522
Coșeu	1422-1423	Holy Trinity	-
Harale	1500	The Virgin Mary (locus)	-
Hațeg	14th c.	?	-
Hunedoara	1470	The Virgin Mary	-
Mediaș	1444	St. Elizabeth	-
Șumuleu Ciuc	1410	The Virgin Mary	1535
Suseni	1427	St. Michael	1535
Teiuș	1448	The Virgin Mary	1520
Tg. Mureș	1316	The Virgin Mary	1503-1506

#### LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. *Maria in Sole*, panel from the altarpiece of Biertan.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Fig. 2. Composition with Anne Threesome on a panel from the altarpiece of Șaeș.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Fig. 3. *Bodily Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, panel from the altarpiece of Mălâncrav.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Fig. 4. *Crucifixion*, panel from the altarpiece of Sântimbru.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Fig. 5. *Crucifixion*, panel from the altarpiece of Mediaș.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Map 1. Observant Friaries and Parish Churches (Altarpieces)

#### LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. *Maria in Sole*, panou al altarului din Biertan.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Fig. 2. Compoziție cu Anne Threesome pe un panou al altarului din Șaeș.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Fig. 3. *Adormirea Maicii Domnului*, panou al altarului din Mălâncrav.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Fig. 4. *Răstignirea*, panou al altarului din Sântimbru.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Fig. 5. *Răstignirea*, panou al altarului din Mediaș.

(Source: <http://tethys.imareal.sbg.ac.at/realonline/>)

Hartă 1. Mănăstiri franciscane și biserici parohiale (altare)





Fig. 1. *Maria in Sole*, panel from the altarpiece of Biertan

Fig. 2. Composition with Anne Threesome on a panel from the altarpiece of Șaeș

Fig. 3. *Bodily Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, panel from the altarpiece of Mălîncrav

Fig. 4. *Crucifixion*, panel from the altarpiece of Sântimbru

Fig. 5. *Crucifixion*, panel from the altarpiece of Medias





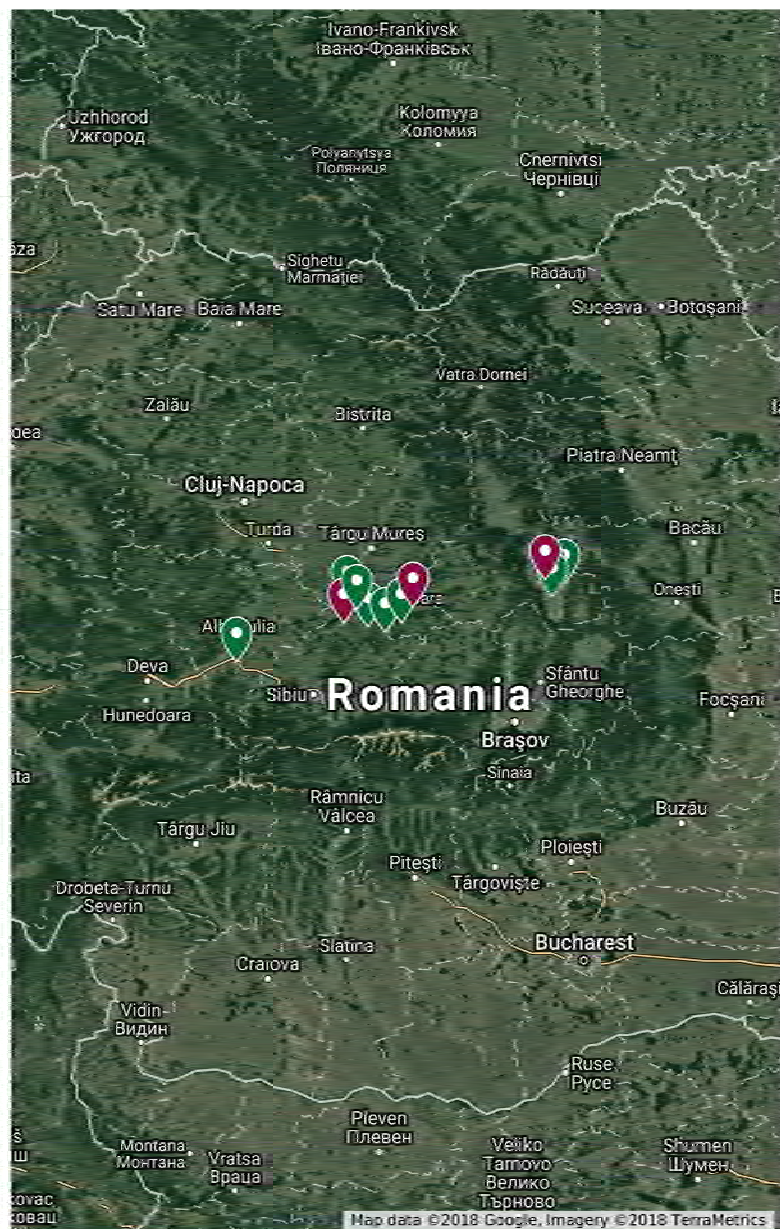
## Observant Friaries and Parish Churches (Altarpieces)

### Observant Friaries

- Albești Târnava
- Medias
- Șumuleu Ciuc

### Parish churches (Altarpieces)

- Armășeni
- Băgaciu
- Biertan
- Lelicieni
- Mălâncrav
- Saes
- Sebeș
- Sântimbru Ciuc
- Șmig







## THE POLYPTYCH OF DOBÂRCA AND THE ISSUE OF THE TEXT-RETABLE IN EARLY MODERN TRANSYLVANIA

Maria CRĂCIUN\*

**Abstract:** Starting from the detailed iconographical analysis of a particular artefact, the altarpiece from Dobârca (1629), this study explores the issue of the text or catechism-retable in early modern Transylvania. The essay defines the altarpiece from Dobârca as a type, deciphers its messages and determines its functions, placing it in its spatial, cultural and confessional context. The study also tries to assess whether preference for a particular type of altarpiece reflected a particular stage in the reforming process.

**Keywords:** altarpiece, catechism-retable, Lutheran Reformation, confessionalization

**Rezumat:** Pornind de la o analiză iconografică detaliată a unui artefact, polipticul din Dobârca (1629), studiul explorează problema retablului-text sau catehetic în Transilvania modernă timpurie. Articolul definește polipticul de la Dobârca ca tip, din punct de vedere formal și funcțional, îi descifrează mesajele și îi determină funcțiile, plasându-l în contextul său spațial, cultural și confesional. Studiul încearcă să estimeze dacă preferința pentru un anumit tip de retblu reflectă un anumit stadiu din procesul reformativ.

**Cuvinte cheie:** retblu, retblu-catehetic, Reforma Luterană, confesionalizare

In 1629, the high altar of the church at Dobârca (Dobring, Doborka) was decorated with an altarpiece (Roth 1916, 184-186) (Fig. 1). At first glance, and except for the fact that it was produced for a Lutheran church, this altarpiece appeared to be very similar to countless medieval examples, especially since it was a polyptych with moveable wings, which opened and closed, revealing distinct, alternative pictorial programmes. However, on closer examination, one notices that, despite its traditional format, this artefact was very different from the altarpieces produced during the fifteenth century and the first decades of the following one. If one begins from a cursory survey of the open position of the altarpiece, the so-called *Festtagsseite*, one will first of all notice that its pictorial programme was completely different from that of medieval altarpieces. Thus, the central panel was decorated with the Last Supper (Fig. 2), while the superstructure was adorned with the Baptism of Jesus (Fig. 3). The date 1629 appears in the compositional field of the superstructure.

These two episodes were rarely represented in medieval altarpieces from Transylvania. The Last Supper never appears on the central panel and only occurs twice on the predella, on the altarpiece from Șoroștin (Schorsten, Sorostély) and on a predella attributed to Vincentius, which has later been placed on the sarcophagus type predella of the altarpiece from Mediaș (Mediasch, Medgyes). The Baptism of Jesus was present on the wings of the altarpiece of Roadeș (Radeln, Rádós), inserted in a brief narrative of the Baptist's life, and apparently also occurred on the central panel of the altarpiece of Cisnădie (Heltau, Nagydisznód), the structure of which is only known today from Pulszky's description (Pulszky 1879). Unfortunately, when this altarpiece was dismembered in 1880, the superstructure and the predella ended up among the holdings of the Brukenthal Museum, while the rest of the panels became part of a private collection (Roth 1916, 150-152).

The Baptism of Jesus appears to be present as part of the fifteenth-century Marian cycle visible in the open position of the altarpiece from Biertan (Birthälm, Berethalom) (Sarkadi Nagy 2012, 45-47; Firea 2010a, 319-359, especially footnote

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83; Firea 2010b, 51). Harald Krasser was the first art historian to suggest that this panel was the work of a different master and that it had been painted after the Reformation. He believed that the presence of the Baptism defies both the iconographical structure of this altarpiece and compositional rules prevalent at the time (Krasser 1976, 193-214, especially p. 204). Building on this suggestion, I have argued elsewhere that the Baptism episode may have been integrated into the Marian narrative in Lutheran context, for doctrinal and devotional reasons, in order to shift the focus from the Virgin to Jesus (Crăciun 2004, 61-96, especially p. 77-79, 93-95).

Thus, not only were the episodes of the Last Supper and the Baptism of Jesus rarely represented in medieval context, they were also never associated within the programme of the same altarpiece in the manner seen in the artefact from the church at Dobârca.

This difference and, dare one suggest, the novelty of the programme conceived for the altarpiece at Dobârca is further emphasised by the compositions present on the interior of the wings. The images representing 'Moses Receiving the Tables of the Law' (Fig. 4) and the 'Descent of the Holy Spirit' (Fig. 5) are rather small, while most of the surface of the panel is covered by inscriptions. The latter are in fact two quotations from the New Testament which refer to the sacrament: "Dominus Iesus in qua nocte tradebatur accepit panem et gratias agens fregit et dixit: accipite et manducate. Hoc est corpus meum, quod pro vobis tratur hoc facite in meam commemorationem" and "similiter et calicem postquam coenavit dicens: hic calix novum testamentum est in meo sanguine hoc facite ovotiescunque biberitis in meam commemorationem" (Roth 1916, 185).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Interestingly enough this text benefits from two scriptural references: "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." I Cor. 11: 23-25 and "And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." Luke 22: 19-20.

Moreover, the two images are also explained by inscriptions introduced in the compositional field itself: "Lex per Mosem data est" and "Gratia et veritas per Jesum Cristum facta est (Joh 1)".<sup>2</sup>

Besides these two inscriptions meant to identify the two compositions, both images are explained by a text which begins on the panel depicting the 'Descent of the Holy Spirit' and ends on the one showing Moses: "Spiritus vivificat II Cor III" and "Litera occidit", which marks the difference between the ethos of the Law and that of the Gospel.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, on the Tables of the Law held by Moses, one is able to read the first three of the Ten Commandments, selected and arranged in the manner suggested by St Augustine, which was consistently used during the Middle Ages and preferred by Martin Luther in his catechisms: "non habebis deos alienos coram me", "non assumens nomen deitu in vanum" and "memento ut dies sabbat" (Veldman 1995, 215-239, especially p. 216-217) (Fig. 6).

The predella is primarily dedicated to an Old Testament quotation: "Vivo ego et nolo mortem peccaturis sed ut convertatur et vivat, dicit Dominus" from Ezekiel 33:11 (Roth 1916, 185)<sup>4</sup> (Fig. 7), while the second inscription alludes to the donor of the artefact: "Ad exornandum hoc altare contulit amplissimus dominus Georgius Stenzel huius temporis sedis iudex sabsiensis fl. 15 grata redemptoris pandens hortamina latus" (Roth 1916, 186). Finally, the central panel depicting the Last Supper is also decorated with a text. Unfortunately, at this time this is barely discernible and thus impossible to read (Fig. 2).

If one looks at the closed position of the altarpiece, the so-called *Werktagseite*, one notices that the pictorial programme is one that was frequently used during the medieval period (Fig. 8).<sup>5</sup> Thus,

<sup>2</sup> "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John 1: 17.

<sup>3</sup> The complete quotation reads "He has given us competence to be ministers of the new covenant, a covenant which is not of written letters; for the written letters kill, but the Spirit gives life." II Cor.: 3.6.

<sup>4</sup> "Say unto them: 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezekiel 33: 11.

<sup>5</sup> During the Middle Ages, several Transylvanian altarpieces were decorated with a pictorial narrative of the Passion, visible when the artefact was closed. This was the case at Mediaş, Dupuş, Cund, Sibiu, Roadeş, Fişer, Şoroştin, Şmig and Beia. For a discussion of the structure, meaning and function of Transylvanian

the exterior of the moveable wings and the fixed wings, only one of which was preserved, were entirely dedicated to the Passion. The upper half of the extant fixed wing represents the 'Arrest of Christ', commented by a quotation from Psalm XXII: 16 "circumdederunt me canes multi; cogregatio malignantium possedit me"<sup>6</sup>, while the lower half shows the 'Flagellation' with the inscription "Corpus meum deum percutientibus et genas meas vellentibus Esa L: 6".<sup>7</sup> The exterior of the moveable wings represents the 'Coronation with Thorns', with two quotations in the compositional field: "Ave Iudeorum Rex" and "Omnes videntes me substantenerunt me. Aperuerunt super me os suum Psalm XXII: 7"<sup>8</sup>. This episode is contiguous with the 'Crucifixion' commented on by "Eli Eli Lamma Sabachtani" and "Factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad Mortem, Mortem autem crucis Phil I".<sup>9</sup> The other wing is divided between the 'Deposition into the Grave' commented by "Ero mors tua o Mors morsus tuus inferne Osea XIII"<sup>10</sup> and an

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medieval Passion narratives, see Crăciun (2010, 11-70, especially p. 20-31).

<sup>6</sup> "Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet." Psalm XXII: 16. The complete text in Latin should read: "Quoniam circumdederunt me canes multi; concilium malignantium obsedit me. Foderunt manus meas et pedes meos, dinumeraverunt omnia ossa mea. Ipsi vero consideraverunt et inspexerunt me."

<sup>7</sup> "I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting." Isaiah 50: 6. The complete Latin text should read: "Corpus meum dedi percutientibus, et genas meas vellentibus; faciem meam non averti ab increpantibus et conspuentibus in me."

<sup>8</sup> "All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads." Psalm XXII: 7. The complete Latin text reads: "Omnes videntes me deriserunt me; locuti sunt labiis, et moverunt caput." and "Aperuerunt super me os suum, sicut leo rapiens et rugiens." The text is thus a conflation of verses 7 and 13.

<sup>9</sup> "And being found in human form he humbled himself unto death, even death on a cross." Phil I: 8. The Latin text reads: "Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis."

<sup>10</sup> The complete quotation would be "de manu mortis liberabo eos de morte redimam eos ero mors tua o mors ero morsus tuus inferne consolatio abscondita est ab oculis meis" (I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes) Hosea XIII: 14. There is a second and apparently longer inscription on

extremely faded composition, which may have been the Resurrection.<sup>11</sup> This is suggested by the shadowy outline of a figure with a crown-shaped halo, barely discernible in the centre of the composition. The panel also bore an inscription which is now illegible.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, the altarpiece from Dobârca is striking, first of all because of the unusual, perhaps even innovative pictorial programme of the *Festtagsseite* and the much more traditional one of the *Werktagsseite*. The altarpiece is also unusual in its use of abundant quotations, mostly scriptural texts which seem to complement and, sometimes to overshadow the images. In fact, another striking feature of this altarpiece is the ingenious way that images were used in conjunction with texts. This last feature is however in stark contrast with the awkwardness of style and the conventional way that most episodes are represented.

Taking this description into account, the first question that springs to mind is whether this altarpiece was similar to others that were produced in Transylvania in the early modern period and whether it belonged to a specific type. Secondly, the question that comes to the fore is whether preference for a specific type of altarpiece responded to or simply reflected the needs of the commissioners and/or the congregations. Finally, one is bound to wonder whether preference for a specific type of altarpiece coincided with a stage in the development of the reforming process.

In response to these questions, this study aims to determine the type or category of altarpiece that the artefact from Dobârca belongs to. To put it another way, this study wishes to define the altarpiece of Dobârca as a type, both formally and functionally.

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the side of the sarcophagus, but this is impossible to read.

<sup>11</sup> Roth (1916, 185) mentions the 'Arrest', the 'Flagellation', the 'Coronation with Thorns', the 'Crucifixion', the 'Lamentation' and the 'Three Women at the Grave'. One of the fixed wings, according to him the left one, was already missing when Roth had seen the altarpiece. The last composition mentioned by Roth may well have been the Resurrection, as the 'Three Women at the Grave' is generally a secondary subject in a composition showing the 'Resurrection'.

<sup>12</sup> One can make out the beginning of the word Absorpt.

In this particular endeavour, form is understood to refer both to the structure or architecture of the altarpiece in question, which is in fact the work of the joiner, and the pictorial programme devised for the artefact by its commissioner(s), probably in co-operation with the artist. In this sense, the analysis of this altarpiece brings to the fore the issue of the newly-developed pictorial programme, specific to the Lutheran context.

This pictorial programme was meant to convey specific messages, adapted to the confessional culture, encouraging one to think about the way that meaning was articulated. This implicitly involves looking at the altarpiece as a specific medium of communication, but also taking into account the mechanisms deployed, such as the relation between image and word.

Function, on the other hand is understood in terms of roles played by the altarpiece, both within ecclesiastical space and the religious and/or cultural experience of the congregation. By defining the polyptych of Dobârca in terms of function, the study aims to assess whether the traditional roles of the altarpiece were still present or whether the didactic dimension eliminated all other possible ways to interact with the artefact. Pursuing this particular line of investigation, one ultimately aims to determine whether the value of the altarpiece lay in its potential as a didactic tool.

Thus, by analysing the architecture of the altarpiece and its pictorial programme, this study wishes to attribute the altarpiece from Dobârca to a specific category of artefacts, to decipher its message and to determine its functions. This would focus attention on both the production and the reception of the artefact, on intended meaning as well as appropriated ideas and, ultimately, on the means of communication, whether visual or textual, deployed in the dissemination of confessional messages.

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Starting from the question whether the altarpiece from Dobârca fits easily into a specific category, one is tempted to compare it with artefacts produced during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Medieval altarpieces from Transylvania were either *Schnitzaltäre* of the *Vierer* type or retables with painted panels.<sup>13</sup> The features that they had in common were the sets of fixed and moveable wings, the predella and the

superstructure. The moveable wings were meant to close over the central area of the altarpiece, thus providing the space for two distinct and alternative pictorial programmes. The difference was that the *Schnitzaltäre* had a shrine, generally surrounded by niches, which all housed statues (Fig. 9), while painted altarpieces had a large central panel, sometimes flanked by smaller intermediate ones (Fig. 10). In terms of their common denominator, one should call these medieval altarpieces polyptychs with moveable wings. These types of artefacts were a specific feature of the north, popular in the German territories and the Netherlands. Some of these artefacts had three-dimensional images in the shrine and carved reliefs on the interior of the wings, while others were entirely made of painted panels.<sup>14</sup>

At first glance, it seems obvious that the altarpiece from Dobârca formally belongs to this traditional type, although it has a central painted panel rather than a shrine with a three-dimensional figure. Given the date of its production (1629), this is rather unusual, particularly in Lutheran context, as it has been noted in the literature that this type of artefact went out of fashion around 1584 (Koerner 2004, 214). This conclusion does not ring true for the Transylvanian case, since the polyptych of Dobârca appears to formally belong to a series of altarpieces produced in the second half of the sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth century, which also had a set of moveable and a set of fixed wings flanking the central area of the artefact and were able to present alternative pictorial programmes. This group comprises the altarpiece of Agnita (Agnetheln, Szentágota), produced in 1650 (Fig. 11 and 12), the one from Meşendorf (Meschendorf, Mese), installed in 1653 (Fig. 13), the one from Cincşor (Kleinschenk, Kissink) (Fig. 14) commissioned in 1655 and the one from Veseud (Zied, Vesszöd) dated to 1703.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> For the structure of northern altarpieces, see Baxandall (1980); Woods (1990, 76-90); Harbison (1990, 49-75); Decker (1990, 90-105).

<sup>15</sup> The first documented example is the altarpiece of Şeica Mică (1565), which had already lost its central panel and superstructure by the time Victor Roth saw it. This artefact apparently had its wings decorated with scenes from the Passion, visible in both its closed and open position. This would justify its inclusion in this group of artefacts. For a description of this altarpiece, see Roth (1916, 186-187). Fabini (1998, 382) mentions the artefact on the south wall of the chancel in the

<sup>13</sup> They have been catalogued by Sarkadi Nagy (2012, 120-258), who lists 94 artefacts and Firea (2010b), who discusses 59 examples.

Thus, based on the structure of the artefacts, one is led to conclude that the altarpieces produced in Transylvania in Protestant context formally continued the medieval tradition until the beginning of the eighteenth century, although, in all surviving examples, the shrine and the surrounding niches have disappeared and been replaced with painted panels.<sup>16</sup> This, in itself is not entirely original, as altarpieces with painted central panels and wings were also produced in the late medieval period.<sup>17</sup> One is thus led to speculate that the originality of the altarpiece of Dobârca and, in fact, the distinctiveness of several seventeenth-century Transylvanian retables is conferred, not so much by their architecture as by their pictorial programme. This conclusion is further strengthened by a comparison with pictorial programmes devised during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Medieval pictorial programmes for Transylvanian altarpieces mostly acted as labels. In that sense, they served to identify the dedication of both high and secondary altars placed within the parish church. In the first instance, the most popular dedicatee was the Virgin, followed by a plethora of saints; in the second instance, dedications were shared between saints and particular mysteries.<sup>18</sup> As they were mainly intended to decorate parish churches, the *Festtagsseite* of these altarpieces reflected the structure of the liturgical calendar and included episodes related to major Christological or Marian feast days, while the *Werktagsseite* displayed either a gallery of saints or the narrative of the Passion.<sup>19</sup>

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church at Şeica Mică and enumerates the same episodes as Roth had mentioned.

<sup>16</sup> The last (surviving) example is the altarpiece from Veseud, now in the church at Cîsnădie, produced in 1703.

<sup>17</sup> Two relevant examples are the altarpieces from Mălâncrav and Sighişoara.

<sup>18</sup> For example, Mălâncrav, Biertan, Băgaciu, Sebeş and Şmig illustrate the dedication to the Virgin while Beia, Bruuiu, Cund, Hălchiu, Roadeş, Fişer and Sighişoara illustrate the dedication to a saint. In the case of secondary altars, the altarpiece from Moşna and the pala considered to come from Şaeş illustrate the dedication to saints, while the altarpiece from Dupuş gives visual expression to Eucharistic theology and probably decorated an altar dedicated to the Body or Blood of Christ. For the latter demonstration, see Crăciun (2002-2003, 139-158).

<sup>19</sup> Biertan, Sebeş and Mălâncrav illustrate Marian feasts while Şmig, Băgaciu and Şoroştin present

By contrast, early modern altarpieces tended to completely eliminate saints and thus entire pictorial programmes were dedicated to the life of Christ, particularly his Passion. This is persuasively illustrated by several seventeenth-century altarpieces, such as Agnita, Meşendorf and Cîncşor where all available surfaces were decorated with an extended narrative of the Passion.<sup>20</sup> Thus, Transylvanian early modern altarpieces seem to have had distinctive and narrowly focused pictorial programmes, although an interest in the Passion might reflect a preference for rather traditional subject matter. If seen from the perspective of their decoration, these artefacts would qualify as figurative altarpieces, while an attempt to define their type in terms of the manner of representation or subject matter, would dub them narrative retables. However, the particular object of this investigation, the altarpiece of Dobârca does not entirely fit into this group, as it only dedicates its *Werktagsseite* to the Passion.

The common features of these seventeenth-century altarpieces are not restricted to their preference for the versatile polyptych format, accommodating as it was to visual narratives, or to the interest in the Passion, but also extended to the manner of representation, the abundance of text in conjunction with the image. The altarpiece of Dobârca is an excellent example from this perspective, as it is particularly striking

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predominantly christological episodes. The gallery of saints on the other hand is present at Proştea Mare, Jidvei, Băgaciu and Bruuiu. For Passion narratives, see footnote 5.

<sup>20</sup> Of the three seventeenth-century altarpieces, only the one from Agnita still exists, apparently unscathed, *in situ* in the local parish church. The altarpiece of Meşendorf, although still present in the parish church, has been significantly modified. Victor Roth has still seen it when the interior of its wings was decorated with Passion scenes (Roth 1916, 191). However, in 1923, the interior of the moveable wings was painted by Hans Hermann with portraits of the evangelists, which can still be seen today. Finally, the altarpiece from Cîncşor was mentioned by Victor Roth as being part of the collection of the Brukenthal Museum. This is no longer true, as at present, the artefact is in the collection of the Museum of Făgăraş. Roth mentions that this altarpiece was decorated with a Crucifixion in the central panel, the Last Supper on the predella and a narrative of the Passion on the wings (Roth 1916, 189-191, plate LXXXVI). I am indebted to Heidrun König for locating the altarpiece of Cîncşor.

through its integrative use of images and texts. The important place afforded to texts in the decoration of this altarpiece, particularly the prominent display of the Words of Institution on the two wings, suggests that, in this particular case, the Image played second fiddle to the Word and seems to reflect the intention to create a different type of artefact. This warrants a closer look at specific types of altarpieces that were created in the Lutheran world, that is, in a new confessional culture.

Discussed in the literature dedicated to the decoration of Lutheran churches, the text-retable, sometimes also referred to as the catechism-retable, is one new category, which has not been defined with any precision. While Dietrich Diederichs-Gottschalk discusses altarpieces that were completely covered in texts, Joseph Leo Koerner also includes examples that combine inscriptions with images.<sup>21</sup> On the one hand, Koerner mentioned the Crucifix, projected against a bare background and surrounded by biblical quotations, calling it the most common type of image produced in Lutheran environment. He is however fully aware that such compositions were generally popular in funerary context, especially for the decoration of epitaphs.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, Koerner mentions two altarpieces that combine images with texts, both produced in 1537 and placed respectively in the parish church of St George and the Hospital Church at Dinkelsbühl (Koerner 2004, 289).<sup>23</sup> Because in all these cases the place of text is most prominent, these artefacts could be rightly called text-retables, but the term

catechism-retable was also coined to best express the content of the inscriptions, namely the fact that these altarpieces often displayed the Words of Institution, the Creed, the Decalogue and, sometimes the Lord's Prayer.<sup>24</sup>

Although Koerner believed that the text-retable had become a staple in Lutheran churches (Koerner 2004, 291),<sup>25</sup> in actual fact it does not seem to have been particularly widespread, as a type, within the Lutheran world. The most numerous examples come from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, north-western Germany and Estonia (Koerner 2004, 300; Ekroll 2012, 277-310, especially p. 292, 299; Kodres 2012, 333-376, especially p. 361).<sup>26</sup>

The particularities of this type of artefact, especially the predominance of the word make one wonder whether the polyptych from Dobârca could be included in the category of text-retables. At first glance, the importance afforded to texts and the way that words were used in conjunction with the images seems to suggest that it could. The relation between image and text on the *Festtagsseite* of the altarpiece, particularly the prominence of the quotations on the surface of the panels and the much smaller size of the images, would lead one to conclude that the artefact had been conceived as a text-retable. In this sense, one must emphasise the distinctiveness of these quotations even when compared with the inscriptions on the *Werktagsseite* of the altarpiece. The latter, although present, are much less prominent and, at least in terms of style and placement on the surface of the artefact, resemble captions. Consequently, only the pictorial programme of the *Festtagsseite* of the altarpiece of Dobârca suggests that this artefact may have been conceived as a text-retable.

If one is tempted to tentatively conclude that the altarpiece of Dobârca belongs to the category of text-retables, one must also see whether the production of this altarpiece was a unique

<sup>21</sup> For a comprehensive survey of text-retables in the German lands, see Diederichs-Gottschalk (2005); Belting (2002, 11-32, especially p. 22) calls such artefacts "Antibild" and "Nichtbild", ultimately contesting their value as images; Koerner (2004, 289-303) tends to call them text-retables, text-altarpieces, text panels or catechism-retables suggesting that the two categories are interchangeable.

<sup>22</sup> Koerner (2004, 222-223) provides a relevant example, a painting, oil on canvas, produced by Lucas Cranach the Younger in 1571, a picture that is now part of the *Lutherhaus Wittenberg* collection. For further examples, see Harasimowicz (1991, 135-164); Harasimowicz (1998, 262-281).

<sup>23</sup> Diederichs-Gottschalk (2005, 21-23) ultimately considers this artefact the result of "late iconoclasm" and thus denies its nature as a text-retable, or as an "Antibild" or "Schriftikone", in Belting's definition; Belting (1994, 467) considers it one of the first altarpieces commissioned in the new doctrinal context and notes that the text is displayed in the place formerly occupied by images.

<sup>24</sup> Koerner (2004, 300) mentions the altarpiece from Ballerup in Denmark as one of its panels (the one with the Ten Commandments) has survived. Many such altarpieces have disappeared during Christian IV's campaign against Calvinism. Koerner further suggests that, "in spite of this iconoclasm of iconoclasm", several catechism altarpieces have survived in villages throughout Denmark, Norway and southern Sweden.

<sup>25</sup> Belting (1994, 467) also considers that such text-bearing altars must have been quite common.

<sup>26</sup> Diederichs-Gottschalk (2005) *passim* deals with examples from Ostfriesland and Harlingerland.

occurrence or part of a more general trend. In this sense, one must ascertain whether other similar altarpieces were produced in Transylvania at this time.

A striking example is the altarpiece from Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Nagyszeben) dated by inscription to 1519, which may have initially decorated the altar of the Holy Cross placed in the transept of the parish church. This altarpiece has undergone important transformations, first of all, in 1545, when Benedictus Moler was hired to renovate it and, later, in 1701, when Jeremias Stranovius was requested to repaint it.<sup>27</sup> During this process, the images representing saints from the central panel of the altarpiece have been covered with blue paint and decorated with quotations from the Old and New Testaments (Isaiah 53: 11 – “Justus servus meus cognicione sui iustificabit multos. Ipse peccatum multorum tulit et pro iniquis rogavit” and Matthew 11: 28-29 – “Venite ad me omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis et ego refocillabo vos et invenientis requiem animabus vestris”).<sup>28</sup> Following this intervention, only the Crucifixion remained visible, with the hands of the Magdalene embracing the cross as the sole witness from a much more complex composition (Fig. 15).

Another detail becomes interesting from the perspective of the changes undergone by the altarpiece of Sibiu in 1545. The restoration undertaken in the workshop of Gisela Richter in the 1980s has preserved the repainting of 1701 on the interior of the wings, although it has removed the most recent layer of paint from the central panel of the altarpiece, bringing to the surface the

medieval layer together with the intervention from 1545.<sup>29</sup> The decision to proceed in this manner has been prompted by the attempts to clean small portions of the panel's surface, an action which allowed one to glimpse the inscriptions that seem to have covered the interior of the wings, which were probably contemporary with those on the central panel of the altarpiece (Sarkadi Nagy 2012, 229) (Fig. 16).<sup>30</sup> Fortunately, Gisela Richter has identified and copied some of these inscriptions. On the right wing of the altarpiece, the Ten Commandments from Exodus: 20 were inscribed. The reconstruction proposed by Ferenc Mihály suggests that the first three were written on the upper panel, while the last seven were inscribed on the lower panel (Mihály 2014, 89, fig. 23) (Fig. 17). On the left wing of the altarpiece, there were some texts from the New Testament, more precisely from Paul's epistle to the Galatians, chapter three on the upper panel (verses 13 and 14) and chapter four (verses 4 and 5) on the lower panel.<sup>31</sup> Finally, Victor Roth mentioned an inscription from the predella: “Hic est panis qui de coelo descendit. Qui manducat hunc panem, vivet in aeternum. Ecce panis Angelorum factus cibus viatorum. Vere panis Filiorum non mittendus canibus”, which represents a combination of John 6: 59 and a liturgical hymn dedicated to the Eucharist from the office composed by Thomas Aquinas.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Richter (1992, 224) is the only one who believes that the medieval painting dates to 1480. In her opinion this layer of painting was removed with mechanical and chemical means.

<sup>30</sup> On the basis of Gisela Richter's restoration report, Sarkadi Nagy states that the removal of the painting from the wings of the altarpiece had been forbidden by the authorities when the partial cleansing showed that the wings had also been covered in inscriptions. The coats of arms on the predella and the inscriptions on the central panel dating from 1545 were brought to the surface on this occasion.

<sup>31</sup> “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us – for it is written,” “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree” – in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Galatians. 3: 13-14. “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” Gal. 4: 4-5. Reproduced apud Mihály (2014, 80).

<sup>32</sup> “This is the bread that comes down from Heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. Behold the

<sup>27</sup> The renovation carried out by Benedictus Moler has been suggested by Firea (201b, 306-307), on the basis of the initials present on the artefact itself, contextualised with the help of a document published by Roman (2007, 254). The painting from 1701 is mentioned by Roth (2016, 155). He alludes to the repainting of the altarpiece in 1701 at the expense of Thomas Schemel, a rich merchant from Sibiu. Mihály (2014, 75-94, especially p. 90, fig. 25) has published this inscription.

<sup>28</sup> “After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.” Isaiah 53: 11 and “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” Matthew 11: 28-29.

The presence of inscriptions, surrounding the Crucifixion, which was preserved on the central panel, recalls the already mentioned example produced in 1571 by Lucas Cranach the Younger and suggests that the intervention may be read as an attempt to transform the altarpiece from Sibiu into a text-retable (König, Rudolf 2017, 23-27).<sup>33</sup> In this case, a minimalist Crucifixion was framed by quotations from the Bible, exactly as in the examples discussed by Koerner (Koerner 2004, 222, fig. 103). The only difference is that the altarpiece from Sibiu was not newly-produced but rather transformed in order to turn it into a text-retable. This process of adaptation makes sense if one considers the suggestion that the inclusion of inscriptions helped render an altarpiece more Protestant by affording a more important place to the word.<sup>34</sup> In the Transylvanian case, a look at the existing medieval altarpieces, especially at those that had been refashioned in the second half of the sixteenth century, with the intention of adapting them to the new Protestant environment, suggests that the inclusion of inscriptions in the compositional field and, implicitly in the pictorial programme of the altarpiece, was part of this transformation and perhaps part of the attempt to turn these artefacts into text-retables (Crăciun 2016, 119-123).

Other Transylvanian examples, such as Biertan, Mediaş and Hălchiu (Heldsdorf, Höltdövény) suggest that the adaptation withstood by the altarpiece of Sibiu was not unique. In all these cases, a wish to compensate for the absence of statues, which had probably been removed from the shrines during the first decades of the Reformation, by the introduction of inscriptions, seems obvious.<sup>35</sup> Archival photographs published

by Victor Roth and, later by Harald Krasser testify that, at both Biertan and Mediaş, inscriptions were placed in the shrine exactly in the space formerly occupied by a statue or high-relief carving.

In the case of the polyptych from Hălchiu, inscriptions are also visible in the niches specific to the *Viereraltar*, which may have been placed there when the latter were empty, following the loss of statuary and before new three-dimensional images were installed in the seventeenth century (Fig. 18). Unfortunately, the inscriptions in the niches are impossible to read as they are both faded and placed behind the statues.<sup>36</sup> Although less dramatic than the adaptation of the polyptych from Sibiu, the transformation of the artefacts from Biertan, Mediaş and Hălchiu also highlights the intention to turn these altarpieces into text-retables. Finally, the attempt to transform medieval artefacts into text-retables is further suggested by the research undertaken by Ferenc Mihály during restoration, which has highlighted the presence of inscriptions – today illegible – under the layer of painting at both Şaeş (Schaas, Segesd) and Roadeş (Mihály 2007, 49-74, especially p. 53, 63-64).

Despite the apparent slimness of this file, the inclusion of inscriptions suggests, on the one hand, that medieval *Schnitzaltäre*, which have survived in Lutheran churches, did not function with an empty shrine. This is persuasively argued by the examples of Biertan, Mediaş and Hălchiu where an inscription has been placed in the vacuum created by the removal of statuary. On the other hand, it suggests that there was a conscious attempt to transform these artefacts into text-retables. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that medieval altarpieces with a painted central panel and wings were similarly decorated with biblical quotations, as convincingly demonstrated by the altarpiece from Sibiu. These converging developments essentially highlight the tendency, which seems to have prevailed at the beginning of the Reformation, to turn surviving medieval altarpieces into text-retables.

It remains however to be seen if such text-retables were created in the new confessional context, not only by adapting medieval altarpieces, but also

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bread of angels that becomes the food of voyagers. Truly the bread of the sons should not be fed to the dogs." Reproduced apud Roth (1916, 157). Roth does not mention the date of the inscription but his text suggests that this may have been contemporary with the intervention from 1701.

<sup>33</sup> This transformation has already been discussed in Crăciun (2016, 120-121). For the meaning of the texts, see Pitters (2016, 177-194).

<sup>34</sup> For a discussion of the role of inscriptions, see Michalski (1996, 34-47).

<sup>35</sup> The removal of statues from the shrines of altarpieces is not just suggested by the empty shrine of several artefacts, but also by *hic fuit* inscriptions which appeared in the shrines during the second half of the sixteenth century, for example at Jidvei in 1584 (Sarkadi Nagy 2012, 271, footnote 414). The removal of statuary from Hălchiu is discussed by Wetter (2006,

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109–126, especially p. 121). For the incidents associated with the troops of Michael the Brave, see *Quellen Brassó* (1903, p. 54).

<sup>36</sup> Wetter (2006, 124) suggests that these inscriptions underline the role of the evangelists as witnesses to Christ's life.



following specific commissions. A tentative answer is provided by the example of the altarpiece that stands to this day on the high altar of the parish church at Țapu (Abtsdorf, Csicsóholdvilág). Dated to 1712, this altarpiece may well have been initially conceived as a text-retable. Hermann Fabini, who has seen the artefact at the time when he was preparing the publication of his catalogue dedicated to fortified churches, has described its pictorial programme (which included the Crucifixion on the central panel, the Last Supper on the predella and the figures of the four evangelists, as well as Moses with the Ten Commandments and an angel holding a cross, on the wings) and included a photograph of the altarpiece in the second volume of the work (Fabini 1998, vol. I, 4; vol. II, 2, figure 2g).<sup>37</sup> Unfortunately, the altarpiece no longer preserves the aspect shown in this photograph because all the images have disappeared (Fig. 19).

The surface where the Crucifixion used to be is now covered with a quotation from John 3: 14-15 and a paraphrase after John 3: 16.<sup>38</sup> Written in Gothic script, this text is not dated. On the other hand, the text on the predella, a quotation from Paul's epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 11: 28-29) is dated to 1699 (Fig. 20).<sup>39</sup> Although one is not aware of the circumstances or timing for the removal of the images photographed by Hermann Fabini, the fact that the uncovered surfaces display inscriptions suggests that this altarpiece may have been initially conceived as a text-retable. Although the quotation on the central panel is not dated, the particularities of the writing suggest that the two texts were contemporary. It would be consequently tempting to surmise that a text-retable had been produced in 1699 for the church at Țapu, an altarpiece that was later, hypothetically in 1712, transformed by repainting.

<sup>37</sup> Unfortunately, the size of the photo does not allow the identification of the episodes.

<sup>38</sup> "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him." John 3: 14-15. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3: 16.

<sup>39</sup> "But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly." 1 Cor. 11: 28-29.

Thus, if one accepts that the altarpiece from Țapu was initially a text-retable, one could reach the conclusion that the popularity of this type of artefact lasted to the end of the seventeenth century.

However, beginning with the middle of the seventeenth century, another type of artefact seems to have been increasingly favoured by commissioners and, perhaps artists: the altarpiece with extensive narrative decoration, as suggested by the examples of Agnita, Meșendorf and Cincșor. Although texts are also present in these cases, they are not an integral part of the compositions but rather captions, meant to aid in the decoding of the meaning of these images. In fact, the inscriptions seem to reference the image, or comment on it, signposting a shift in its function that will need to be further explored.

The evidence provided by both refashioned altarpieces, such as the one from Sibiu and newly-produced ones, such as the one from Țapu, provides some context for the production of the altarpiece from Dobârca and prompts its tentative inclusion into a new category of artefacts. Thus, if one takes only the *Festagsseite* into account, the altarpiece of Dobârca seems to fit, however uneasily into the category of the text-retable. This conclusion is somewhat encumbered by the situation of its closed position, which displays a narrative sequence of the Passion. This figurative decoration highlights similarities with both medieval altarpieces and with the artefacts produced in Lutheran context, beginning with the middle of the seventeenth century.

Ultimately, this analysis seems to suggest that the altarpiece of Dobârca is difficult to fit into a specific category. One appears to be dealing with a hybrid artefact, a transitional piece, hovering between two different types, the text-retable, which seems to have been favoured beginning with the second half of the sixteenth century, as suggested by the example of Sibiu in its 1545 form, and the narrative altarpiece, which gained popularity during the second half of the seventeenth century, as persuasively demonstrated by the examples of Agnita, Meșendorf and Cincșor. One may tentatively speculate that text-reatables were preferred at the beginning of the Reformation in Transylvania and that these particular artefacts eventually fell out of favour during the second half of the seventeenth century. Within this broader picture, the altarpiece from

Dobârca may have been the product of an intermediate phase in the development from the text-retable to a type that easily accommodated grand visual narratives. This development also represented a shift from the hegemonic role of the text to a predominantly figurative decoration. And again, within the broader framework, the altarpiece of Dobârca, with its alternative pictorial programmes, visible in open and closed position, may well have given visual expression to this change in preference.

The definition of the altarpiece of Dobârca as an intermediate type gains further strength from the comparison with altarpieces produced in Transylvania during the second half of the sixteenth century, on the one hand, and with artefacts commissioned beginning with the middle of the seventeenth century, on the other. The result of the comparison suggests that, while the altarpiece of Sibiu was refashioned in 1545 as a text-retable and, while the altarpieces of Agnita, Meşendorf and Cincşor definitely qualify as artefacts with figurative decoration and were probably produced as such, the piece from Dobârca remains in a category of its own.

Fortunately, however bereft of Transylvanian analogies, the altarpiece from Dobârca does not stand alone in broader European context. Its closest analogy is the altarpiece of Kikelkonna in Estonia, produced in 1591, which was similarly decorated with the Last Supper on the central panel, while the wings bore the Words of Institution taken from Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 11: 23-25) (Kodres 2012, 361). However, this isolated region was not likely to have been the birth place of this type of programme. This tentative conclusion prompts one to look further afield for analogies for this particular artefact.

If one looks more closely at the German lands, one finds that the polyptych from Dobârca is also similar to the reconstruction proposed by Joseph Leo Koerner for the altarpiece which used to decorate the hospital church in Dinkelsbühl. In this particular case, the fragment that has actually survived in the church is the predella, with a central panel decorated with the Words of Institution, while the wings were inscribed with the Ten Commandments, symmetrically arranged (five on one wing and the other five on the other).<sup>40</sup> Koerner has the merit of realising that

the panel, representing the Last Supper, found by Herbert Reber in the collection of the same church was part of the same altarpiece. Based on material evidence, he persuasively argued that this painted panel had been originally attached to the predella found in the church (Koerner 2004, 290-292).<sup>41</sup> Moreover, descriptions in written sources have further suggested that, also in 1537, the parish church of St George from Dinkelsbühl was decorated with a similar altarpiece comprising a panel with the Last Supper and a predella with the Words of Institution (Koerner 2004, 289). These analogies place the polyptych from Dobârca in a category of altarpieces that combine images with texts, apparently bestowing on them equal value. It is equally significant that these images and texts happened to include a representation of the Last Supper and the Words of Institution. Thus, the analogy is not limited to the equal use of image and text but can be extended to the subject matter of the altarpiece and hence to its message.

Consequently, the presence of a visual and textual exposition concerning the sacrament of the Eucharist makes one wonder whether this type of artefact should not be included in the category of catechism-retables. As has been noted earlier in this study, the catechism-retable has two distinguishing features. Unlike the text-retable, it also displayed figurative decoration, while the texts included in its pictorial programme mirrored the contents and/or structure of the Lutheran catechisms, comprising the Creed, the Decalogue, the Words of Institution and, occasionally, the Lord's Prayer.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the presence of the Words of Institution on the wings of the altarpiece from Dobârca would fulfill at least one of the criteria that define the catechism-retable. The presence of the Last Supper on the central panel is equally suggestive, as this was a subject recommended by Martin Luther for the decoration of the altar, precisely because it alluded to the ritual enacted

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describes the example from the Hospital church at Dinkelsbühl but believes that the predella present in the church represented the entire artefact.

<sup>41</sup> Diederichs-Gottschalk (2005, 22-23) considers that it is difficult to determine whether the artefact present in the church is a predella or an altarpiece. He does however mention the panel with the Last Supper, allegedly discovered in 1995 and dated to 1550.

<sup>42</sup> Not all these texts needed to be present on the same altarpiece. For instance Diederichs-Gottschalk (2005, 43) mentions an altarpiece from Norden which displays the Decalogue on the exterior of the wings and the Words of Institution on the interior of the wings.

<sup>40</sup> Its current presentation has led some scholars to conclude that this is a text-retable completely devoid of images (Belting 1994, 467). Noble (2009, 110) briefly

there and recalled the historical institution of the sacrament (*Luther's Works*, vol. 13, p. 375).<sup>43</sup>

Besides helping one to more firmly include the altarpiece from Dobârca into the category of catechism-retables, this association between image and text inevitably draws attention to the messages it transmitted to the congregation and ultimately to the function of the altarpiece.

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The selection of episodes on the *Festtagsseite* of the altarpiece of Dobârca, the Last Supper and the Baptism of Christ, strongly argue, both for the originality of its pictorial programme and the importance of the doctrinal messages conveyed with the help of both text and image. For instance, the presence of the Last Supper on the central panel has the role of visualising the link between the communion ritual and its prototype, affirming the apostolic character of the church in which the altarpiece was placed (Koerner 2004, 291). This message is further underlined by the presence of the two biblical quotations that explicitly allude to this connection between the historical moment and its consistent reiteration during the divine service. Benefiting from biblical references that explicitly mention memory (Luke 22: 19-20 and 1 Cor 11: 23-25), the two quotations also resemble the explanations concerning the Eucharist from Luther's *Small Catechism* (Wandel 2006, 115).<sup>44</sup> It is perhaps worth mentioning that the reference to the canonical Gospels is supplemented by the allusion to Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, a text frequently invoked by reformers in support of their doctrinal tenets during their theological debates concerning the sacrament of the Eucharist.<sup>45</sup>

The representation of the Baptism of Christ in the superstructure is accompanied by the reference to Matthew 3, although unfortunately the text itself is no longer visible (see figure 3). However, the composition of this episode, with God the Father blessing from a garland of clouds and with the dove of the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus, allows one to surmise that the chosen text was Matthew 3: 17, which refers to the divine mission that Christ was invested with, but also to the divine grace that was benevolently bestowed on mankind.<sup>46</sup>

Equally interesting from the perspective of an iconographic analysis is the association of the two compositions, the Last Supper on the central panel and the Baptism of Christ in the superstructure, especially if one takes into account the new doctrinal and liturgical circumstances (Fig. 21). The association of the two episodes in the new confessional context is a direct allusion to the two sacraments maintained by the Lutheran Church, the Eucharist and Baptism. This association of the Last Supper with the Baptism of Christ is not frequent in the Lutheran world, but it does appear on one of the seminal altarpieces created in this context, the one that decorated the high altar in the church at Wittenberg, produced by the Cranach workshop in 1547 and installed in the ecclesiastical space at a sensitive time, one year after Martin Luther's death. (Koerner 2004, 75-76; Noble 2009, 104)<sup>47</sup> Because it included portraits of the reformers, such as Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon and Johannes Bugenhagen, Christensen considered this altarpiece a memorial to the Reformation but also a depiction of the

<sup>43</sup> *Luthers Werke* (1888, 415) refers to instructions given by Luther in 1530. The adequacy of this subject for the decoration of an altar also occurs in Luther's comment on Psalm 111.

<sup>44</sup> Lee Palmer Wandel, who mentions this text, focuses on its meaning as testament and promise, the essential connection between communion and forgiveness of sin.

<sup>45</sup> For example, Matthias Hebler quoted Paul 1. Cor. 10 in *Brevis confessio de coena domini ecclesiarum Saxonicarum et conjunctarum in Transsilvania*, 1561 (Teutsch 1883, 41, 45). Paul 1 Cor. 10 is also quoted in the *Formula pii consensus inter pastores* (Teutsch 1883, 160), in reference to the words of institution and in support of the real presence.

<sup>46</sup> "As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Matthew 3: 16-17.

<sup>47</sup> Joseph Leo Koerner, while considering that the altarpiece may have been commissioned before Luther's death, suggests that, beyond honouring Luther, the altarpiece "also marked the place where the evangelical faith founded itself as church". Bonnie Noble suggests that the installation of the altarpiece in 1547 assumes greater significance in the aftermath of the reformer's death and on the eve of military defeat and factionalism.

Lutheran conception of the sacraments (Christensen 1979, 140).<sup>48</sup>

Moreover, from a doctrinal point of view, the Last Supper evoked the centrality of the sacrament in Lutheran theology. Being a rather discrete presence in the decoration of medieval altars,<sup>49</sup> the Last Supper or the Lord's Supper, as it came to be called in Protestant context, occurs more frequently in Lutheran altarpieces as an expression of a specific conception concerning the sacrament (consubstantiality and ubiquity, the so-called *communicatio idiomatum*) and as a visual proclamation of the doctrine referring to the Church, understood as an assembly of the faithful (Christensen 1979, 146-152; Price 1996, 578-584).<sup>50</sup> Thus, the fresh popularity of the Last Supper in the case of altarpieces produced in Lutheran context may be explained by the prominence of Eucharistic theology in the debates of the reformers.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> For the theme of the sacraments, see (Koerner 2004, 74-77), who notes the resilience of this interpretation since Franz Kugler's textbook published in 1842. Welzel (1991, 151) mentions that the altarpiece of Wittenberg is the only example where the Last Supper is integrated into a sacramentary cycle. Noble (2009, 78) suggests that the presence of the Last Supper defined a critical point of Lutheran theology, the real presence in the bread and wine. Moreover, the biblical Last Supper not only marked the initiation of the Passion but also marked the first Christian community.

<sup>49</sup> Christensen (1979, 140-149) underlines that, from 441 medieval altarpieces inventoried, only four had the Last Supper as a subject. Koerner (2004, 340-346) also considers the Last Supper as rarely used in medieval times and restricted to secondary altars with a specific Eucharistic dedication or associated with relics that referenced post-biblical miracles involving the body of Christ. Noble (2009, 78, 110) also remarks that there was no strong medieval tradition for this subject. For a discussion of the topic in German medieval context, see Welzel (1991, 151).

<sup>50</sup> For the significance of the Lord's Supper in Lutheran context, also see Koerner (2004, 361-376). Hotchkiss Price (2003, 250-258) considers that the Last Supper represented the institution of the evangelical community and invokes John 13 to argue this point.

<sup>51</sup> The popularity of the subject for Lutheran altarpieces is however controversial. If Koerner (2004, 329) considers that the Lord's Supper was a recurrent motif in the pictorial programmes conceived in Lutheran context, Noble (2009, 78, 110) is of the opinion that this theme does not occur frequently in Lutheran altarpieces. A series of empirical studies however indicate a high percentage of altarpieces that have the Lord's Supper, either on the central panel or the predella. For examples, see Gertz (1936, 56, 64);

Moreover, the visual representation of the sacraments retained by the Lutheran Church also alludes to liturgical practice and their actual celebration. Thus, many altarpieces from the German lands show the actual dispensation of the sacrament, in both kinds, with the clergy offering the bread and the wine from the two corners of an altar. (Brückner 2007, 65-66) Koerner mentions an early example, an altar frontal from Turslunde, Denmark commissioned by the minister Johann Jacobi, which shows evangelical communion, flanked by baptism and preaching. (Koerner 2004, 314-315, fig. 160) Ritual specificities may be alluded to even when the administration of the sacrament is not explicitly depicted. Bonnie Noble, for instance, suggests that the very presence of the chalice is an allusion to communion in both kinds, as medieval Last Suppers de-emphasised the chalice to the point of omitting it entirely, a fact that stresses the significance of its inclusion in Wittenberg and other Lutheran paintings. (Noble 2009, 110)

Unlike many examples from the German lands, the images from the altarpiece at Dobârca portray the historical moment, the institution of the sacraments, rather than the form of their celebration in the Lutheran Church. However, the species of the sacrament are prominently displayed, as Jesus holds the host while a rather voluminous chalice is placed in front of him, suggesting that the congregation will have received both elements. It can therefore be construed that the image alluded to communion practice, although not in an explicit manner. Moreover, the inscriptions on the wings of the altarpiece of Dobârca obliquely refer to communion in both kinds as they explicitly mention the bread and the wine. Consequently, both image and text also refer to correct practice in the Lutheran Church, not just to doctrine.

On the other hand, this altarpiece seems to be sensitive to the antithesis between the Old and the New Testament, as suggested by the presence of Moses receiving the Tables of the Law juxtaposed with the Descent of the Holy Spirit, an episode that brought together the apostles of the New Law. Thus, the Old Law offered by God to the people of Israel and the New Law, the Gospels that the apostles were meant to disseminate to the entire world were visually counter-posed. In case the meaning of these juxtaposed compositions would

Oertel (1972); Ortel (1974, 223-270). For the controversies concerning the sacrament, see McGrath (1988, 117-129); Cameron (1991, 157-167).

have eluded the faithful, the two episodes are explained by the inscriptions that accompany the images: the Law is given with the help of Moses, while Grace and Truth are bestowed upon mankind with the help of Jesus. The fact that the images on the two wings had to be read together is suggested by a second inscription that unifies the two compositions, physically and ideologically. The inscription begins on the panel depicting the Descent of the Holy Spirit and ends on the panel representing Moses receiving the Tables of the Law. The content of this inscription, the idea that the Spirit resuscitates while the Letter kills expresses the relation between the Law and the Gospel, in agreement with Lutheran understanding (Christensen 1979, 50; Reardon 1981, 67-70; McGrath 1988, 67-83; Cameron 1991, 111-135).

One needs to mention, at this stage of the argument that Lutheranism benefited from a specific understanding of the relation between Law and Gospel. In the world of the Law, the effects of original sin caused man to be the subject of divine judgment and his life was governed by the laws given to Moses on Mount Sinai. By contrast, the Gospel offers, through divine benevolence (grace) a second chance of redemption, a promise fulfilled by Jesus through his life and death, which served to annihilate the effects of original sin. This belief that the Gospel counteracted the consequences of the Law is clearly expressed by the series of explicitly antithetical compositions entitled the Law and Gospel, produced by the workshop of Lucas Cranach.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, as Bonnie Noble has suggested, the function and significance of the Law and Gospel as a pictorial type derives from Luther's understanding of scripture. The compositions were meant to explain the defining point of Lutheran theology, the idea of salvation by faith alone: the dual gift of faith and grace made salvation possible, while God in his relationship to mankind was both judgmental and merciful, granting unearned salvation to sinful believers (Noble 2009, 32-36).

This antithetical approach to the Law and Gospel is illustrated in Transylvania by the pictorial

programme of the altarpiece of Dobârca. In this particular case, the Law is illustrated by Moses receiving the Tables of the Law on Mount Sinai, while the Gospel is visually expressed by the apostles, gathered together in the presence of the Holy Spirit, receiving the mission to spread the evangelical message (see figures 4 and 5). The antithesis between the two is expressed by the inscriptions, not just by the statement that Moses brings the Law, while Jesus brings truth and life, but also by the juxtaposition of the Law that kills with the Spirit that resuscitates, as affirmed by the inscription linking the two panels. The verbal link is just as necessary as the visual juxtaposition because, as Bonnie Noble has persuasively argued, the law makes it possible to identify sin while highlighting the necessity of grace (Noble 2009, 37). Thus, a doctrinal message is once again conveyed in an original manner, not just through visual means and the choice of specific episodes but also by the selection of the most appropriate quotations and, ultimately through the ingenious combination of image and text.

Moreover, as it has already been mentioned, on the Tables of the Law held by Moses one can read the first three of the Ten Commandments, in fact those which, in Lutheran understanding, regulated the relationship between God and mankind. The fact that these commandments represent an injunction against idolatry, a condemnation of blasphemy and an admonition to observe the day of the Lord, no doubt through attending the divine service, gives expression to a concern for religious and social discipline emphasising the agenda of the Lutheran clergy.<sup>53</sup>

If one considers the injunction against idolatry, one comes to the conclusion that this draws attention to one further detail. The Decalogue is organised according to Augustinian suggestions, distancing itself from Hebrew tradition while practically eliminating the second commandment concerning the making of graven images. In this manner, the focus is directed towards the first commandment and thus only idolatry, i.e. the abusive veneration of images is condemned, rather than their actual production. Consequently, the message conveyed is subsumed to the

<sup>52</sup> The Law and Gospel compositions are discussed by Christensen (1979, 124-128); Scribner (1981, 216-219). The altarpieces produced by the Cranach workshop are discussed in detail by Noble (2009, 27-137).

<sup>53</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the use of the Decalogue in Transylvanian Lutheran visual programmes, see Crăciun (2017, 18-38).

theology of the visual, elaborated by Martin Luther.<sup>54</sup>

In one turns to the messages of the *Werktagsseite*, one notices that, with the exception of the Crucifixion (Phil 1:8), all images are commented on by quotations from the Old Testament chosen from the Psalms (particularly Psalm XXII) and the Prophecies (mostly Isaiah and Hosea). The texts in question can be interpreted as an allusion to the sufferings of Christ, as they foretell violence, betrayal, rejection, derision, contempt and mockery, but also highlight submission to God's will. Finally, some of the texts stress the deliverance of the faithful from the power of sin and death. The main message transmitted is that salvation was made available through the suffering and death of Christ and thus sinners should merely repent and believe in the Gospel.

Two things become particularly striking in this situation: firstly, the fact that these texts do not reference the images, but rather metaphorically allude to their meaning by creating typological associations. Consequently, meaning is no longer reliant on a straightforward account of the events but rather on the ability of the viewer to associate Old and New Testament episodes. Secondly, the alternative programmes of the open and closed position of the altarpiece are commented on with texts from the New Testament, in the case of the festive side and mostly from the Old Testament, in the case of the everyday side. Once again meaning is conveyed in ingenious ways, by creating an antithesis between the two programmes that ultimately complement each other.

Finally, the inscription on the predella, an abridgment of Ezekiel 33: 11 urges abandonment of sin in order to attain eternal life. Thus, an exhortation to recognize sin and repent is linked to the hope of salvation. The chosen text also underlines individual responsibility before God and subliminally urges congregations to beware of unworthy reception of the sacrament.

One can only conclude that the altarpiece produced in 1629 is laden with messages concerning doctrine (the preservation of only the two sacraments that benefit from a scriptural

reference, Baptism and the Eucharist, recognition of sin and repentance, a theology of the visual that allows the retention of images in the church, and the two fundamental principles of Lutheran thought, *sola fide* and *sola gratia*), practice (communion in both kinds, the correct administration of the sacraments) and conduct (attendance at church and avoidance of idolatry and blasphemy).

If one considers the specific vehicles of communication deployed in this context, one comes to the conclusion that these messages were transmitted with the aid of both image and text. This conjunction between image and text places the altarpiece even more firmly in the category of the catechism-retable, as the quotations, particularly those visible in the open position of the altarpiece, were not used merely for identification, but were an intrinsic part of the intended message, disseminating the finer points of doctrine. The text does not merely accompany the images, commenting on them and/or decoding them; the text is also presented as an image, particularly in the case of the Words of Institution displayed on the interior of the two wings. Although these quotations can be associated with the image on the central panel, the depiction of the Last Supper, they are not used to adorn the image, to serve as captions to the image, but are presented separately, as an image. Moreover, the message was conveyed, not just through the text itself but also through its spatial arrangement, its distribution within the image or on two different panels, which sometimes indicated how the images and quotations should be read.

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The discussion concerning the messages conveyed by this altarpiece brings to the fore the issue of communication and consequently the question of function, which needs to be addressed in the context of the new confessional culture. This discussion will focus partly on the altarpiece of Dobârca as a relevant example of the category of catechism-retables and partly on other examples of Transylvanian text-retables.

Medieval altarpieces were considered to have educational, mnemonic and devotional or interpellative functions.<sup>55</sup> Some scholars are

<sup>54</sup> Christensen (1979, 53-54) underlines the way that Luther has nuanced the understanding of the interdictions of the Decalogue when he opted for the medieval arrangement of the commandments in both of his catechisms. As a consequence, the image has gained a significant place in Lutheran religious culture.

<sup>55</sup> Kemp (1990, 1-20, especially p. 7) considers that altarpieces were intended to instruct in the faith, to serve as reminders and to stimulate devotion. Noble (2009, 74-75) suggests that an altarpiece adorned and designated the holiest part of the church, either the high

particularly attached to the educational function, following Gregory the Great in equating altarpieces with the books for the unlettered (Kemp 1990, 7; Woods 1990, 86). Others define altarpieces as *Kultbilder* and consider them primarily devotional artefacts (Kemp 1990, 4; Decker 1990, 90; Nieuwdorp 1994, 137-150; Ridderbos 1994, 151-157). Finally, many scholars are tempted to associate the altarpiece with the liturgy and consider the artefact in its ritual context (Ehresmann 1982, 359-369; Ploeg 2002, 102-121; Lane 1984; Woods 1990, 84-86; Harbison 1990, 67). By contrast, it is generally assumed that in Protestant context, when altarpieces were retained in the churches, their educational function completely overshadowed all other ways of interacting with the artefact.<sup>56</sup>

One is led to conclude that altarpieces were retained precisely because they were meant to instruct the congregation. And they instructed primarily by visually conveying messages concerning doctrine, religious practice and devotional models. The most readily available vehicle for conveying such messages was the image, the pictorial programme devised in the new Lutheran context. In order to be effective, this pictorial programme needed to be different, in both its structure and its composition, from a medieval one. By analysing the existing evidence, one could conclude that early modern altarpieces, produced in Lutheran context had more narrowly focused programmes which reflected doctrinal preferences. The life of Christ, particularly his suffering and death became the central theme of these programmes. Moreover, in keeping with prescriptions for devotion, these Christocentric narratives replaced the stories of saints' lives aiming to remove them from the prayers of the faithful. The didactic function of such images owes much to Martin Luther's rather pragmatic approach: when they depicted events from the

Bible, images narrated and instructed in much the same way as the biblical text did. As Hans Belting has persuasively suggested, the narrative image thus became a permissible alternative to the prohibited cult image. Because quotations were generally added, the painted images acted as illustrations of the word or of the deeds of God recorded by the word (Belting 1994, 466-467).

Consequently, as the specificity of Lutheran altarpieces is their generous use of text, one is led to speculate that inscriptions may have played a significant role in defining the function of these artefacts. In this respect, a comparison with medieval altarpieces may highlight significant differences in the uses of inscriptions and the function of the altarpieces themselves. The analysis of the inscriptions deployed in medieval altarpieces tends to suggest that these were used to model piety as they were mainly prayers intended to be memorised – for instance “Ave gratia plena” in scenes of the Annunciation (Fig. 22) – or exemplars of devotional behaviour meant to be copied by the faithful, for instance in the portraits of the two donors, Mihály Apafi and his wife Klára (probably Măcedoniai) depicted on the central panel of the altarpiece of Mălâncrav (Dijk 1999, 420-436, especially p. 421-423) (Fig. 23). In several other situations, inscriptions simply served as labels and helped identify either biblical episodes or characters. Finally, inscriptions served to integrate images within the liturgical context, reproducing passages from the offices performed in church, for example “Nunc Dimittis” in the Presentation at the Temple from the altarpiece of Biertan (Fig. 24). Consequently, in the context of the medieval Catholic Church, the role of inscriptions, besides that of acting as helpful labels, was to offer adequate devotional models and stimulate lay piety by inviting the faithful to interact with the image through individual and collective prayer.<sup>57</sup> In fact, even narrative cycles could be integrated into devotional exercises (Crăciun 2012b, 393-416; Crăciun 2008, 191-211).

By contrast, the inscriptions, introduced on the panels of altarpieces after the Reformation, fall into different and, perhaps more complex categories. Some of them merely offer

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altar or an altar in a side chapel, it marked the location of rituals, it helped define identity and guide the worshipper's devotion, it instructed in theology, either by illustrating a point of dogma, depicting an object of veneration or emphasising one, such as a holy relic.

<sup>56</sup> Noble (2009, 75, 124) suggests that a Lutheran altarpiece guided the religious experience of the viewers by teaching Lutheran salvation. Lutheran altarpieces rejected traditional functions in favour of proclaiming and celebrating communal and confessional identity. Consequently, the image was a pedagogical tool.

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<sup>57</sup> For the role of the image in private devotions, see Hamburger (1989, 20-46). For Transylvanian examples, see Crăciun (2012a, 107-138, especially p. 115-121).

information concerning the commissioner of the artefact in question and the date of its production or restoration, as can be seen in the case of the altarpiece from Dupuş.<sup>58</sup> In other cases, inscriptions simply helped to identify images, as suggested by the example of Hălchiu, where the statue of Jesus placed in the shrine is accompanied by the caption *Christus Triumphans* (Fig. 25).

However, inscriptions sometimes served not so much to identify episodes in narrative sequences but to justify their selection and in a way to legitimise the choice through appeal to biblical references. This is obvious in the case of Agnita and also Meşendorf, but not in the closed position of the altarpiece of Dobârca. While at Agnita and Meşendorf the inscriptions are fragments from the Gospels of Matthew and John, meant to provide scriptural references to the depicted episodes, the texts from Dobârca are not taken from the Gospels, but rather from the Old Testament, the Psalms and the Prophecies (Isaiah and Hosea). Thus, in this case, one is not dealing with a scriptural reference able to at once identify and legitimise the images. They were used, as has already been noted, to convey their meaning through typological associations. The text thus became, in Koerner's opinion an aesthetic emblem of the truths expressed (Koerner 2004, 223, 229).

One may thus conclude that texts were important because of the messages they conveyed. In fact, in Lutheran confessional culture, it was considered, on the one hand, that images functioned better if they were accompanied by texts. On the other hand, in some cases, texts were treated as images, beautifully written and displayed in the church (Koerner 2004, 290-291, 297).

When texts were an obvious vehicle for meaning, inscriptions were primarily intended to encourage the correct reading of images. For example, at Dupuş, an altarpiece decorated with specific Eucharistic imagery, the introduction of an inscription from John 6: 51 is instrumental in conveying doctrinal messages directly related to the meaning of the sacrament.<sup>59</sup> The abridgment

of the inscription, which focuses attention on the real presence, may have been deliberate and intended to emphasise the educational function of this particular altarpiece (Crăciun 2002–2003, 155-157; Crăciun 2016, 122, 160).

Duş is certainly not the only case of this kind and one may safely assume that all the altarpieces created in the second half of the sixteenth and during the seventeenth century, which conveyed doctrinal messages to the congregation had a strong educational function.

On the other hand, inscriptions seem to have served to channel or to invite a different reading from the traditional one. For example, at Biertan, the inscription introduced in the shrine, John 3: 16, allows a new reading of the narrative sequence, initially focused on the life of the Virgin, which was re-interpreted in the new context as a life of Jesus. The faithful/spectators were thus encouraged to read the episodes, many of them marking major Marian feast days, as scenes from the infancy of Jesus. This is not a singular case even for Transylvania, as John 3: 16 was repeatedly used, for example at Mediaş, Hălchiu and Nemşa, throughout the early modern period.

One difference that can be noted and tentatively discussed is that between the more broadly educational and more specifically catechetical function of these altarpieces. For instance, at Sibiu, while the inscriptions introduced on the central panel very straightforwardly convey doctrinal messages, underlining its educational function, the texts on the interior of the wings, the Decalogue and selections from Paul's epistle to the Galatians are to greater extent guidelines for the behaviour of the faithful. While the first three commandments regulate God's relation to mankind, the next five regulate relations within society itself and the last two attempts to control the private sphere of the individuals, their thoughts and attitudes. In this sense, the first three injunctions regulate not just belief, but also religious practice through reference to blasphemy and church attendance. The second half of the list contains definitions of sin, as it alludes to murder, adultery, theft, calumny and envy. One must note that sin is articulated in the terms set by the Decalogue, emphasising transgressions that involved the word, such as blasphemy and slander and unequivocally condemning insubordination to

<sup>58</sup> "Hanc aram inveteratam propriis sumptibus comparavit et renovari curavit et huic ecclesiae piamente dicavit Johan Wellther domaldiensis P.P. Pastor H.L. Anno 1720". (Roth 1916, 72)

<sup>59</sup> "Ego sum panis vivus qui de caelo descendi si quis manducaverit ex..." (Ioan 6: 51). The inscription on the altarpiece is in fact incomplete as it should continue with "hoc pane vivet in aeternum". Roth (1916, 72)

provides the complete version of the quotation: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."



both parental and civic authorities. The altarpiece from Sibiu could thus be easily used in the teaching of the catechism, assuming a catechetical function and becoming part of a disciplining process in both religious and social terms.

The catechetical function is equally easy to highlight in the case of the altarpiece from Dobârca, because parts of the catechism, such as the Words of Institution and a fragment of the Decalogue are included. The inclusion of the first three commandments on the Tables held by Moses on the wing of the altarpiece of Dobârca suggests that they were meant to regulate the daily behaviour of the faithful, both in devotional and the most mundane terms (Crăciun 2017, 24-33).

The inscriptions from the altarpiece of Țapu convey major doctrinal points as they proclaim salvation by faith alone (John 3: 14-15 and John 3: 16). They also tend to engage with the congregation regulating not just their outward behaviour but also their spirituality as they refer specifically to unworthy reception of the sacrament (1 Cor. 11: 28-29).

This emphasis placed on instruction and, more specifically catechesis, highlights the fact that altarpieces, with their images and texts were used to mould perfect Lutherans, essentially constructing their confessional identity. The re-fashioning and continued production of altarpieces in the second half of the sixteenth and during the seventeenth century, not only gives expression to Lutheran visual theology but the very presence of these decorated artefacts in the church becomes a significant marker of confessional identity, helping to distinguish a Lutheran church from the ecclesiastical buildings of its confessional rivals. In this vein, specific doctrinal messages conveyed through visual and textual means further consolidated the identity of Lutheran congregations.

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This analysis leads one to conclude that the altarpiece of Dobârca, although probably conceived as a catechism-retable, also served to ease the transition from a text-retable to the figurative and narrative altarpiece preferred during the seventeenth century. Placed on the high altar of the parish church of Dobârca, this altarpiece transmitted specific and highly confessional messages, articulating the salient points of Lutheran doctrine and setting guidelines for correct practice. In this sense, the altarpiece of

Dobârca had primarily educational functions but it did not merely aim to instruct, in the sense of conveying information but rather, by encouraging typological associations and establishing complex relationships between texts and images, this altarpiece encouraged familiarity with the biblical text. Produced with the involvement of a prominent member of Saxon society, Georgius Stenzel, and very probably the parish minister, Laurentius Aquilinus (Adler), the altarpiece presented the congregation with clear confessional messages intended to model their identity and behaviour (Wagner 1998, 134, position 1223). If the doctrine of the Eucharist is the central confessional element that distinguishes Lutheran beliefs from those of other denominations, the Last Supper together with the Words of Institution constitute the most suitable programme for the decoration of the altar, as they were able to give visual expression to these fundamental tenets of faith.

A discussion of function does not satisfactorily answer questions pertaining to the choice of type and format, especially if one considers that the life of the catechetical-retable in early modern Transylvania was rather short and this type of altarpiece was soon replaced by artefacts with figurative decoration, entirely devoted to portraying the life of Christ and particularly his Passion. Strangely enough, an explanation for this change could be afforded by revisiting the issue of identity, as the Lutheran Church underwent profound ideological turmoil in the middle of the seventeenth century. The latter induced a quest for identity and propelled the Lutheran Church towards confessionalization, in other words, towards firmer choices in favour of Lutheran orthodoxy and orthopraxy.

The theological choices of the Lutheran Church seemed to be clear in 1572, when, perhaps in response to the laws against innovation, it adopted the *Formula Pii consensus inter pastores*, which defined sacramental theology in the terms of the *Confessio Augustana Invariata* (1530) (Teutsch 1883, 139-175). However, local theologians and clergy remained sympathetic to Melancthonian theology and several synods of the Lutheran Church, for example those of 1578 and 1607 drifted away from the orthodox interpretation of the sacrament, proposed by the *Invariata*. A few years later, the Lutheran Church again embraced Lutheran orthodoxy. Thus, the synod of 1613 adopted the *Confessio Augustana Invariata*, while

the gathering held at Mediaş in 1615 voted in favour of articles regarding communion which expressed strictly orthodox Lutheran views on the matter, overshadowing any crypto-Calvinist leanings. Finally, the synod of 1651 explicitly forbade any public preaching of Calvinist teachings, while the Lutheran clergy was requested to swear allegiance to the *Confessio Augustana Invariata* upon appointment in office.<sup>60</sup>

In these circumstances, the type of altarpiece used in the church, together with its decoration became increasingly significant through its potential to act as a marker of confessional identity. As the Lutheran Church developed, institutionally and theologically, the furnishings of churches changed, visually marking the stages in the process of reform. And as this study has tried to show, this was not only accomplished through different pictorial programmes, which incorporated images and texts, but also through the type and format of altarpieces.

Thus, when it first emerged in Transylvania, the text-retable helped delineate the Lutheran community from the Catholic one through a specific manner of decorating the church building, essentially abandoning images in favour of words. A case in point would be the much-invoked altarpiece from Sibiu, which was refashioned from a highly figurative artefact into a profoundly textual one. Later, when the Lutheran Church had to deal primarily with Reformed rivals, who, especially during the rule of Calvinist princes (1613–1660), implemented religious policies which attempted to draw the Lutherans closer to the Reformed Church, one witnesses a shift from the text-retable to figurative altarpieces. In a sense, this time the word was abandoned, although not completely, in favour of the image. If the Lutheran Church wished to assert its identity in opposition to the Reformed, what better way than introducing figurative altarpieces that would help identify their churches as accommodating to images, rather than texts. This may have been an effective strategy, as Reformed churches were

often decorated with texts, the Decalogue among them, although not placed on altarpieces but rather on boards.<sup>61</sup> This strategy is not unique, as Christian IV, the king of Denmark, in his struggle against Calvinism had ordered text-retables to be replaced with altarpieces with figurative decoration as he wished to express Lutheran moderation in the treatment of images (Koerner 2004, 300). This confirms the idea that, in Transylvania the return to figurative decoration and the option in favour of narrative became strong identity statements precisely at the time when the principality was ruled by Reformed princes, like Gábor Bethlen and the two György Rákóczi who strongly supported the Calvinist Church.

One can only conclude that the preference for text-retables belonged to the incipient stages of the reforming process when evangelical reformers wished to distance themselves from the Catholic past. Images were thus gradually replaced or dominated by texts, especially when the influence of Swiss theologies was growing. If one were to use the synods of the Lutheran Church to mark the stages of reform, one may conclude that the era of the text-retable probably coincided with the shift towards Swiss theologies, with the dates of the synods that adopted the *Confessio Augustana Invariata*, 1572 and 1615 as its outer limits. The decision to return to figurative altarpieces, on the other hand seems to have coincided with the drive towards confessionalization and towards Lutheran orthodoxy compounded with a wish to distance the Lutherans from the Reformed, which manifested itself in the middle of the seventeenth century. Thus, preference for a type of altarpiece did mark the stages in the process of reform and probably reflected the agenda of the Saxon ecclesiastical and secular authorities.

Note: The article is based on the state of the artifact, when I photographed it in 2016. Since July 2018, the Dobârca altarpiece restoration has begun, which may reveal more adaptive interventions.

<sup>60</sup> For the process of confessionalization in the Lutheran Church see Szegedi (2002, 31-62); Szegedi (2005, 237-262).

<sup>61</sup> For the decoration of Reformed churches, see Murdock (2005, 231-250).

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Fig.1. The polyptych of Dobârca in open position



Fig. 2. The central panel of the polyptych of Dobârca



Fig. 3. The superstructure of the polyptych of Dobârca



Fig. 4. Panel with Moses Receiving the Tables of the Law



Fig. 5. Panel representing the Descent of the Holy Spirit



Fig. 6. Moses with the Tables of the Law

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Fig. 7. The predella of the polyptych of Dobârca

Fig. 8. The polyptych of Dobârca in closed position

Fig. 9. The altarpiece from Băgaciu

Fig. 10. The altarpiece from Mălâncrav

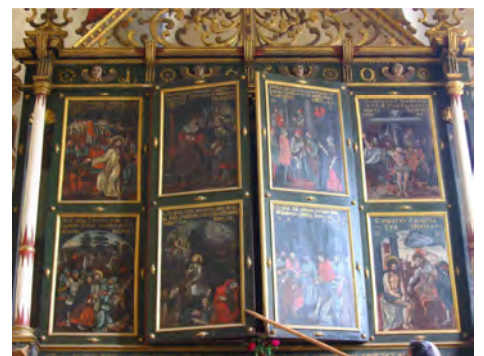


Fig. 11. The polyptych from Agnita in open position

Fig. 12. The polyptych from Agnita in closed position

Fig. 13. The polyptych from Meşendorf in closed position



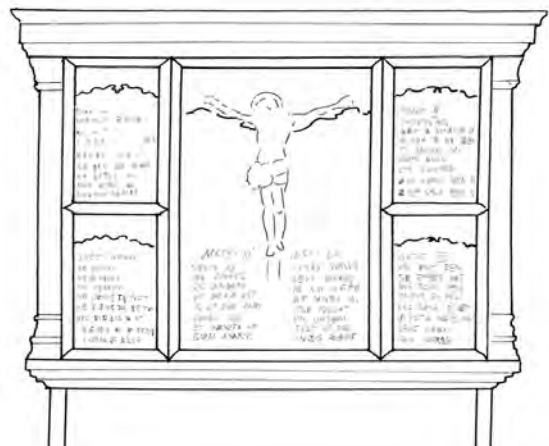
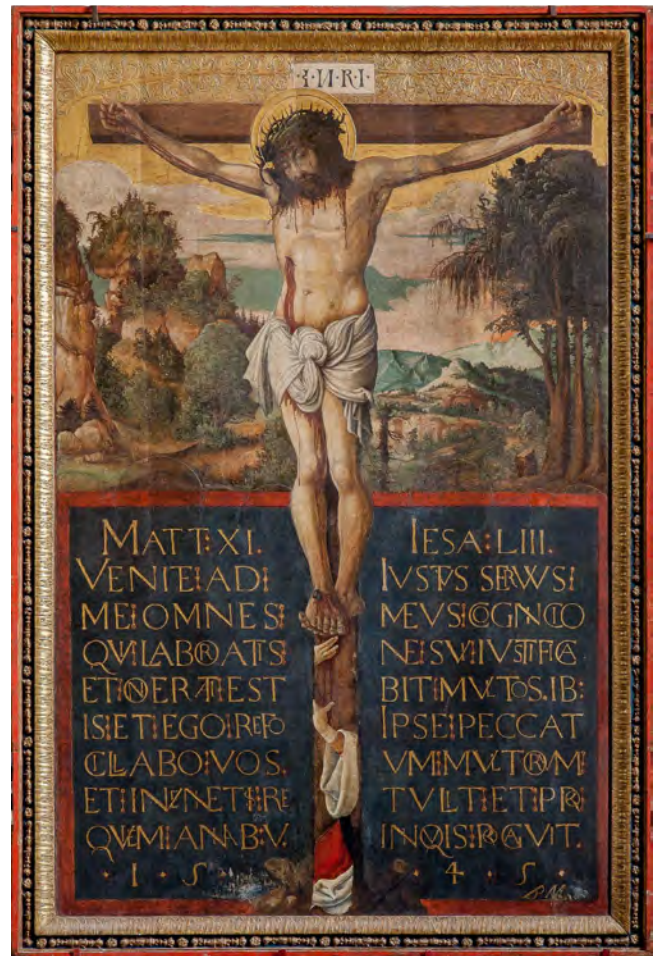


Fig. 14. The polyptych from Cincșor in open position

Fig. 15. The central panel from the polyptych of Sibiu

Fig. 16. The panel repainted in 1701 from the polyptych of Sibiu, with inscriptions visible underneath the layer of paint

Fig. 17. The reconstruction of the polyptych from Sibiu in its 1545 presentation



Fig. 18. The shrine of the polyptych from Hălchiu

Fig. 19. The altarpiece from Țapu

Fig. 20. The predella of the altarpiece from Țapu

Fig. 21. Association between the Last Supper and Baptism on the polyptych of Dobârca





Fig. 22. Annunciation on the polyptych of Mălâncrav

Fig. 23. The central panel from the polyptych of Mălâncrav

Fig. 24. Panel representing the Presentation at the Temple of Biertan

Fig. 25. Detail with inscription on the shrine of the polyptych of Hălchiu





## THE MURAL PAINTINGS OF THE FORTIFIED CHURCH IN CURCIU

Raluca Georgiana COBUZ\*

**Abstract:** *This article attempts to include the Curciu mural paintings in the continuously growing list of the Transylvanian churches that shelter important medieval wall paintings. The study seeks to present the entire pictorial programme, to identify and to analyse each scene, following with the deciphering of the message transmitted, the connection with the religious practices that took place in the church, and to identify the role which the donor or the community played in regards to the selection of these images.*

**Keywords:** *mural painting, Transylvania, Curciu, Christ's Passion*

**Rezumat:** *Articolul de față dorește să includă picturile murale ale bisericii din Curciu pe lista în continuă creștere a bisericilor transilvănene care adăpostesc importante picturi murale medievale. Studiul urmărește prezentarea în ansamblu a programului pictural, identificarea și analiza fiecărei scene, urmând să se descifreze mesajul transmis legătura cu practicile religioase care aveau loc în biserică și să identifice rolul pe care comanditarul sau comunitatea l-a avut în ceea ce privește selecția acestor imagini.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *pictura murală, Transilvania, Curciu, Patimile lui Iisus*

Curciu was in the Middle Ages a free village included in the Mediaș seat (Fabini 2002, 358), located 15 km north-east of the town of Mediaș. The fortified church, initially a Romanesque basilica, was reconstructed at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Gothic style, resulting in a three nave basilica (Fabini 2009, 157), a tower on the western façade, choir, sacristy and a polygonal eastern apse. The church, dedicated to Saint John (Fabini 2009, 157), is surrounded by a defensive wall, with a gate tower and a chapel, on the south-eastern side.

Beside the wall paintings, the main subject of our study, one may consider also the elegance of the sculptural details of the church: the western portal, the sacramentary niche, the sedilia, but also other decorative details from stone, impressive for their artistic quality and elegance.

Until recently, the wall paintings of the church in Curciu were not in the focus of the art historians because of their fragmentary state which made them partially illegible. For a long time there were mentions of some wall painting fragments on the

interior of the northern choir wall and only in the last decade there were identified some images from Christ's Passion: *The Crucifixion* and *Jesus in front of Pilate* (Kiss 2013, 387) together with some consecration crosses, dating probably from the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Burnichiou 2014, 74). The technique in which the wall paintings were made are both fresco and painting al secco, being considered of great value because of the expressiveness of the characters and the realism of their anatomy (Kiss 2013, 387). Considering these aspects, Kiss Lóránd has dated the paintings in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Kiss 2013, 387), while Dana Jenei, in her most recent book, has dated the wall paintings of Curciu after the year 1427, in which Sigismund of Luxemburg named the nobleman Nicolae of Ațel Count (greav) of Curciu, who also, in her opinion, appears in the Last Supper image as a donor (Jenei 2016, 61). As for the pictorial programme, it has been mentioned recently the existence of some scenes from the Passion cycle and the presence of an image of the saints Cosmas and Damian (Jenei 2016, 100, 135). Therefore, until now, the historians have mentioned a few details about the dating of the wall paintings, the stylistic characteristics and the painter's background. However, no one discussed

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the iconography of the scenes or at least no one has presented the entire pictorial programme, which is so important in shaping an idea about how the decoration of this wall might have looked like.

The pictorial programme of the northern wall amazes with its narrativeness, underlined also by the large number of the selected episodes, 19 in total, placed in three horizontal registers and three vertical registers, only on the northern wall of the sanctuary (Fig. 1, Fig. 2 and Fig. 3). This observation raises questions referring to the articulation of the programme, including the selection of the scenes, their spatial layout and the details of the compositions. On the other hand, we wish to know what are the functions and the messages of this programme, and we also wish to explore the motivations of the patrons.

Therefore, this study aims to recreate in the first place the pictorial programme of the church, to be more precise, of the sanctuary, starting with the images that survived, trying to find analogies and also written references. The recreation of the programme will allow us to highlight its peculiarity, its integration in the Liturgy which took place in the sanctuary and to visualize it in the ritual context.

Starting the analysis with an attempt to recreate the layout of the scenes on the surface of the northern choir wall in the sanctuary, we notice that besides the scenes placed on the upper part of the wall, under the vault, which are disposed horizontally, the rest are disposed vertically. The scenes are framed with decorative belts with elegant Gothic motifs. The layout of the scenes is parallel, from the left to the right. This layout dates from the early Christian period, for example the Roman church San Paolo Fuori le Mura, 4<sup>th</sup> century, the old church Saint Peter in Vatican, 4<sup>th</sup> century, or the mosaics in the Sant'Appolinare Nuovo church in Ravenna, dating from the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Baschet 2008, 126). This parallel layout can be read also from the right to the left. After a period of absence from the pictorial cycles of the Middle Ages, this layout can be seen again starting with the 13<sup>th</sup> century, at Assisi (the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century) (Baschet 2008, 127).

At Curciu, as in some other churches like Mălâncrav or Râșnov, the images are read from the western façade to the eastern apse. In Jérôme Baschet's opinion, the narrative programs, especially those who belong to the parallel type,

like in Curciu's case, are following the axiality of the church and they evolve towards the sanctuary, thus towards the Eucharistic fulfilment of the stories depicted (Baschet 2008, 111). Although Baschet, in his book, is referring to Saint-Savin's Old Testament's cycle in the nave, the interpretation is valid also in our study. Here at Curciu we see depictions from the Passion of Christ, and by their placement directly in the sanctuary, their Eucharistic significance is even more underlined by the subject of the episodes: the sacrifice of Jesus for the salvation of humanity.

Once the layout of the scenes is discussed, it is necessary to establish the way in which the episodes were selected for being illustrated on the northern choir wall. Being an extensive Passion cycle, it is important to identify the scenes according to their chronological order. The visual narrative begins in the upper register with the *Entry into Jerusalem*, celebrated in the liturgical calendar on Palm Sunday (Fig. 4). Here we see 11 figures, from which we recognise Jesus in the middle, riding a donkey, going towards the right side and blessing the citadel. Behind Jesus we see the apostles, following their leader. At the citadel's gate we see a boy spreading a garment onto the ground while other two figures are watching and cheering towards Jesus. These three characters represent the multitudes (Matthew 21:7-8, Mark 11:7-8, Luke 19:35-37, John 12:12-14). This kind of composition is representative for *The Entry into Jerusalem* episode. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, we see it in the Sacramentary of Saint-Étienne de Limoges, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, from around 1100. For the 12<sup>th</sup> century we have two mosaics of this episode in the Cappella Palatina, Palermo, placed on the southern wall of the sanctuary and on the western wall of the southern transept, the first one dating from around 1140-1170 and the second one from around 1180. For the 13<sup>th</sup> century we have as an example the altarpiece from 1270 by Guido da Siena, now at Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, and for the 14<sup>th</sup> century there are even more images. For the German area we have the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* manuscript, from 1379 (Additional Ms. 16578), in the British Library, London. For the Italian area we should not forget the Cappella Arena in Padua by Giotto di Bondone, *Entry into Jerusalem*, from around 1304-1306. Some other examples are Duccio di Buoninsegna, with his altarpiece from 1308-1311 at Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena, Pietro Lorenzetti, his fresco in the Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi, from



around 1320, Lippo Memmi, the fresco with Scenes from the Life of Christ (first bay), from around 1340 in Collegiata Santa Maria Assunta, San Gimignano and Giusto de Menabuoi, the frescoes on the west wall of the baptistery in Padua, dating from 1378. For the 15<sup>th</sup> century we have many more examples, but for the Italian space we will mention just Fra Angelico's panel with Scenes from the Life of Christ, from 1451-1452, now in Museo di San Marco, Florence, but also an example from the Low Countries, Hans Memling with his panel with Scenes from the Passion of Christ (left side), dating from 1470-71, today in Galleria Sabauda, Turin. In each of these images, despite the passing of the centuries, we see the same composition, identical to what we see in the painting at Curciu: Jesus riding a donkey, going towards the right side of the image, the apostles following him, and in front of them the Jerusalem citadel, with the multitudes outside, cheering Jesus and laying garments onto the ground in front of him.

The story continues in the upper register, with *The Last Supper* (Fig. 5), which took place Thursday evening. In Matthew's Gospel Jesus sits with his twelve apostles and while they eat, he says that one of them will betray him (Matthew 26:21). The apostles are beginning to ask him who it will be, until Jesus said that it will be the one who dipped his hand with him in the dish (Matthew 26:22-23). Judas is asking if it is him, and Jesus agrees (Matthew 26:25). After this, he blesses the bread, shares it and he does the same with the wine (Matthew 26:29). In Mark's Gospel the episode is almost identical (Mark 14:18-25), except that Judas is not asking at all if it is him who will betray Jesus. In Luke's Gospel the episode begins first with the bread and wine sharing, and after that Jesus tells them that he will be betrayed, Judas is again not mentioned. John's Gospel does not mention the Last Supper at all, instead it presents directly Jesus's Arrest (John 18:1-11). Regarding the composition of the scene at Curciu, we can see that around a rectangular table there are ten figures, Jesus being in the middle. He makes the blessing gesture with his right hand, therefore being illustrated the moment in which Christ blesses the bread and the wine, mentioned in Matthew's Gospel, that is the moment in which the sacrament is established, repeated in each liturgy. The other eight figures are the apostles. On the other side of the table, in front of Jesus, Dana Jenei identifies the kneeling person as the donor of the mural paintings, but without any further information (Jenei 2016, 172). The table is

covered with a pale pink cloth, on which rests the bread and a dish containing a miniature lamb, a powerful sacrificial symbol that reminds us of the Pesah, being also a symbol of Jesus, the God's Lamb (John 1:29). The lamb on the plate is often present in the depiction of this episode. We see it in the 11<sup>th</sup> century in the fresco from Sant'Angelo in Formis, Capua, dating from 1080 and again in the mosaic of the Cappella Palatina from Palermo, on the western wall of the southern transept, dating from 1180. For the 14<sup>th</sup> century we have Duccio with his Last supper scene from 1308-1311, today at Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Siena, Lippo Memmi's fresco, 1340, first bay, in Collegiata Santa Maria Assunta in San Gimignano and Mariotto di Nardo, in his panel from 1395, now at Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century we see the lamb again in Jaume Huguet's, Last Supper from 1423, today at Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona and in Master of the Housebook's panel in Staatliche Museen, Berlin. In all these images, as in the case of Curciu, the lamb represents Christ's sacrifice for the salvation of the humanity and the victory of life upon death (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 2009, 586-587). Unlike the scene of Entry into Jerusalem, this episode has many variations in terms of its composition over time, being one of the most important episodes from Christ's Passion. In all these depictions we can see many kinds of tables: round, semicircular or rectangular, the latter being visible at Curciu. Some depictions in which the rectangular table is present are Lippo Memmi's fresco from 1340, in Collegiata Santa Maria Assunta in San Gimignano, Paolo Veneziano's Polyptych from 1350, now in Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice or Jaume Huguet's Last Supper panel from 1470, now in Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya in Barcelona. The closer resemblance is with Paolo Veneziano's work, in which we have Judas in the first register, in the middle, opposed to Christ. Although the presence of Judas in this place is very common, in the painting at Curciu Dana Jenei identifies the kneeling person as the donor of the painting, Nicholas of Ațel (Jenei 2016, 61), because of his position kneeling with his hands together as if he is praying (Jenei 2016, 172).

The third scene is *The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane* (Fig. 6), unfortunately only partially visible. On the left side we see a part of Christ's halo and his face, while he is kneeling and praying towards the upper right corner of the image. From there the angel's hand blessing Christ is visible. The angel is usually depicted

with a cross on his shoulder, but here the image is too damaged for it to be seen. Between these two figures, on the cliffs the cup is visible, mentioned in the Gospels (Matthew 26:36-44, Mark 14:32-40, Luke 22:39-44, John 18:1). On the lower side, near the cliffs, there are now visible three apostles, sleeping with their hands at their chests. According to the Gospels, they are Peter and the two sons of Zebedee (Matthew 26:36), meaning the apostles James and John. This image has a very powerful meaning because Jesus, although he is aware of his inevitable death in the near future, he voluntarily accepts his fate, the cup in front of him being, thus, the symbol of his sacrifice, and along with the bread, the most important items used in the Liturgy. Like in the previous case, this episode has many variations during the middle ages. We can see images in which Jesus is praying towards the left side, for example in the Lippo Memmi's fresco from around 1340, in Collegiata Santa Maria Assunta, San Gimignano, or towards the right side, as in Giusto de' Menabuoi's fresco from around 1378, in the Baptistry from Padua. In both these examples we can see all the apostles sleeping, not the only Peter, John and Jacob, but the three of them are clearly separated from the group. As in Curciu's case, there are depictions with only the three of them, for example in Andrea Mantegna's panels from 1455 in London or the one from 1457-1459, today in Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tours. The closest link with what it is visible at Curciu in terms of composition is one of Masaccio's works, *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane*, from 1424-1425, now at Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg. It has the same composition, with Jesus to the left, praying towards the angel situated in the upper right corner of the image, and the apostles sleeping in the lower right corner of the scene.

The narrative continues in the middle register, from the left side, with *The Arrest* (Fig. 7). We see a group of angry people, with Jesus in the middle, with a calm attitude symbolising the acceptance of the moments that are to come. On the left side we see the moment in which Peter cuts Malchus's ear (John 18:3-10), while the rest of the soldiers are all crowded in the back (Matthew 26:47-51, Mark 14:43-47, Luke 22:47-50, John 18:3-10). There are many small variations of this episode too, but the composition has not changed very much throughout the centuries. According to Anne Derbes, one of the first depictions of this episode is on the cross from Sarzana Cathedral, by Gulliellmus, dated in 1138

(Derbes 1996, 36). We see the same events as in the image at Curciu, with almost the same composition, with Judas kissing Jesus, Peter attacking Malchus and Jesus pointing his hand to Malchus's ear to cure it. Derbes is analysing the evolution of Christ's attitude towards the conflict between Peter and Malchus, and after some decades of absence starting from the Sarzana cross, Jesus turns again towards the two men to stop the conflict. The author gives as an example the Betrayal of Christ panel from 1275-1280 by Guido da Siena and also the scene from the Upper Church of San Francesco in Assisi, paintings from around 1290. In both of the images Jesus has a serene attitude, accepts Judas's embrace and gestures towards Malchus's ear to heal it. Even though in later depictions as in Duccio's *Maestà* and in Giotto's mural paintings at Arena Chapel in Padova Jesus is not focusing his attention in any way to Peter and Malchus, at Curciu these details are clearly present.

The next image is *The Hearing before Herod* (Fig. 8). Christ is on the left side, surrounded by soldiers who are immobilizing him. Jesus looks at his judge, on the right side, who sits on a richly decorated throne. The judge, with grey hair and a beard, wears a crown on his head. The way in which he is pictured makes us believe that he could be more Herod rather than Pilate. Herod is mentioned in Luke 23:7-8, though he is rarely pictured without the other judgements before Annas and Caiaphas (Matthew 27:11-19, Mark 15:1, Luke 23:1, John 19:13). On Duccio's *Maestà* panel, we see both Herod and Pilate. Herod is depicted with a crown and a beard, like at Curciu, and Pilate, who seems younger, has a laurel wreath on his head. In Agnolo Gaddi's *Feast of Herod*, besides the fine garments and the crown, he also has grey hair and beard. This means the crowned enthroned man at Curciu may be the king Herod.

Unfortunately the next image is badly preserved (Fig. 9). It is probably *The Flagellation*, in which we see Christ tied against a red column. Around him there are a few figures, but only one survived almost entirely. The figure stands with his back towards Christ and he may have held in his hands a whip, now almost gone. Usually there are depicted different kinds of whips and stakes, but unfortunately they are not visible anymore because of the damage. Behind the figures there are some architectural details. In Matthew's Gospel this happens after the meeting with Pilate and before the crowing with thorns (Matthew

27:26), as in Mark's Gospel (Mark 15:15), outside Pilate's house. There are many Italian depictions of this scene in which Jesus is tied behind a column (see Guido da Siena, Cimabue, Duccio, Lorenzetti and Ugolino di Nerio) dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century, but at Curciu he is presented in front of the column. Some examples of this kind, from the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, are *The Flagellation* by Pierro della Francesca, from around 1455, now at Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino, and a more similar image we have on the *Scenes from the Passion of Christ* panel by Hans Memling, dating from, 1470-1471, today at Galleria Sabauda, Turin. Christ has almost the same position as in the painting in Curciu, and even though the positions of the men around him vary, we may think that the painter at Curciu was influenced by the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century type.

The next episode is also badly damaged, mostly in the centre (Fig. 10). Only three figures can still be identified, and it is probably *The Crowning with Thorns* (Matthew 27:29, Mark 15:17). In the centre we can see Christ, flanked by two men who are pressing the crown with thorns on his head, using two wooden stakes, an image common in the late middle ages, especially in the northern art. This episode also is visible on Duccio's *Maestà* panel, from 1308-1311, composition that we see much later in *The Crowning with Thorns* of the Master of the Karlsruher Passion, dated in 1440 or the *Crowning with Thorns* of the Master of the Lyversberger Passion, from around 1464-1466. Unfortunately, because of its damaged state we cannot analyse much the image. From the man in the left only the head and the hand which holds the stake are visible, while the man on the right cannot be seen anymore. Only the lower part of the scene is left, where the garments of the figures can be seen, showing that Jesus, dressed in white, is flanked by two persons. In the background an architectural décor can be seen again, that acts like a decorative niche for the episode.

The next episode is *Christ Carrying the Cross* (Fig. 11), but only some fragments have remained (John 19:17). Jesus is to the left surrounded by soldiers. The cross is also visible, in a diagonal position, as it is carried by Jesus, with a multitude of spears in the background. This episode is mentioned in Matthew 27:31-32, Mark 15:20-21, Luke 23:26-31, in which is mentioned Simon from Cyrene who helps Jesus to carry the cross, while in John 19:16-17 he carries it all by himself. This episode is not presented in much detail in the

Gospels, but for the medieval art this is one of the most important images in the Passion cycle. According to Anne Derbes, in the first depictions from the 13<sup>th</sup> century it was Simon that carried the cross, like the image on the Sarzana Cross, 1138, but from the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and until the end of it Christ is shown carrying the cross himself, like on the Enrico de Tedice's cross, 1245-1255 (Derbes 1996, 114-115). In the painting at Curciu, from the fragments that had still remained, it seems like Jesus is carrying his own cross, according to John's Gospel. If we look closely we can see that Jesus, even though he is carrying the cross, is not visibly affected by its weight, maintaining his head high. According to Derbes, this type of image was common between the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century until about the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when the depictions in which Jesus is exhausted by the weight of the cross appeared.

The next image is almost entirely lost (Fig. 12), the only visible fragment is in the upper left corner, where the face of a man and another one's helmet are still visible. It is possible that this scene is *The Rising of the Cross*, because the two figures are oriented towards the upper right corner of the image. In the Gospels is not mentioned anything about the rising of the cross (Matthew 27:33-34, Mark 15:22-23, Luke 23:33, John 19:17), but the visual tradition comes with additional details to this scene. Derbes discusses this episode by stating that it first appeared in the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century on the San Gimignano cross, by Coppo di Marcovaldo (around 1261). A later example is also the miniature by Pacino di Bonaguida in *The Morgan Codex*, folio 22, from 1320. Even though at Curciu the scene is almost lost, we can still see the two figures placed to the left, gazing towards the top right of the scene, where the cross may have been raised.

Unfortunately, the following image is completely lost (Fig. 13), though it may have been *The Crucifixion*, because this episode is followed by *The Deposition* (Fig. 14), which took place on Friday evening (Mark 15:46, Luke 23:53). Luckily, most of the image survived. We see Jesus dead, in Mary's arms, an image which reminds us of *Pietà*. Behind Mary is John, always present in this scene, and the other two women may be Mary of Cleophas and Mary Salome. In the background we can see the ladder by the cross. Some similar images are *The Deposition*, by an anonymous Italian artist, from around 1180, in the Basilica di Aquileia's crypt, *The Deposition*

by the Master of St Francis, from around 1260, in the Lower Church of San Francesco, Assisi, and Guido da Siena's wooden panel from 1270 now at Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena. In all these depictions, as in the painting from Curciu, we see Christ facing upwards, in Mary's arms, John up on the ladder handing Jesus to Mary and around them the rest of the crowd, making us believe that the painter at Curciu was influenced by the Italian painting from the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The first image of the lower register is *The Entombment* (Fig. 15), judging by the stone sarcophagus in which we can see a body wrapped up in a white shroud and at least two persons who are holding him. This image also is damaged in the central part, but we can see in the back two figures, Joseph from Arimathea with Jesus's mother, Mary, and the person in front of the sarcophagus, whose legs are the only ones that are still visible, is probably Nicodemus (Matthew 27:59-61, Mark 15:46-47, Luke 23:53-55, John 19:38-42). The same composition is also present on Duccio's *Maestà*, in Pietro Lorenzetti's fresco in the Lower Church of San Francesco, Assisi, or in Ugolino di Nerio's panel with *The Entombment* from 1325-1328, now at Statliche Museen in Berlin.

The second image is *The Resurrection* from Sunday morning (Fig. 16). Although the moment when Jesus rises from the tomb is not described in the Gospels, the visual tradition enriches the episode with additional elements (Matthew 28:1-7, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-8, John 20:1-10). Here at Curciu, Jesus is depicted in the centre of the composition, rising from the tomb while blessing with his hand. In the back we see one of the guards asleep. The rest of the image is unfortunately destroyed. Some other examples of Christ rising from the tomb, surrounded by sleeping guards are the fresco of Pietro Lorenzetti in the Lower Church of Assisi, from around 1320, Ugolino di Nerio's panel from 1324-1324 from the Santa Croce Altarpiece, now at National Gallery in London, the central panel of Niccolò di Segna's altarpiece from Duomo Sansepolcro, from around 1350, Andrea del Castagno's fresco in Sant'Apollonia, Florence, from 1447, the Resurrection by Piero della Francesca and on the wall paintings in Pinacoteca Comunale, Sansepolcro, dating from 1463-1465. A more closer parallel in terms of composition and also closer to Transylvania is Thomas de Coloswar's work *The Resurrection*, from 1427, now at Christian Museum, Esztergom, in which we see a

more dynamic figure of Jesus while exiting the tomb, and not so rigid, as in the Italian examples. His position is almost identical to what we see in Curciu. Last but not least, the year in which this painting of Thomas de Coloswar was made (1427) is very close to the dating of the paintings at Curciu (between 1427 and the end of the century). Dana Jenei affirmed that the characteristics of Thomas's painting are present here, enriched with more complex compositions and the expressiveness of the characters depicted (Jenei 2016, 61).

The next episode is *The Harrowing of Hell*, according to Dana Jenei (Jenei 2016, 57, 111) (Fig. 17), mentioned in I Peter 3:18-19. Christ is shown to the left, holding the flag and helping the saved souls exit Hell. According to the visual tradition, the first persons saved are Adam and Eve. Here at Curciu, because of the damage of the scene, only Adam is visible. Some examples of this episode are the *Christ in Limbo* scene on Duccio's *Maestà* (1308-1311), Pietro Lorenzetti's fresco in the Lower Church in Assisi (1320), Giotto's *Descent into Limbo* on the wooden panel now at Alte Pinakothek in Munich (1320-1325), Fra Angelico's fresco in Convento di San Marco, Florence (1441-1442), and the Master of the Osservanza's *Descent into Limbo* at Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge (around 1445). We see almost the same composition, with small variations, the work of Fra Angelico being the closest one in terms of chromatic characteristics. The only thing that concerns us in the case of the image from Curciu is that the chronology of the narration is not respected, because this image is placed after the Resurrection, and not before it.

The next three scenes are very damaged and they can no longer be recognised (Fig. 18, Fig. 19 and Fig. 20). In the first one, in the upper left corner we see a part of Christ's halo, meaning that there is at least one scene in which he is depicted. If the chronological order has been respected and if the scenes are still part of the Life of Christ cycle, there might have been images with Christ's apparitions after the Resurrection. Unfortunately only small fragments are visible, but not enough for us to identify a particular scene. We can look at other examples, though, to see what these images might have been. In Giotto's Arena chapel, the next scenes with Christ after the Resurrection are *Noli me tangere* and *The Ascension*, and on Duccio's *Maestà* there are *Noli me tangere* and *The Road to Emmaus*. For a more

local parallel, if we look at Mălâncrav, for example, the scenes after the Resurrection are *Noli me tangere* and *The Ascension*, which means that it is possible that these images are present also at Curciu.

The last two images are fortunately in a better state (Fig. 21 and Fig. 22). According to Dana Jenei (Jenei 2016, 100, 135), besides the Passion cycle at Curciu, there is also a depiction of the two saints Cosmas and Damian. In the first image, the two saints are standing behind a body whose right leg is cut, meaning that this is the episode when Cosmas and Damian are transplanting the dead Moor's leg onto an ill Christian. Some examples of this scene are the panel of Matteo di Pacino, *St. Cosmas and Damian*, now at North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh (1370-1375), Fra Angelico, *The Healing of Justinian by Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian*, today at Museo di San Marco in Florence (1438-1440) and the panel *Saint Cosmas and Damian Healing a Christian with the Leg of a Dead Moor*, of School of Castile and Leon (1460-1480). It has not been clarified yet why there is an image of these two saints at Curciu. Usually the presence of some saints along with the Christological narrative is due to the dedication of the church, in Curciu's case saint John, but their presence here might be because of their healing powers. Cosmas and Damian were two brothers, saint martyrs from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century Middle East who were known for their voluntary healing activities, in the name of God (Kirschbaum VII, 344). They appear also on the southern choir wall in Mălâncrav, even though the church is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The two saints appear there as full-body portraits and not in a particular healing scene, as here at Curciu.

The last scene is highly damaged too (Fig. 22), and unfortunately no longer recognisable. There are two men standing straight, the one on the left elderly and the one on the right dark-haired with a beard, looking towards the upper right corner, while another dark-haired man is in front of them, looking towards the opposite direction. In the lower part of the image it can be seen another figure kneeling, with his hands together, but because of the damage to the fresco it can no longer be identified. The two standing men have a majestic appearance underlined by their richly decorated headdresses.

After the recreation of the pictorial programme is completed, we may say that at Curciu we have a predominance of the Passion of Christ cycle, but

also a few scenes from his apparitions after the Resurrection. Besides this narrative, there is also a healing scene of the saints Cosmas and Damian and another scene, unfortunately now lost.

As we have seen, the main works that had influenced the paintings in Curciu come from the Italian space. The north Italian influence is very well known in Transylvania in the early fifteenth century, that along with the international gothic style and the bohemian "Gothic court" have marked the stylistic characteristics of many mural paintings of the Transylvanian churches, including the church in Curciu (Jenei 2016, 53).

Regarding the aesthetic value of the paintings, the painter was very particular about the character's faces, but the garments and the body's anatomy were not executed with the same artistry. The main colours that survived are the green, brown and the red of the garments and architectural details, along with the dark blue of the sky. The drawing is mostly fluid and almost transparent, and the characters have an unique expressivity. The contoured hands and the legs are unusually big and drawn quite naively, in comparison with the realism of the figures. Despite the fragmentary state of the paintings and the transparency of the colours, the mural paintings from Curciu amaze with their draughtsmanship and the dramatic expressions of the characters.

As mentioned above, the iconographic programme of the sanctuary consists mainly in Christ's Passion. The relation between the paintings and the Gospels is quite tight, in some cases the episodes are present in all four Gospels (*The Entry into Jerusalem*, *The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane*, *The Arrest*, *The Judgement*, *The Rising of the cross*, *The Entombment*, *The Resurrection* while in other cases the episode is described in only one Gospel (*Christ carrying his cross* – John 19-17).

Curciu is not the only Transylvanian church decorated with Christ's Passion on the northern wall of the sanctuary. The most known example is the church in Mălâncrav, where there are 15 scenes. The narration begins with The Last Supper and it concludes with The Resurrection. Another church with the same decoration on the northern wall of the sanctuary is located in Râșnov, where eight of the most important episodes survived until today, starting with The Last Supper and finishing with The Resurrection.

At Curciu there are many more episodes depicted from the life of Christ, 19 in total.

As we can see, in each case the number of the episodes is different, for various reasons. First, the number of the scenes can be limited by the architectural space. At Mălâncrav the narrative occupies the entire northern wall of the choir and even continues on the north-eastern wall of the apse too. At Râșnov, there are only a few scenes selected, but they only decorate a well limited part of the northern wall of the choir. As regards the Curciu church, the scenes decorate no more, no less than the entire northern wall of the sanctuary. Another aspect is the size of the images. At Curciu we have so many episodes because they are quite small, so it is the case of Mălâncrav, but at Râșnov the images are indeed few, but they are a lot bigger in size. In any case, this may reflect the options of the community or the donor, who chose which episodes to emphasise more. At Curciu we have clearly an emphasis of Christ's suffering, illustrated through many episodes, but also on his Resurrection and his apparitions, while at Sibiu, for example, there is a single but monumental *Crucifixion* image that emphasises the Eucharistic nature of Christ's sacrifice.

The presence of these scenes on this wall is not accidental because this is the dedicated place for the tabernacle. This is significant because the tabernacle was used to preserve the sacrament during the Liturgy. In many Transylvanian churches, as in Curciu's case, instead of a tabernacle there is a sacramentary niche, often richly decorated with sculptural details. The main message of the pictorial programme is referring to the Easter feast days that started with the Palm Sunday and ended with the Pentecost. The episodes depicted here are the most important events in Christ's life that took place in the Passion Week, which culminated with his death and resurrection. The images are directly connected with the significance of the liturgical act and with the practices during the Liturgy. Some of the episodes present on this wall, especially *The Last Supper* and *Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane*, emphasize the doctrine of transubstantiation, meaning the transformation during the Liturgy of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Also, the chalice that contained the wine and the host, as Eucharistic symbols, suggested the doctrine of concomitance, meaning that the blood and the body of Christ were present in both the wine and the bread (Crăciun 2010, 60). The chalice and the host were

kept in this sacramentary niche, surrounded by the mural paintings. The message transmitted by the episodes depicted emphasized the sacrament present in the niche, and also vice-versa.

These murals were very often seen by the medieval people because of the importance of the Liturgy, when the whole community had to participate. Maria Crăciun in one of her studies stated that the clergy tried to impose the laics to participate every Sunday and in the feast days, closing the city and also the taverns, so that nothing would interrupt the service (Crăciun 2005, 81). This means that the medieval people were encouraged to be in permanent contact with these images during the entire liturgical year, especially during the feast days. As regards the function of the narrative, we may think that because of the importance given to the Liturgy, an also to the murals presented there, the images had, obviously, the role to instruct, but they also had a devotional purpose, meant to challenge the viewer, inviting him to meditate and to empathize with Christ's suffering. The message was transmitted, thus, in three ways: visually, through the paintings, acoustically, through what the priest said during the Liturgy and also physically, through the administration of the sacrament. Therefore, we can state that the paintings had an active role in the religious services.

Last but not least, one of the most important factors is the significance of these images. In all these churches the majority of the scenes are part of the Passion cycle, but in some cases there are also some apparitions after the Resurrection, for instance at Curciu and also at Mălâncrav. In both of these churches there are many scenes that depict the tortures which Jesus endured (*The Flagellation*, *The Crowning with Thorns*, *The Carrying of the Cross*), events that culminate with *The Crucifixion*, an episode which unfortunately at Curciu did not survive. We see that the main focus in these images is the suffering of Jesus that started on Monday, culminated with his crucifixion on Friday evening and his resurrection on Sunday morning. The paintings at Curciu continue these events with several scenes from Christ's Death (*The Harrowing of Hell*), The Resurrection and at least one of his apparitions after that, maybe even his Ascension, but unfortunately the paintings are too damaged to be deciphered. Even though these images are not visible anymore, the images after the Resurrection underline Christ's divine nature and the miracle of his Resurrection, but also his human nature and

his suffering during the Passion Week. Eugene Honeé discussed this emphasis on Christ's suffering, physical, moral and psychological, stating that it was promoted by the Franciscans who believed that the imitation of Christ's suffering was one of the fundamental components of the devotional acts (Honeé 1994, 164).

A more detailed view of the Franciscan influence over the mural paintings is Anne Derbe's book *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy*, in which she analyses every episode from *The Arrest* to *The Raising of the Cross*, discussing the evolution of the images and also the Franciscan influence over the later depictions. Derbes mentions that starting with the 1230-1240 period, in the new artworks commissioned by the Franciscans Jesus started to be presented as *Christus Patiens* (as a human, suffering victim of the tortures) and not as *Christus Triumphans* (as a saviour, invincible) as it was before (Derbes 1996, 64-65). The Franciscan writers also insisted on Christ's suffering and his voluntarily acceptance of death. Among the works discussed by the author are Pseudo-Bede's *De meditatione Passionis Christi per septem diei horas libellus*, Bonaventure's *Lignum vitae* and *Apologia Pauperum*, and last but not least, Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes vitae Christi*. Another detail that received a great attention was the rope which kept Jesus's hands tied during the Passion, Derbes declaring that the Franciscans adopted the rope as a characteristic feature of the Order, because Saint Francis refused a belt and chose the rope instead (Derbes 1996, 92). Saint Francis also followed Christ in terms of humility and he was mocked as well by the community around him, sometimes he even asked the friars to mock him, thus imitating every aspect of Christ's Passion (*imitatio Christi*), considering himself as *Alter Christus* (Derbes 1996, 108-110). Lastly, Francis's ideology of mission was based on a biblical passage that said "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24), assuming in this way the role of a crusader, being marked with a cross, and also adopting the image in which Christ is carrying his cross as a symbol of the Franciscan Order (Derbes 1996, 130). Summarizing this discussion, it is obvious that this emphasis on Christ suffering during his Passion underlined his human and fragile form. The contemplation and the meditation on his life eventually encouraged the imitation of his suffering, encouraging the people to identify and empathize with Christ.

As mentioned at the beginning of the study, Curciu was in the 15<sup>th</sup> century a free village that was included in the Mediaș seat, meaning that the donor of the paintings was the community itself. Thus, the organisation, the layout and the number of the episodes selected could reflect the community's options. As mentioned before, Ciprian Firea stated that in the Transylvanian villages, even though the local educated personalities, that had economic or political power, might have helped with the building of the churches, it was still the priests who had a big role in the decoration of the church (Firea 2016, 237). This means that for the selection of the scenes were involved both the community and the local priest. Even though until now there is no clear written evidence of who the priest or the donor of the paintings was, Dana Jenei stated that it is Nicholas of Ațel, depicted in the image of *The Last Supper*, kneeling in front of Jesus, taking into consideration his usual position as a kneeling and praying donor, without mentioning other details about him. Some other representations of priests we see at Hărman, the donor being depicted near the Crucifixion scene, at Alțâna, where we see a priest inside the sedilia (Kónya 2013, 52), and at Cîsnădie, on the interior of the eastern window, Petrus Plebanus, who had an important role in the construction of the church (Dâmboiu 2009, 38). The donors or the patrons of the churches had also some privileges, one of them being the dedicated seating place, sedilia (Firea 2016, 236), present also at Curciu. The placement of the sedilia, the dedicated seating place of the donor, on the southern wall (present also at Dârlos, Alțâna and Alma) offered a complete view of the mural paintings and over the entire sanctuary, the most important and sacred place in the church. Also, if these paintings of the Passion cycle are on the northern wall of the chancel, they are directly opposite and fully visible from the sedilia.

As a conclusion, we think that the church in Curciu deserves much more attention not only because of its extended Passion cycle, but also because of the presence of the images after Jesus's Resurrection. It is also curious the image with the saints Cosmas and Damian, but also the last scene from the lower register, not yet identified. Further analysis is required also regarding the stylistic attribution that impresses the viewer with the dramatic figures of the characters depicted, and also regarding the painter himself. The Passion cycle here is one of the most extended ensemble that we have seen until now in Transylvania, placed in the sanctuary, because it

begins with *The Entry into Jerusalem*, and it ends long after the Resurrection, that along with the saints Comas and Damian and the last scene, it covers the whole northern wall of the sanctuary in no less than 19 images. The emphasis on the moments from the Passion Week, that is the arrest, the unjust judgement, the torment and the suffering of Christ, culminated with his death, resurrection and the apparitions, underline the importance of his suffering, fragile humanity, but also his triumphant, divine nature. The placement

of this programme on the northern choir wall strengthens the sacrality of the message, the sacramentary niche being, thus, surrounded by images regarding the sacrifice made by Christ for the humanity, resumed at each Liturgy. The church in Curciu joins in with the churches whose sanctuary keeps important paintings about the Passion week, underlining the importance of these images in the religious lives of the medieval people.



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## LISTA ILUSTRAȚIILOR

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Fig. 22. Imagine pierdută

The Entry into Jerusalem			The Last Supper			The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane	
The Arrest	The Hearing before Herod	The Flagellation	The Crowning with Thorns	Christ Carrying the Cross	The Rising of the Cross	The Crucifixion	The Deposition
The Entombment	The Resurrection	The Harrowing of Hell	?	?	?	Saints Cosmas and Damian	?

Fig. 1. The northern choir wall paintings scheme



Fig. 2. The first two vertical registers (west and middle)



Fig. 3. The third vertical register (east)





Fig. 4. *The Entry into Jerusalem*



Fig. 5. *The Last Supper*



Fig. 6. *The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane*



Fig. 7. *The Arrest*



Fig. 8. *Jesus in front of Herod*



Fig. 9. *The Flagellation*





Fig. 10. *The Crowning with Thorns*



Fig. 11. *Christ Carrying the Cross*



Fig. 12. *The Ascent on the Cross*



Fig. 13. *The Crucifixion*



Fig. 14. *The Deposition*



Fig. 15. *The Entombement*

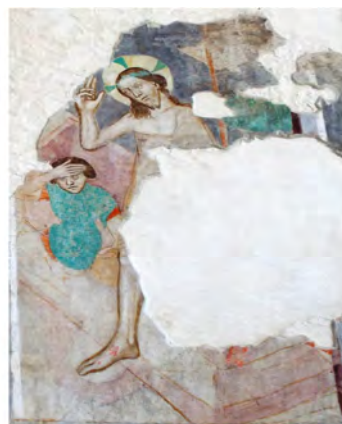


Fig. 16. *The Ressurrection*



Fig. 17. *The Harrowing of Hell*



Fig. 18. Image lost



Fig. 19. Image lost

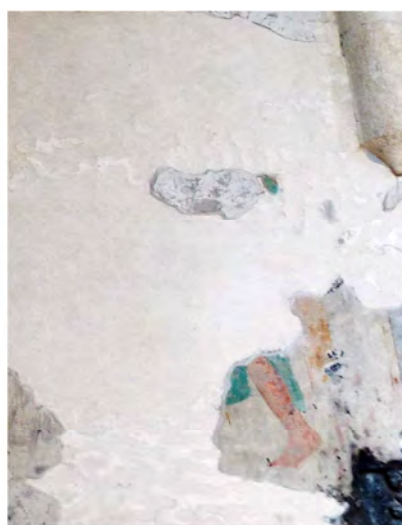


Fig. 20. Image lost



Fig. 21. *Saints Cosmas and  
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Fig. 22. Image lost





## THE RESTORATION OF THE BLACK CHURCH IN BRAȘOV THROUGHOUT THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Ágnes ZIEGLER\*

**Abstract:** *Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Black Church in Brașov underwent several restoration campaigns, as a consequence of which, the church lost a part of its original Gothic substance that had already been altered in the Baroque period. This paper makes a review of the restoration campaigns, its protagonists, the methods and measures, trying also to reconstruct the aspect of the church prior to its renewal in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

**Key words:** *Black Church, restoration, archive images, stone conservation, statue replicas*

**Rezumat:** *Pe durata întregului secol 20, Biserica Neagră din Brașov s-a aflat în restaurare, în urma căreia aspectul construcției gotice, modificat în perioada barocă, a suferit nenumărate pierderi. Studiul de față trece în revistă campaniile de restaurare, protagoniștii ei, măsurile luate și metodele implementate, încercând o reconstrucție teoretică a imaginii bisericii de acum mai bine de un secol.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Biserica Neagră, restaurare, imagini de arhivă, conservarea pietrei, replici de statui*

The Black Church in Brașov is known for public and researchers alike as one of the most Eastern examples of European Gothic. Taking a short glimpse in its history, we see how events and interventions contributed to a gradual transformation of the church and ultimately to a loss of its original Gothic aspect. After the building of a new vault (1532), the refurnishing in the Reformation period (1544) and further interventions on the choir (1665), the church suffered a considerable reconstruction finalised in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (1690–1772), following its massive destruction in the Great Fire of Brașov (1689), continued in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with interventions in Neo-Gothic style. (For the history of the church see generally Kühlbrandt 1898, Kühlbrandt 1927, Ziegler 2018)

Following several construction and reconstruction phases, which reshaped the aspect of the church throughout the centuries, the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought interventions which were meant to repair the existing substance and at times to restore it as it must have been built originally. Although at times some doubtful, not optimal, methods were used, leading to the regrettable loss of some artistic details, the restoration works have undoubtedly succeeded in preserving the whole of the church for further generations. The main problem of all

the interventions remains the poor documentation, which leaves us with questions about how the church could originally have looked like and which aspects were modified by its large reconstruction in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Due to the relatively large number of restoration campaigns throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which implemented different methods and conservation concepts, we are now forced to pick up the pieces of a puzzle, in order to try and reconstruct the aspect of the church prior to these interventions. Alongside the deficient documentation providing only a minimum of information, we can turn to historic photography and imagery in doing so. An important collection of archival images is kept in the Department for Documentary Graphics of the Brukenthal National Museum (Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Muzeul de Istorie, Colecția de Grafică Documentară). These provide the opportunity to detail the restoration works of the Black Church also in the pages of this magazine.

The earliest image showing solely the Black Church dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On page 10 of a booklet containing aquarelle paintings, kept in the Brukenthal Museum, there is also a sketch of the Black Church, viewed from the Warthe hill, from the North-Western direction, a relatively detailed image, capturing well the main characteristics of the building (Schlichting 1858, 10) (Fig. 1). Another image is a 19<sup>th</sup> century etching, also with author unknown. The singular

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sheet kept in the Brukenthal Museum was probably part of a volume and was, according to its inscription, edited by F. Michaelis in Sibiu and printed by Römmler és János in Dresden (Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Colecția de Grafică Documentară, Inventory no. 013154) (Fig. 2). This depicts the church again from North-Eastern direction, seen from the former Rossmarkt Street, showing generously the Western and Northern façade. Due to the detailed reproduction, one can easily recognize some aspects of the church exterior which have been removed by the recent restorations, such as the second room of the sacristy, the nave windows partly closed with wall on the level of the side galleries or some details of the coronation of the tower and Western facade. Two images of the interior are known dating before the era of photography. The first is a lithography based on the drawing of Theodor Glatz (1818–1871), with the title *Das Innere des Doms zu Kronstadt*, dated 1844, a copy of which is kept at the Brukenthal Museum (Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Colecția de Grafică Documentară, Inventory no. 33008) (Fig. 3). Although it definitely provides some indications about details which do not exist anymore, generally its accuracy is doubtful. The second is an etching of Ludwig Heßheimer (1872–1956), which is an important source regarding the early exhibition of antique Ottoman rugs in the church, but is rather negligible to further conclusions concerning the architectural aspects (Die Karpathen 1914, n.n.).

Meaningful sources showing the aspect of the church prior to the recent restorations are two early photographs dating from about the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, taken before the refurnishing of the choir in 1865–1866, bearing the emblem of the photographer Ed[uard] Fritsch from Sibiu (Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Colecția de Grafică Documentară, Inventory no. 015890 and 015891) (Fig. 4). On the photo showing the choir one can recognize the horizontal beam at the triumphal arch, holding earlier probably a crucifix group, the 18<sup>th</sup> century altarpiece, the swallow nest organ and two elevated pews, probably connected earlier to the rood screen. The important and authentic source for the outside aspect is another series of six photographs, of unknown author, showing the church before 1898 (Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Colecția de Grafică Documentară, Inventory no. 015859, 015861, 015863, 015864, 15813, 01860) (Fig. 5–8), and the illustrations of Oszkár Lácay-Fritz's article of 1913 (Fritz 1913, 15–21).

The beginning of the art historical research of the Black Church at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century coincides with the beginning of the long period of restoration that stretched throughout the whole century (1898–2000). The conclusions of the historical, archival and stylistic research concerning the church provided a foundation for the decisions regarding the restoration, whereas the restoration itself could add to the historical data, by analysing the edifice from the immediate proximity and drawing conclusions about the construction methods.

This century of restorations evolved approximately around the same building principles throughout its entire span, repeatedly trying to restore the assumed original Gothic state of the church, prior to the Great Fire in 1689. We recognize this intention for example in the recurrent wish to change the structure of the roof, freeing the balustrade traced with quatrefoils over the cornice as it probably had been in the Gothic period (Ziegler 2018, 93, 105). This wish for the reconstruction of the Gothic aspect can be found as early as the erection of the new altar in 1865, until as late as the year 1998 as builders intended to reconstruct the tower details in their assumed original state. The poor condition of the church always provided the initial motive to begin a restoration and enough excuse to replace damaged original elements with new ones, unfortunately without holding on to the original fragments. The interventions concentrated mainly on the weather-beaten exterior of the church, dealing mostly with the choir on the inside; the nave was spared of major changes, probably because of the side galleries, built in a Neo-Gothic style at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (1710–1715). Although the static consolidation of the building was in many cases necessary, structural changes were rather rare compared to the multitude of small repair works and replacements of carved stone details.

On the four-hundredth anniversary of the church reformer and scholar Johannes Honterus (1498–1549), celebrated in his home town Braşov, Friedrich Wilhelm Fröde (1847–1920) issued a plan and an estimate of costs for a full restoration of the Black Church (Fröde 1898). Fröde, an architect from Dresden, studied in the School for Architecture in the city of Zittau and worked starting from 1869 with Theophil Hansen in Vienna. Starting with 1881, he conducted the reconstruction of the St. Elisabeth church in Košice, following the plans of Imre Steindl

(1839–1902) and drafted plans for several renovations in the region of Szepes County, the churches of Prešov, Sabinov and Gelnica. Subsequently he became the city architect of Vienna (Lövei 1997, 857).

Fröde divided his plan for the restoration of the Black Church in three chapters according to the degree of the interventions. Besides the advanced deterioration of the stone material, he found no problems of static origin endangering the construction. He perceived the consolidation of the triumphal arch buttress as defective and proposed the recovery of the buttress in their original form, after having identified the alternative means of static consolidation (Fröde 1898, 3). Among the urgent matters of restoration he counts a series of works on the exterior of the choir, for example the reparation of the plinth, of the window tracery, of the breastwork, the replacement of the statues, the statue baldachins and pinnacles, as well as freeing the traced cornice balustrade from under the roofing (Fröde 1898, 3). He considered the latter of interest also for the nave, nevertheless he timed this intervention for the second group of priorities, together with the building of a foundation for the South-East porch of the church, as well as several interventions on stone details of the portals, replacing or completing them with artificial stone (Fröde 1898, 7-19). In the third group of priorities we find a series of measures characteristic for his era, as these include some surprisingly bold proposals to reinstate the Gothic character of the church. He recommended the completion of the Gothic gable above the South-East portal, the completion of an assumed missing carved stone pediment above the West entrance, the building of the second tower, as well as the construction of pyramidal, traced carved stone steeples for the towers (Fröde 1898, 19-22).

Although the exact premises of Fröde's proposal are not known, it seems possible that some restoration measures had been planned in the run-up to the Honterus' Jubilee, while the church clock was repaired and a statue of the reformer was erected (Kühlbrandt 1927, 6). Nevertheless, none of the works proposed by Fröde, which were estimated to last ten years and cost 500.000 Forint, were ever accomplished, not even partly.

The restoration effectively began in 1912 on the initiative of the State Monument Commission in Budapest (Műemlékek Országos Bizottsága). Oszkár Lácay-Fritz (1878–1958) was appointed as supervisor of the construction site, travelling

every second week from Budapest to Braşov, and acted also as architect, providing the plans for the renovation. Oszkár Lácay-Fritz studied architecture on the Faculty of Constructions in Budapest, where he later worked as assistant lecturer, further on as tutor. He was a member of the State Monument Commission and technical director of the restoration of the House of Parliament in Budapest. He contributed to the restoration of several medieval churches in Hungary and had a special interest for the stone decay process and its prevention, topics he also wrote two books about (MÉL Lácay Fritz, 56). After this first phase of restoration at the Black Church, he was also invited several times later on, to write an expertise about the conservation of the church, until he was forced to withdraw due to an illness in 1937 (Letter Roth/Wühr 1937).

This first campaign, lasting from 1912 to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 (Kühlbrandt 1927, 19-20; Zeidner 1999, 157), concentrated on the restoration of the stones in the plinth. The plinth stones were replaced with blocks of andesite brought from the stone-pit of Malnaş, easily recognisable by the characteristic violet tinge (Lácay-Fritz 1937; Killyen-Schuller 1968, 5-6). The stone replacements in this period were made in the spirit of reviving the correct Gothic style of the church, as one reconstructed a plinth profile supposedly identified by Lácay-Fritz as being the original form. The plinth profile on the choir façade had been destroyed prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as stores were placed between the buttresses and the wall surfaces were evened out and plastered. This was the situation found by Lácay-Fritz after the stores have been demolished in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He reconstructed the plinth of the South façade based on a survived piece allegedly found in the area of the Southern triumphal arch buttress (FuSK Protocols 1937–1939, 18.06.1937, 30; 09.07.1937, 37; 02.08.1937, 45).

During the restoration of the church, between 1912 and 1914, an architectural survey was completed, the documentation being to this day kept in Budapest (Magyar Építészeti Múzeum és Műemlékvédelmi Dokumentációs Központ). The drawings, partly also published, provide an accurate image of the architectural aspect of the church at the beginning of the century, yet none of them evoke its conservation status (Magyarországi Művészet 1987, 556, 557, 560, 561, 562).

Not foreseeing the outbreak of the war and the

interruption of the works only two years after their beginning, the Braşov cultural paper, *Die Karpathen*, published an ironical sketch in 1913 presenting the church fully covered by scaffold – already an exaggeration, as only the choir could have been scaffolded at that time. The ironic explanation to the sketch said that the parish had commissioned scaffolding for the next hundred years to enhance the attractivity of the church (*Die Karpathen* 1913, 284) (Fig. 9). What the sarcastic newspaper editors could not know in 1913 is that the restoration of the church would in fact go on – with some gaps – for a century.

After the war, Oszkár Lácay-Fritz, again invited in 1924 to conduct an expertise on the state of the building, concluded that the church was endangered by severe static problems: first large cracks on the upper side, the partial disjunction of the buttress from the wall, the outward leaning of the walls, would all be signs of serious problems, which would cause the collapse of the church if not immediately intervened. This expertise did not survive; nevertheless the conclusions are referred to in Lácay-Fritz's ulterior report (Lácay-Fritz 1934; Schuller 1975, 4). The works of static consolidation were led beginning with 1924 by the city architect of Braşov Albert Schuller (1877–1948), who had studied architecture and construction engineering at the Magyar Királyi Állami Felső Ipariskola in Budapest and in Munich, then returned in his hometown and distinguished himself by implementing new building techniques. His early works are characterised by an understated Secession style, which evolves to a well-articulated functionalism in his late work. In dealing with restorations of historic buildings, he proved an excellent sense for combining modern solutions and local traditions (Tătaru 1998, 323-324).

Dealing with the static problems of the choir, Schuller proposed a system of metal ties introduced under the church vaulting, meant to pull the walls together and stabilize the static (Kühlbrandt 1927, 19; Killyen-Schuller 1968, 5-6; Schuller 1975, 4; Zeidner 1999, 157). This metal ties system must have had a more modest antecedent built around 1818 (*Protocols of the church council (1814–1828)*, 29<sup>th</sup> of august 1818, p. 251-252; 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1819, p. 273-274). In 1925 and 1926, in order to eliminate the moisture of the foundations and walls, the soaked plaster was removed on the inside, up to a level of two meters above the floor and ceramic pipes were introduced in the foundation (Groß 1925 a, 139-

140; Killyen-Schuller 1968, 5-6; Zeidner 1999, 157). When removing the plaster, the restoration teams discovered the tomb stone of the early parish priest Thomas Sander, which provided relevant information regarding the history of the edifice (Groß 1925 a, 139-140; Groß 1925 b, 140-154; Philippi 1974, 15; Ziegler 2018, 74-77).

Schuller also led the works for the enlargement of the Western gallery (Kühlbrandt 1927, 3; Killyen-Schuller 1968, 5-6 (pointing 1924 as the year of construction); Zeidner 1999, 157 (pointing 1926 as the year of the construction). The extension was necessary because of the growing number of choir members, who needed more place near the large Buchholz organ built in 1839. The first plan for the enlargement, proposing a parapet with Neo-Gothic aspect, was submitted by architect Joseph Nekolny in 1901 (Gallery project Nekolny), followed by Schuller's plan in 1923 (Gallery project Schuller). Prior to the modification, the gallery had a straight line parapet, stretching between the four Western piers of the nave, two of which end at gallery level. The latter had originally divided the parapet, shaped – just like in the case of the cornice balustrade – with a tracery of aligned quatrefoils, unperforated. This was replaced by Schuller, who added an arched parapet, thus being able to add more room to the gallery, needed to house the large organ and the growing choir. Thus he sacrificed the old parapet in Gothic style, fragments of which now only survive underneath the vaulting of the side galleries at the two points where these intersect with the former parapet of the Western gallery.

The falling of a large fragment from a deteriorated pinnacle gave the decisive incentive for the largest restoration campaign of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 10-11). The restoration took place between 1935 and 1944 and was supervised by the association named *Für unsere Schwarze Kirche* (For our Black Church). The association founded in 1937 took over the coordination and supervision of the works, functioning also as a fundraiser (Kamner 1964, 39). It included a restoration council, presided by the architects Albert Schuller and Helmut Zeidner (1905–1994), who also lead the works, joined by the engineer Fritz Roth (Zeidner 1999, 158). The proceedings of the board meetings, such as the field diaries provide a relatively detailed picture of the works, beginning with the launching of the works and the blessing of the scaffold on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1937 (Field diaries FuSK 1937–1939; Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939).

We have found several photograph folders showing the church prior to the major restoration in the 1930's. These photos were the followers of the tradition of vedute albums in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, containing general and popular views of the church. A photographic folder by Leopold Adler (Photo folder Adler) made probably in Braşov between 1866 and 1895, but also one by an unknown author (Photo folder *Die Schwarze Kirche zu Kronstadt*) dating probably between 1923 and 1935, both kept by the Brukenthal Museum, belong to this group, but we may also count the illustrations of the volumes *Das Burzenland* and the monography of the Black Church signed by Ernst Kühlbrandt as being part of the same concept (Kühlbrandt 1989; Kühlbrandt 1927; Burzenland 1928). These pictures typically show the church from a South-Western view, the Eastern façade of the choir with the statues, the Western and South-Eastern portals and two classical interior views, the choir seen from under the Western gallery and the nave seen from the baptismal font under the triumphal arch. Sometimes they caught also the image of the baptismal font, the pulpit or the wall painting with Mary and Child.

The challenge of this restoration campaign did not reside in the static consolidation of the church since that had been solved by the metal tie system introduced a decade before, but in the conservation of the stone material of the façade, which was deteriorating rapidly and extensively. During this second restoration led by Schuller, the following tasks were accomplished: renewing or replacing the complete stone material of the choir façade, of the buttress, on the windows, including sills, splays and tracery (Hörmann 1938; Killyen-Schuller 1968, 5-6; Láczy-Fritz 1937; Kamner 1942, 4). Three buttresses at the termination of the choir had been underpinned with reinforced concrete and rebuilt in their complete height (Field diaries FuSK 1937–1939), the baldachins and statues on the buttresses were replaced (Field diaries FuSK 1937–1939, entries on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 1937, p. 69; 16<sup>th</sup> of February 1938, p. 76; 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 1938, p. 79; 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1938, p. 80; 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1938, p. 118-119) and the second chamber of the sacristy was demolished (Kamner 1942, 4; Kamner 1964, 38; Zeidner 1999, 158).

The most urgent topic of this era was to identify the stone material most suitable for making replacements on the façade; in this respect several stones had been analysed, such as the volcanic tuff from the quarry in Timişul de Jos, a volcanic trachyte of blueish tone, the limestone of Ighiu,

the andesite of Malnaş, sandstone from the stone pits of Sânzieni, Apaţa, Ghelinţa, thrachyte of Deva, artificial stone or the tuff of Banpotoc. Other topics of the restoration were the method of replacing particular elements, the situation of the choir buttress-statues and the option to heat the church.

To solve these matters in an optimal, professional manner, the Braşov community invited several European architects and monument conservators, great authorities of the era. Besides Oszkár Láczy-Fritz already mentioned, Hans Hörmann, Ludwig Grote, Hans Wühr and Alois Kieslinger had also been in Braşov, on the Black Church construction site. However commendable was the initiative of pursuing professional help, the community only seldom succeeded in choosing the right solution from the several – often opposed – reports, their decisions often being arbitrary and averse to current restoration concepts.

The monument conservation experts from Hungary or Germany only stayed short periods of time in Braşov, their contribution to the restoration works ran down to intermittent counselling and expertise. On the site of the construction the works were conducted by local architects and engineers, working generally with a crew who did not have a special training in monument restoration. At several times the formation of a stone mason was discussed, as a so called *Laubmacher* would have had a better qualification to form Gothic elements, such as baldachins and the mechanical surface treatment of stone (Field diaries FuSK 1937–1939, entries on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1937, p. 21; 18<sup>th</sup> of May 1937, p. 23; 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1937, p. 32-34; 18<sup>th</sup> of July 1937, p. 82-90). In this matter, one considered inviting Johann Stelzl or Hans Borisch from Vienna, also a stone mason from Passau, ultimately deciding on training the Braşov mason Otto Graditsch as a *Laubmacher* in Passau (Hörmann 1938; Field diaries FuSK 1937–1939, entry on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1938, p. 80).

But how was the problem of stone replacement solved?

The restoration works were triggered by the poor quality of the stone material of the choir façade, so this was a priority of the consolidation as early as 1935 (Fig. 12). The works started with the replacement of the deteriorated pinnacles, which had survived quite fragmentary. The restoration council did not want to preserve this image of decay by solely stopping further degradation, and thus decided to replace the pinnacles with

artificial stone reproductions, modelled on gypsum replicas made by Láczy-Fritz at the beginning of the century (1912–1914) (Fig. 13). Unfortunately the original pinnacles were not kept in a lapidary, so we only have photos to document their original form (Láczy-Fritz 1934; Groß 1936, 4; Láczy-Fritz 1937; Hörmann 1938; Kamner 1964, 37; Zeidner 1999, 157).

Trained in the spirit of 19<sup>th</sup> century monument conservation, Láczy-Fritz was committed to artificial stone for the replacement of architectural elements and proposed its use in Braşov throughout the years of his involvement in the works at the Black Church. This however was opposed by the experts now called in the 1930's and this proposal did not persuade the community either (Grote 1937; Hörmann 1938). According to their opinion, the pinnacles replaced with artificial stone reproductions modelled only after three originals, did not reflect the variety characteristic for the Gothic style (Groß 1936, 4) and immortalised a random moment of their decay (Hörmann 1938).

In order to find about the new stone protection material, *Deckosit*, the community turned to Ludwig Grote who then came to Braşov and wrote an expertise on the restoration of the choir of the Black Church (Grote 1937; see also Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entries on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1937, p. 22; 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1937, 32–34). Ludwig Grote (1893–1974) studied archaeology in Jena and architecture in Braunschweig, until he was forced to interrupt his studies as he was called to arms in the First World War. After the war and following a diploma in architecture, he studied art history at the Universities of Halle-Wittenberg and Munich, where he also was granted a doctorate in 1923. Between 1924 and 1933 he served as a conservator of the Anhalt province, after 1927 he was also director of the picture gallery of Dessau, which he had founded. He was also assigned by the town council with transferring the Bauhaus from Weimar to Dessau. Due to his connections with the Bauhaus and the selection of paintings he had bought for the gallery, the National Socialists forced him to retire in 1933. Years of free-lance work began and he reappeared after the Second World War, directing art exhibitions in Munich, having been elected to be the first director of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg in 1951 (Wendland 1999, 251–255). He came to Braşov in 1937, during the years he spent as a freelance stone conservator.

His proposals regarding the Black Church were

that, instead of replacing the baldachins of the statues with artificial stone reproductions, these should rather be newly carved in stone, that window tracery and sills should also be replaced by new stone elements. He also suggested freeing the carved stone cornice parapet from under the weight of the roof leaning on it and recommended the restoration of the portal and of the wall painting in the South-Eastern porch, also the removal of the oil painting from the vaulting ribs in the same porch (Grote 1937, 4–5). He also drew up an evaluation of the work done until his arrival in Braşov, recommending the use of limestone-mortar for the pointing of the stones in the future, instead of cementation and advising to a diverse surface treatment of the stone (Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1937, 32–34).

Regarding the stones used for the restoration of the church, he discouraged the community of Braşov to use more types of stone, arguing that these would act differently under weather conditions and would also age differently, causing ultimately a disturbed aspect of the façade. He also stood against the use of artificial stone, which in his opinion aged unsightly; it did not achieve patina, but just dirt. He proposed the use of andesite from Malnaş for the plinth and fitting sandstone for the rest (Grote 1937, 3–4).

Following Oszkár Láczy-Fritz and Ludwig Grote, the community invited Hans Hörmann (1894–1985) from Munich to give an expertise too. Hörmann was an architect and archaeologist specialised in monument conservation, who dedicated his scientific research activity to develop methodological theories for the restoration of monuments. Beginning with 1928 he was government commissioner for building in Passau, where he founded the stationary site for the construction works on the cathedral. After 1938 he became head of the building division in the Monuments Office in Bavaria (Dennert 2012, 658).

According to Hörmann's diagnosis, the stone material of the church showed advanced deterioration, which had reached at places the centre of the stone blocks. This deterioration was caused by the weather conditions and water infiltrations on the one hand, and by the pressure of the roof leaning on the parapet, on the other hand. He asserted that water leakage on the façade of the church was due to the covered roof rails; the leakages on the statues were due to the broken baldachins; the infiltrations in the foundation of

the church were caused by the fact that the church floor was lower than ground level; the leakages on the window sills were due to the tin covers; and the leakages on the wall painting of the tympanon of the South-Eastern portal were caused by the poor junction of the portico (Hörmann 1938, 1-12). Concerning the works which had been done until his arrival, Hörmann criticised the overly smooth surface of the renewed buttresses, the too narrow gaps between the stones, the artificial stone material used for the replicas of the choir pinnacles, the black coloured cement completion of the quatrefoil parapet, as well as the plasticity of the baldachin replicas (Hörmann 1938; see also Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 1937, p. 82-90). According to his opinion, the details that have become fragmentary should not be reconstructed in a fragmentary manner. Hörmann was also consulted about the profile of the plinth, which had been prior reconstructed by Oszkár Láczy-Fritz, based on allegedly found witnesses. The community considered these reconstructed profiles to be overly rich, could not identify itself with them and pleaded for simplifying them. According to Hörmann, one could apply the rich form only on the location where it actually survived, otherwise a simple form must be chosen. He also felt that the traced parapet should be freed from under the roof and proposed that the damaged carved stone pieces would be changed by newly carved blocks. Concerning the stone material of the edifice, he saw advanced damages and stated that it can only be repaired by chopping the loose parts of the stone down and treating it with stone protective materials.

At Hörmann's proposal, the Braşov community also invited Alois Kieslinger (1900–1975) to analyse the stones and determine which would be the most suited to be used as conservation material. Kieslinger was a geologist and palaeontologist from Austria, who worked in the field of art and architecture analysis and was held to be the founder of the discipline of „cultural geology”. He came in contact with monument preservation during his research of stone damage process, after doing some research on the geology of stone quarries, the technique of cutting and carving stone. He participated in the restoration of the Stephansdom in Vienna and was appointed as geologist of the State Monument Preservation Department of Austria in 1946 (Bachl-Hofmann et al. 1992, 15-19.). Kieslinger analysed four stone types, possible options for the conservation of the Black Church: a limestone from Ighiu, two types

of sandstone from Apaţa and Sânzieni, as well as an andesite from Malnaş. He determined their weight, water sustaining capacity, how they stand to pressure and their resistance to frost (Kieslinger 1938). He then proposed to use the calcareous sandstone from Ighiu, excluding the andesite from Malnaş due to its specific, strong violet colour, and the other sandstone types due to their overly soft material. He added that, on plain surfaces, any of the four could be used, treated with stone protection material and coloured with Membranit.

Following the visit of Hörmann in Braşov, the community decided for using Membranit-coloured sandstone for the carved elements and for ditching the andesite proposed by the specialists (Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August 1938, p. 95).

By October 1938, the plan changed and the community was intending to implement a method that was very different to what Grote, Hörmann and Kieslinger had proposed (Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 1938, p. 109-110). The new idea was to replace the first row of stones, just above the ground, with trachyte from Deva. Above that, but only to the line of the windows, there should be used andesite from Malnaş and tufa from Banpotoc. The plan was to replace the carved decorations with sandstone from Ighiu and the plain cubes with sandstone from Sânzieni.

This method, which was elaborated as a result of the input of specialists' expertise, long discussions and experimentations, had however a short life, as the Second Vienna Award blocked as early as 1940 the stone import from several stone quarries. Thus the Braşov community was forced to use the stone already in store, introducing them somewhat randomly. Nowadays, 80 years later, Grote's, Hörmann's and Kieslinger's expertise were proven correct: the different stone materials aged and deteriorated differently, attracted different impurities and changed colour in a different manner, so that the aspect of the Black Church nowadays has become anything but homogeneous.

Another controversial issue of the second restoration led by Schuller (1935–1944) was the conservation of the buttress statues, which have become greatly deteriorated by then (Fig. 14). Oszkár Láczy-Fritz proposed replacing them by artificial stone replicas, based on plaster stone models, made back at the beginning of the century and stored since then at the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest (Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1937, p. 8-

9). Láczy-Fritz has let one such replica be made at the Schmidt szobrász firm in Budapest, reproducing the St. John the Baptist statue of the church, kept today in the church interior (Offer Schmidt 1937; Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1937, p. 21). At the beginning, the church council followed the 1937 expertise of Ludwig Grote and planned on restoring the originals by completing the missing parts with newly carved stone fragments and treating the original substance with stone-protection chemicals. According to Grote, only two replicas should be made - of the most deteriorated statues: the cherub and St. Katherine; the rest should be completed with Deckosit. If this could not be implemented, the plan was to make sandstone replicas of all of them, carefully not to overly simplify them (Grote 1937). As the contracted sculptors did not agree to add completions without having reliable models (Handover certificate Guggenberger 1938), the church council decided to apply Hörmann's proposal and let contemporary sculptors make free stone parts based on the originals, without the demand of reproducing the exact features of the statues as they might have existed in the past (Hörmann 1938; Handover certificate Guggenberger 1938; Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March, 1937, p. 13). Thus, the broken and lost limbs of the statues were replaced according to the current knowledge of the iconographical programme (for the research dealing with the statues see Wühr 1925; Kühlbrandt 1927, 28-29; Vătăşianu 1959, 526; Entz 1996, 85; Ziegler 2018, 33-35, 78-79).

It is praiseworthy the fact that the original statues, except two, were also kept and displayed inside the church; less commendable however was that these were also restored, completed with gypsum, artificial stone and other materials, without documenting their interventions. The completion of the statue of Christ and the Holy Virgin has been scarcely documented (Handover certificate Guggenberger 1938; Nussbächer 2009); the changes on several other statues can however only be observed, without having further information about these measures (Bârză 2018). The replicas of the statues were made between 1938 and 1941 by the sculptors Hans Guggenberger and Richard Ernst Boege, with Guggenberger sculpting replicas of the statues of St. John the Baptist (1938) and Christ (1939) and Boege those of St. Nicholas (1938), archangel Michael (1939), St. Jacob (1939), St. Katherine (1939), pastor Thomas (1939), St. Luke (1939), St. Paul (1940),

St. Peter (1940) and St. John (1940) (see Accounting book statues 1938–1944; Kamner 1942, 4; also Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entries from the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 1937, p. 47; 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1937, p. 47; 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 1938, p. 79, 5<sup>th</sup> of October 1938, p. 111-112, 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1938, p. 113-114, 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1938, p. 8). An exception remains the statue of the Virgin Mary, which had been reproduced and restored by Margarethe Depner, but only received a replica in 1981, by the hands of Kurtfritz Handel (Nussbächer 2009).

Hans Guggenberger (1902–1987) was a sculptor born in Mediaş, who studied medicine, archaeology and art history in Berlin, then learned stonemasonry in Sibiu (Bergel 1994). As a sculptor, Guggenberger made at the beginning of his career mostly small plastics and began carving large scale figures in the 1930s. After 1944 he was sent to a labour camp and afterwards imprisoned, so he fled to Germany in the 1960s. Richard Ernst Boege (1899–1985) was an artist from Halle an der Saale, who lived and worked in Transylvania more than one and a half decades after 1937 (Wittstock J., Wittstock R. 2014, 30-31). First he worked in Sibiu, dealing mostly with portrait-sculpting, seeking to depict the visible physiognomy of a person while blending in the invisible characteristics of the personality. He spent a longer period of time in Braşov on account of making the replicas of the Black Church statues. Margarete Depner (1885–1970), a female sculptor of Braşov, learned her art from the leading local artists of her home town, then perfected her artistic skills in Berlin and Vienna. Following mostly classicistic models, her sculptures excel in fine expressions of shapes (Wittstock J., Wittstock R. 2014, especially 33-126).

In the process of work, the statues were one at a time lifted from the buttresses, as the construction site evolved, and handed over to the sculptors (Field diaries FuSK 1937–1939, entries on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> of September, 6<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1937, 16<sup>th</sup> August 1938). Richard Ernst Boege for example, set up his workshop in the old Weavers' Tower. The sculptors first made a proposal in clay, which, after the approval of the church council, would then be transferred in stone. The church council repeatedly criticized Boege for being too committed to the original and thus not showing enough artistic freedom in treating the subject (Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry from 16<sup>th</sup> of February 1938, p. 77).



The sculptors worked in sandstone from Ighiu (Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry from 26<sup>th</sup> of October 1937, p. 69), but Guggenberger considered that stone was not perfectly suitable and was always on the search for alternatives. At least one of the sculptures he made is carved in a stone from Vratza (Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entry from the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1938, p. 8).

As early as the restoration of the Black Church in 1912–1914, plaster stone replicas of the buttress statues were made (Láczay-Fritz 1934), however none of the baldachins and consoles. These by the 1930s utterly deteriorated elements should have been reconstructed based on the documentary drawings of Láczay-Fritz, also put on paper in the 1910s (the whereabouts of these drawings is not known; for a reference to this collection see Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entries from the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1937, p. 8 and 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1937, p. 21). According to the latter, these should also have been replicated into artificial stone. Eventually the baldachins were also carved in stone by the sculptors working on the statues, following the plans and assisted by Otto Graditsch, who had been granted a qualification as *Laubmacher* in Passau (Accounting book statues 1938–1944; Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entries from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1937, p. 45, 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1938, p. 8) (Fig. 15).

During the second restoration led by Schuller, the work concentrated also on the interior. In 1937 a pavement heating system was introduced based on the plans of Gustav Fabritius and Dr. Hermann Gröber, funded by the former church curator, Samuel Schiel (Fabritius 1935; Gröber 1937; Zeidner 1999, 158). Parallel to digging the heating ditches, scientists were allowed to make archaeological observations, supervised by József Köpeczi Sebestyén (Proceedings of meetings FuSK 1937–1939, entries from the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1937, p. 22, reference to the start of the works on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 1937). During the works on the interior, the original seating order was greatly disturbed: the benches in the middle of the nave, where women were generally seated, were completely changed, but several other pews were also modified or discarded (Kamner 1942, 4). This was the point where the Western portico, open towards the naves, was closed down with glass and wood doors and the new sacristy – now only left with one chamber – was refurnished (Kamner 1942, 4; Kamner 1964, 38). The end of the interior works was marked by a wedding

ceremony on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 1937, in which the participants enjoyed the warm church despite the winter (Field diaries FuSK 1937–1939).

On the whole, the second restoration led by Schuller left a choir behind that now had a completely different, renewed façade, which can hardly provide us nowadays with certainties about its original aspect or the changes made following the Great Fire (Fig. 16). The refurnishing of the interior completed the radical changes initiated in 1865 and resulted in a sheer change of the prior aspect of the church.

A new phase of restoration, which took place between 1968 and 1975, was initiated by the Romanian State. Beside the architects and experts of the State Monuments Office, Vasile Drăguț, Alexandru Greceanu, Mariana Iliescu, the church also sent its representatives in the construction board, in the person of Dr. Otmar Richter and Günther Schuller (Schuller 1981; Zeidner 1999, 159).

The works began with the large scale consolidation of the roof, which allowed the relieving the surrounding walls and the vault from under the pressure of the roofing (Schuller 1975). Although we have some knowledge about experimenting with stone conservation materials from the publications of construction engineer Moraru (Moraru 1973), one decided eventually to relace the deteriorated stone elements with newly carved ones. New stone details made of a limestone from Vișta de Sus by Cluj were mostly introduced on the South façade of the church. Although the works had not been thoroughly documented, the new elements that appear in window frames, on buttresses, as pinnacles, can easily be recognized due to their striking white colour and sharp-edged, machine-cut form (Schuller 1981; Zeidner 1999, 159).

The wall painting in the tympanum of the South-East portal was restored with the contribution of the UNESCO and the Instituto Centrale del Restauro from Rome. Due to the regrettable loss of the documentation, the restoration measures cannot be exactly traced and it is also difficult to tell what the *unfortunate and untalented repainting* might have been, which had been removed on this occasion, alongside the grime and dirt (Schuller 1985, 80–82). In the interior, there were fewer pews left: all the guilds' pews in the Southern gallery had been removed in order to ensure a better lighting (Zeidner 1999, 159). Most of the painted back panels and parapets were sawn out and displayed on the ground floor of the

church, while some of them did not have this chance and were reused as shelves or even thrown away.

This restoration period was abruptly ended by the state ordinance that ceased the existence of the Romanian State Monuments Office. After 1981 the works could again commence, this time following the initiative of the Evangelical Church in Braşov. The restoration led by architect Hermann Fabini and later architect Ulrich Keicher continued until 1999, resumed the refurnishing of the interior and was committed to restoring the original Gothic aspect of the church. Thus the restorers tore down two Neo-Gothic stair towers built in 1865 by the triumphal arch in the choir and removed the walling which parted the nave windows on the level of the side galleries (Fig. 17). The plastering of the interior was renewed and some of the architectural details were repainted. In parallel the colours and the gilding of the altar, the pulpit and of other reliefs were refreshed (Schuller 1981-1982; Zeidner 1999, 159). After the interior works were completed in 1984, the restoration of the façade continued, as the rapid deterioration of the stone was seen an urgent problem. This time, work was done for the restoration of the Northern and Western façade, about there where Schuller stopped in 1944. A financial help for the construction works came from the Evangelical Church of the Rhine Region, who has sent architect Keicher to conduct the works, to define the methods and supervise the restoration, including supervising the quality of execution and the acquisitions (Wittstock W. 1997, 4). Assigned on behalf of the church we find architect Hermann Fabini and construction engineers Rolf Andre, later Christian Albert. An active participant of this restoration period was also the local architect Günther Schuller (1904–1995), an acknowledged expert on monument conservation of the town (Nussbächer 1993, 444; Drotleff 1994, 5). Schuller's conservation method would be nowadays considered somewhat radical

as it pleads for a thorough *cleaning* of the building of damaged elements, which should be replaced by new ones. Although this method was controversial even back then, Schuller was distinguished with the Herder Award in 1983, including for his work on the Black Church (Drotleff 1994, 5).

During the years the restoration teams applied Keichers method for stone restoration over the most part of the church façades. The method consisted of chopping the stone down until the healthy core, and then treating it with a chemical solution and completing the missing parts with a conservation material called Mineros. This would then be coloured to blend in with the rest of the wall (Wittstock W. 1997; see also the written documents of Ullrich Keicher in the Church Archives). The restoration ended with the repainting of the clock face on the Southern and Western tower façade (Keicher 1996, 6; Wittstock W. 1997, 4), ending also the century long efforts to reinstate the Gothic appearance of the church. Little did the restorers know that it was the very Gothic reminiscence that disappeared with the implemented changes.

An important picture source for the history of the church is also the documentation made by Ulrich Keicher between 1986 and 1998, during the restoration led by him. The several slides document the transformation of the façades of the Northern nave and tower during the most recent restoration, unfortunately concentrating rather on the successful results, than on documenting also the state prior to the restorations.

As a first step of the planned restoration of the churchyard, an archaeological research was conducted in this area in 2012–2013. Since 2014 the restoration of the large roof is in progress. The measure planned to last over a total of 8 years, aims at replacing the deteriorated timber, the tiles and optimizing the rainwater drainage.

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- Fig. 17. Fațada nordică restaurată cu replicile statuilor de pe contraforți (fotografie, 1937, Biserica Evanghelică C. A. din România, Brașov)
- Fig. 18. Turnulețele cu scări neogotice construite în 1865 și demolate în anii 1980 (fotografie, 1937, Biserica Evanghelică C. A. din România, Brașov)



Fig. 1. Aquarel depicting the Black Church (Schlichting 1858)

Fig. 2. Etching depicting the Black Church (F. Michaelis)

Fig. 3. Etching depicting the interior of the Black Church (Glatz 1844)

Fig. 4. The interior of the Black Church choir (photo, before 1865)

Fig. 5. The Black Church from the North-West (photo, before 1898)

Fig. 6. The Western façade of the Black Church (photo, before 1898)

Fig. 7. The Southern façade of the Black Church (photo, before 1898)







Fig. 8. The choir of the Black Church (photo, before 1898)



Fig. 9. The scaffolded interior of the Black Church (photo, late 19<sup>th</sup> century)



Fig. 10. Satirical illustration of the scaffold (Károlyi 1914)



Fig. 11. Deteriorated pinnacles on the Northern side of the choir (photo, 1935)



Fig. 12. Deteriorated pinnacles on the polygonal termination of the choir (photo, 1935)



Fig. 13. The deteriorated façade of the church (photo, 1937)





Fig. 14. Artificial stone replicas of the choir pinnacles (photo, 1937)



Fig. 15. The deteriorated buttress statues on the Northern façade of the choir (photo, 1937)



Fig. 16. The building site of the Black Church during the restoration in 1938–1944 (photo, around 1940)



Fig. 17. The restored Northern façade of the choir with the statue-replicas (photo, 1937)



Fig. 18. The Neo-Gothic stair towers built 1865 demolished in the 1980ies (photo, 1937)





## THE ESOTERIC MEANING OF THE BRUKENTHAL PALACE DECORATIONS

Daniela DÂMBOIU\*

**Abstract:** *The Brukenthal Palace – built in stages between 1778–1783–1785, and completed in 1788 – was conceived as the seat of representation of Baron Brukenthal’s governmental function and, at the same time, as a cultural establishment for the shelter and displaying of his valuable collections. But the initiates could also notice certain decorative motifs of the Palace, which were not accidentally chosen; it is obvious that Samuel von Brukenthal (1721–1803) intended to transmit – through visual depictions – a programmatic code of the Masonic ideas. “Seen in the context of Freemasonry, the understanding of the arts and sciences, and the ability of knowledge derived from it, was a way to gain access to truth and virtue.”*

**Key words:** *Brukenthal, Enlightenment, Freemasonry, representation, symbolism, virtues*

**Rezumat:** *Palatul Brukenthal – construit în etape între anii 1778–1783–1785 și finalizat în 1788 – a fost conceput ca sediu de reprezentare a funcției de guvernator a Baronului Brukenthal și, în același timp, ca o instituție culturală care să găzduiască și în care să fie expuse valoroasele colecții ale baronului. Inițiații, cunoscătorii, puteau observa însă și anumite motive decorative ale Palatului, care nu au fost alese întâmplător; este evident faptul că Samuel von Brukenthal (1721–1803) a intenționat să transmită – prin intermediul imaginilor vizuale – un cod programatic al ideilor masonice. “Privită în contextul francmasoneriei, înțelegerea artelor și științelor, precum și abilitatea de cunoaștere derivată din aceasta, au constituit căi de acces la adevăr și virtute.”*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Brukenthal, Iluminism, francmasonerie, reprezentare, simbolism, virtuți*

By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Freemasonry assumed and helped disseminate the philosophies and ideals of the Enlightenment – which meant a new way of thinking and representation, based on reason and high moral and ethical principles, with a fervent interest for sciences and a continuous search for education and further illumination, but withal still “engaged in the search after Divine Truth”, through which “its members may advance their spiritual interest, and mount by the theological ladder from the Lodge on earth to the Lodge in heaven” (Mackey 1882, 456).

The initiatory journey underwent by Samuel von Brukenthal in his youth under the Freemason order marked his life forever. Significant pieces of information about his acceptance in the Lodge *Aux Trois Canons* in Vienna (on March 2, 1743, when he was only 22 years old), his chance not to be present six months later at the meeting of the lodge when its members were arrested on the order of Maria Theresia, and the circumstances under which he pursued university studies at Halle – where he was the founder of a new Lodge, *der*

*Loge Zu den drei goldnen Schlüsseln* [Au Trois Clefs d’Or], on December 14, 1743, under the tutelage of the Lodge in Berlin (*der Hochw[eise]. Mutterloge*) *Zu den drei Weltkugeln* [Aux Trois Globes] –, as well as his subsequent studies at Jena are documented and analysed in several surveys (Eckstein 1844; Schuller 1969; Krivanec 1975; Autexier 1998; Fischer 2007). This was the time when he undoubtedly visited the cosmopolitan salons in Dresden, Leipzig, Berlin and Vienna, in whose effervescent atmosphere the Enlightenment ideals were assimilated, interpreted, promoted and spread, and the ties of the enlightened Masonic brothers were getting closer and growing stronger.

During his fruitful administrative and political career at the Imperial Court in Vienna, and especially after his investiture as Governor of Transylvania in 1777 until the end of his life, he attempted to implement in this province of the Habsburg Empire – starting from its capital and his own home town, Sibiu / *Hermannstadt* – a new cultural and economic core, based on universally valid scientific criteria, oriented towards progress and sustainability (Fischer 2006,

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23-30). We can say that he imposed firmly and steadily his enlightened outlook between his congregations, and especially against the will of the Hungarian nobility, from whom he faced a strong opposition at the Imperial Court, while trying to keep undisclosed his affinity to the Masonic mission. There is no trace of his further affiliation to any Masonic Lodge during his stay in Vienna, nor later to the Lodge *St. Andreas zu den drei Seeblättern in Hermannstadt* [Saint Andrew to the three sea-roses in Hermannstadt], active in Sibiu between 1767–1790 (Şindilariu 2002), but it is obvious that he frequented several Masonic circles and he had a wide network of relationships with Masonic brothers, intellectuals and statesmen of the monarchy in particular – most of them being among the leaders of the Illuminati movement in Austria and Transylvania (Johann Melchior von Birkenstock – the reformer of education –, Ignaz von Born – the well-known Transylvanian savant and Grand Master of the Lodge *Zur wahren Eintracht* [To True Harmony] in Vienna –, Thobias von Gebler – lawyer, playwright and poet –, Joseph von Sonnenfels – an Austrian and German jurist and novelist –, Györgyi Bánffy – Grand Master and the next Governor of the Province of Transylvania et al.). It can be assumed that Brukenthal renounced to be an active member of any Freemasonic Lodge, but he behaved as if he still was; he continued to attend some meetings, invited as an honorary member (e.g. at *Zur wahren Eintracht* Lodge in Vienna, on November 7, 1785) (Fischer 2007, 61, 70); his opinions counted so much in the Viennese society that some came to the belief that “in the Aulic Chancellery only what Brukenthal was saying it was taken into account” (Göllner 1999, 13).

The explanation that he had not longer joined any other Freemasonic Lodge as an active member probably resides in his particular social status at the Aulic Chancellery. The Empress Maria Theresia, an ardent faithful Catholic, banned Freemasonry in her Empire – just as the Catholic Church did – because she considered Freemasonry not merely responsible for subversive activity, but also for conspiracies with her main political enemy, King Frederick of Prussia, a Grand Master Mason; on the other hand, with serious reservations, the Empress tolerated Freemasonry, because even her husband – Franz Stephan von Lothringen – and several high officials were Mason Masters. However, Brukenthal – with his relatively modest family background, his religious affiliation to

Protestantism (categorically refusing to convert to Catholicism like others aspiring to high positions), and with his pronounced Saxon patriotic orientation – did not risk to join a particular Freemasonic Lodge, although, through all his actions, achievements and conceptions he remained faithful to the Freemasonry’s “way of life”. “Freemasonry was known to be a way of life, rather than just a group or organization.” (Vucijak 2011)

Given the circumstances, even if Brukenthal chose not to be an active member of a Freemasonic Lodge, there is a lot of proof that he was keenly adept of the Freemasonic ideology and that – as we will notice in this study – he was familiar with the visual language of the “Royal Art” of Freemasonry, using it in the decoration of his Palace on the Great Square in Sibiu. This was a specific language – expressed through symbols and allegories, which had to be subjected to interpretation in order to reveal their deeper meanings –, meant only for the initiates.

The Palace – built in stages between 1778–1783–1785, and completed in 1788 – was conceived as the seat of representation of Brukenthal’s governmental function, but at the same time as a cultural establishment for the shelter and displaying of his valuable collections, for which he invested much effort, perseverance and money. Brukenthal’s vast Library – with reference works of classics, but also of writers, scientists and some of the most notable contemporary specialists in different fields of interest (education, art, philosophy, culture, religion, history, economics, agriculture, geography, astronomy etc.) –, complemented by the Picture Gallery<sup>1</sup> – with paintings of various themes, covering the artistic evolution of the most famous European painting schools –, and the Cabinets of numismatics, mineralogy and antiquities, have attracted those interested in deepening their knowledge, and have delighted the soul, senses and minds of all those who crossed the threshold. This possible access was visible, concrete and it was made known and advertised at that time (e.g. *Hermannstadt im Jahre 1790*, 99-102). But the initiates could also have noticed certain decorative motifs of the Palace, which were not accidentally chosen; it is obvious that Brukenthal intended to transmit – through visual depictions – a programmatic code of the Masonic ideas. “Seen in the context of

<sup>1</sup> “Gemälde Sammlung” / “Bildergalerie” / “Gemälde Galerie”

Freemasonry, the understanding of the arts and sciences, and the ability of knowledge derived from it, was a way to gain access to truth and virtue.” (Fischer 2007, 80)

In his speech on the occasion of Brukenthal’s anniversary in 1789, Daniel Georg Neugeboren – future Bishop of the Augustan Confessional Church in Transylvania – emphasized that: “In the counsel of noblemen [Brukenthal] was admired for his wisdom, in private life he became a model and a norm of good taste”, and his home was transformed “in a temple devoted to sciences and arts” (Fischer 2007, 79).

The topic of this paper is to identify and decipher, as much as possible, the symbolic decorative compositions of the palace, presenting them in the order of their chronological elaboration, so that we can have an overview of the entire iconographic program in its evolution to the present appearance.

The elaborate stone portal of the palace, realized by Simon Hoffmeyer – sculptor from Cluj Napoca, employed by contract on August 10, 1779 (Sabău 1992, 59; Avram 1998, 175) –, is endowed with a massive oak gate, carved with a group of emblems on both outside panels; the alto reliefs in wood were probably made by Ludwig Christian Hezel, a carpenter from Franconia, whom Brukenthal met in Vienna and proposed to become the *Hofschler* of the Palace that he was going to build in Sibiu. (L.C. Hezel – arrived in Sibiu in c. 1777 – executed, among other works, the Josephine furniture in the reception rooms and the frames with rosettes and chain motif of some of the Baron’s favourite paintings.)

On the left panel of the oak gate (Fig. 1) is reproduced a laurel wreath – sign of victory and honour –, together with a cornucopia – the horn of plenty (featuring deities like Gaia / *Terra*, Fortuna, and even Hades, the terrifying god of death and of the underworld, enriched by the precious minerals from the under earth, but also by “our sighs and our tears” as Sophocles said<sup>2</sup>) –, an instrumental horn (symbolizing physical and generative power, as well as mental and spiritual strength), and last but not least, a caduceus (metaphor for astrology, alchemy and astronomy, as well as the attribute of Hermes / identified with the Roman god Mercury – messenger of the gods, protector of the travellers, commerce and negotiation, and conductor of the souls into the afterlife).

On the right panel of the oak gate (Fig. 2) can be distinguished the attributes of Athena (Minerva, for Romans), the ancient Greek goddess of wisdom, patron and protectress of arts and sciences, and also of warfare: “the owl of Athena”, the shield with Medusa’s head with snake-like hair, the helmet, as well as a lyre and a flute, a palette with paintbrushes, and some working tools of masons (a protractor instead of a compass, a square, a T-square, and chisels, pertaining to the first three degrees of Freemasonry).

Each of these two groups of emblems is surmounted by a bow-knot, whose meaning in the Freemasons’ “language” is reunion, but also can suggest the garland of friendship.

Three groups of similar “instruments” are placed on the façade of the building, above the first row of windows over the portal (Fig. 3).

This iconographical program corresponded to the European “Royal Art” of Freemasonry, being intimate to the Masonic brothers who were able to recognize since the entrance of the Palace the enlightened mind of the owner and the cultural destination of the establishment.

Brukenthal was most likely inspired by some decorations of the Imperial Court Library in Vienna, a place he knew very well since he lived in the capital city. He chose as models for adorning his palace oak gate the almost similar compositions realized in stucco – following the conception of Conrad Adolph von Albrecht – on both walls that flank the main gate of the Library State Hall (Fischer 2007, 149-156) (Fig. 4). Counsellor of his Imperial Majesty, Conrad Adolph von Albrecht (1682–1751) designed (in c. 1730) the iconographic program of the Viennese Library State Hall decoration, as well as of other sumptuous Baroque palaces of some empire statesmen (Petschar 2016, 69-80). Aware of the educational and scientific value of the Imperial Court Library, Conrad Adolph von Albrecht remarked that the establishment was “a Temple of the Muses”, as well as “a Temple of Sciences”, expressions reproduced in some later writings acquired by Brukenthal for his library (Codex Vindobonensis 1774, Fol. 33r. and Fol. 36v.). Applying the same association of symbolic images on the entrance of his palace cannot be a pure coincidence, neither a matter of artistic decoration, but the expression of the deeper meanings made use of by the enlightened Freemasonry.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Hades>



Beyond doubt, Brukenthal's lasting impressions settled along with other scenery viewed during the travels he made and in the circles he attended. Ráday Mansion in Pécel (Hungary) – which, “by the eighties, became a literary and scientific centre” – must have been one of these, with its impressive encyclopaedic library (with works from all branches of humanities, literature and natural sciences) and its reading room decoration with symbolic mythological scenes realized by the painter Mátyás Schervitz, in 1763, after Bernard Picart's illustrations of *The Temple of the Muses* book) (Segesvary 2005, 121-122). The scenes that covered the walls impressed Brukenthal a lot, two of them – rendering the myths of Narcissus and Arion (Figs. 5-6) –, and some others from the same illustrated book being used for the decoration of his own Palace in Sibiu; that book could not have missed from his library (Picart 1733). It cannot be a coincidence the existence in both Ráday Mansion and Brukenthal Palace of a “Hercules Room”, accomplished *en grisailles* and respectively, *en camaïeu* technique, with paintings illustrating the *Labours of Hercules* (Figs. 7-8). Both Baron Brukenthal<sup>3</sup> and Count Ráday held in their Libraries, *Acta Eruditorium*, the scientific periodical published in Leipzig between 1682–1782, from which some other frescoes of the Ráday Mansion were inspired.

We do not have evidence that Brukenthal personally met Count Gedeon Ráday I (1713–1792), which is unlikely to have happened taking into account the notoriety of both and their passion in collecting books. It seems that Brukenthal was in contact with Abraham Christoph Thiele from Leipzig, who was in charge with commissions of books for Count Ráday, Sámuel Teleki, and many other book collectors (Segesvary 2005, 93). It is also important to mention that, Count Ráday was one of the “champions of Protestant freedom”<sup>4</sup>, who worked on the preparation of the *Patent of Toleration* in 1781 – the year in which Ferenc Kazinczy became his trustworthy man, collaborator and the most important purchaser of books. The decoration of the Ráday Mansion followed the concept and iconographic program of its owner, Count Ráday, who expounded it along with Kazinczy, in the latter's journal *Orpheus* of 1790.

Over the years, in 1816, Kazinczy visited the Brukenthal Palace – an older wish, probably, but

because he was imprisoned several years (between 1794 and 1801), due to his antimonarchical and pro-revolutionary views, he reached there some years after the Baron's death; he met instead the Gubernial Sekretary Johann Freidrich Seiwert (1755–1832), Brukenthal's nephew, who welcomed and showed him the collections. He was astonished when Seiwert mentioned that David Teniers' painting, *The Infant John the Baptist* (Fig. 9)<sup>5</sup>, had been held in high esteem by Brukenthal, seeing in his private art gallery several other works of more famous painters (Ordeanu 2010, 143). But the explanation for Brukenthal's keeping this painting in his official cabinet might have been that John the Baptist was the Patron Saint of Freemasonry; his veneration day – on June 24<sup>th</sup> – was one of the most important Festival days for any Blue Lodge (Ankerberg et al. 1989/2009)<sup>6</sup>.

On such an anniversary day of June 24, 1744, a special gold medal was struck – worth 20 ducats, also multiplied in silver –, the so-called *Johannismedaille* (Autexier 1998, 40-41, 56-60), with the portrait of Samuel von Brukenthal as Master Mason of the *Loge zu den drei goldenen Schlüsseln* [Aux trois Clefs d'or / The Three Golden Keys Lodge] in Halle. It was claimed that Brukenthal offered to each brother of the lodge a copy of the medal on that celebration day of Saint John the Baptist (Marvin 1877, 20); thirteen of these are said to have been struck in gold, and others in silver; few copies are currently preserved (Autexier 1998, 59), one in the Treasury of the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu (Sonoc 2012, 197)<sup>7</sup>. The medal is a mirror of the young Brukenthal surrounded by the most expressive Masonic symbols (Fig. 10). Having displayed on the ground, at his feet, some Masonic working tools (a gavel – emblem of authority –, a square and a pair of compasses – representing together the fraternity of Freemasonry, and separately integrity, respectively, virtue –, and holding a plumb line in his right hand – that was one of the

<sup>5</sup> Brukenthal National Museum, oil on oak wood, 93 x 69 cm, inv. 1163.

<sup>6</sup> “All men who become Masons go thorough the first three degrees of the Blue Lodge. The Blue Lodge is the parent, or mother, Lodge of Freemasonry. In the Blue Lodge are conferred the first three degrees: 1) the Entered Apprentice, where a man is initiated into the beginning mysteries of the fraternity of Freemasonry; 2) the degree of Fellow Craft; 3) the Master Mason Degree.”

<sup>7</sup> Brukenthal National Museum, medal of silver, inv. T. 1285 / 10.703, G. 43,32 g, D. 48,1 mm, Th. 2,7 mm.

<sup>3</sup> The Brukenthal Library keeps 27 volumes of *Acta Eruditorium*, inv. V.II.1808.

<sup>4</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferenc\\_Kazinczy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferenc_Kazinczy)

instruments of Freemasonry presented to the Master of a Lodge at his installation, and defines rectitude of conduct and linear ascension that leads to perfection) –, “Brukenthal sits on a piece of work, leaning against a large globe that alludes to the mother’s lodge. Pointing to the royal protection, a crowned eagle flies to the radiant sun. At Brukenthal’s right, two broken pillars stand on a pedestal, a third lies in two pieces on the floor, as a sign of the ‘sublime art’ to be rebuilt. The lunar side (the reverse of the medal) shows in the background, under numerous shimmering in the dark sky, a beautiful prospect of the city of Halle, seen from the other side of the Saale, with its characteristic towers and buildings, where the Feast of St. John was celebrated. Three arms in the clothing of a clergyman (left, recognizable by the sleeve of the robe), a citizen (top, with cuff) and a horned knight (right) shake hands. They denote ‘teaching, nutrition and defence’.... The *Johannis* medal is not only a testimony to the honours and respect of the Halle brothers for their Master, but the expression of the basic idea that they made of Freemasonry.” (Autexier 1998, 58-60) A significant legend is engraved on the obverse of the medal: *STUDIO SAPIENTIA SILENTIO*, continued on the reverse with: *ET NON FUCATA AMICITIA QUID NOBILIA*, meaning: “Are there anything more noble than zeal, wisdom, silence and unvarnished Friendship?” (Autexier 1998, 56). In exergue it is added: *HALÆ. MDCCXLIV. D.XXIV.JUN.* [“In Halle, on 24 Juny 1744”]. The initials of the young Master’s name are engraved on a facet of the stone cube on the ground: *C S v BR* (Carl Samuel von Brukenthal) – on another facet being represented the level, the symbol of equality; in Masonry, the cubic stone refers to “the Stone of Foundation, which was placed at one time within the foundation of the Temple of Solomon, and afterwards, during the building of the Second Temple, transported to the Holy of Holies”<sup>8</sup> (or *Sanctum Sanctorum*, which was its purpose as a structure). Besides the cubic stone “of Foundation”, the two broken pillars on Brukenthal’s right side represent the twin pillars (Boaz and Jachin) that guarded the entrance in the Temple of Solomon; we have here not only a symbol, but a system of symbols. “Freemasonry is marked by two principal concerns, the search for more Light, and Temple building. It can be maintained that these are one and the same work. Solomon’s Temple has been the locus of the symbolic embodiment of Masonic practice, where

the orientation, proportion, shape, and ornamentation of this holy place embodies not just an esoteric cosmology, but bears a relational link to the microcosm: the inner life and anatomy of the contemplative. This architecture is that of Initiation.” (Rivera 2017)

It is obvious that Brukenthal had thoroughly deepened the Freemasonic symbolism since his youth, that over the years he met it on his routes in various circumstances and locations, and that he used it with much refinement when he drafted the iconographic program for the decoration of his Palace in Sibiu. If the use of Masonic emblems and symbols, as well as of moralizing scenes, was fashionable in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, their selection and association for the purpose mentioned above was the personal concern of the establishment’s holder, who intended to convey soul messages that marked and guided him in life and he found worthwhile to be followed.

An imposing staircase leads to the first floor of the Brukenthal Palace, in the large central reception room, whose destination as a Concert Hall is marked by sculpted and gilded musical instruments, applied inside garlands of laurels and frames above the high doors (Fig. 11a,b). On the walls, there are floral tapestries made of expensive chintz, on whose description – implying some sacred and symbolic gardening traditions – we refer later in this presentation.

The Concert Hall is flanked by two visiting rooms, with red silk tapestries hung on the walls. The Visiting Room on the left is embellished with four symbolic mythological scenes on the supraportes (Figs. 12-15), realized in bas-relief (of gilded lime wood) after Bernard Picart’s illustrations of the *Tempel-Musen*, book held by Baron Brukenthal in his private library (Avram 1998, 162); they reproduce the copper tables XV, XVI, XXXIX and XL, namely the following mythological scenes: *Clytia changed into a Turnesole*, *The Moon and Endymion*, *Narcissuss changed into a Flower* and *Arion preserved by a Dolphin* (Figs. 16-19); the first three of them are signed “B. Picart dir.”, that means that Picart had directed the copies after his original engravings, and signed them as supervisor.

Bernard Picart (1673, Paris – 1733, Amsterdam) was a French book illustrator and an outstanding engraver exiled in Holland because of his radical ideas, such as his views in favour of religious tolerance. He contributed large plates to famous illustrated books as *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde*

<sup>8</sup> <http://masonic.wikidot.com/stone-of-foundation>

(published between 1723–1743, that embodied “an immense effort to record the religious rituals and beliefs of the world in all their diversity as objectively and authentically as possible”) (Israel 2001, 135) and *The Temple of the Muses; or, the Principal Histories of Fabulous Antiquity* [Neu-Erofneer Musen-Tempel], a collection of mythological tales and fables most notably from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*) – published in Dutch, French, English and German. The portfolio of sixty copperplates gathered in *The Temple of the Muses* were designed and engraved by Picart and other “celebrated masters”, after the paintings of Abraham van Diepenbeeck – Rubens’ student – or Cornelis Bloemaert; the beautiful engravings are surrounded by elaborately ornamental borders, separately engraved.

An argument that Baron Brukenthal did not randomly choose the first two scenes for the decoration of the Visiting Room on the left, and the revealing of their meaning is found in the discourse held by *Bruder* [Andreas] Weber (*Präambel in das Protokollbuch*) at the meeting of the Lodge in Halle on the occasion of the festive celebration of Saint John the Baptist’s Day, on June 24, 1744; the speech is considered to be more likely written by Brukenthal himself (Autexier 1998, 62–63). By using a suite of parables, the discourse comes at some point to the significance of the light reflected by the celestial bodies, the Sun and Moon: “The Sun shines on us, it lets us continue to exist, it makes the earth bring forth, which is necessary to human, and what man could by no means allow his skill. Luna, the sun’s sister, rules the night. The day star disappears; but the palace of nature never remains without Light. That faint and mild glow that the moon spreads is useful for craftsmen and travellers who want to extend their work into the night. This nocturnal light, strong enough to promote the purpose of the people just mentioned, cannot (yet) disturb the rest of the other mortals. The Stars, this swirl of flames that revolves around our heads, sustain us when we celebrate by night a part of the pleasures that the day gave us.” (Autexier 1998, 61) In other words, the Sun and Moon refers to Light as the primordial source of knowledge and goodness, the expression of mental and moral illumination, the representative of the highest human good (while the darkness was synonymous with ignorance and evil). For Brukenthal, as Master of the Lodge, the sunlight and moonlight parables were very suggestive and compelling. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, “some Masonic philosophers have found this to be a fitting parallel for as the light of the

moon is a mere reflection of the greater light of the sun, so the Senior Warden [i.e. the second of the three principal officers of a lodge, and the Master’s principal deputy], the officer associated with the Doric pillar of Strength, is intended to be a reflection of the ‘light’ of the Worshipful Master [i.e. the honorific title of the Master of the Lodge] who is associated with the Ionic pillar of Wisdom.”<sup>9</sup>

The Sun and Moon usually accompany the representation of the twin pillars of Solomon’s Temple, Jachin and Boaz, denoting the equality of their duality, and the ideal state of equilibrium; in the draft for the speech from the Halle Lodge on June 24, 1744, Brukenthal stressed the importance of a stable equipoise between Wisdom and Strength, similar to the one existing between the Sun and Moon. But Brukenthal must have been aware of the fact that the two celestial bodies convey also all the “pairs of opposites” in our world: day-night, light-dark, warm-cold, male-female, good-bad etc.<sup>10</sup>

The third pillar that supported the Solomon’s Temple is a Corinthian one, representing Beauty. “These pillars have, however, more important significance: *Wisdom* [expressed by the Ionic column and the Worshipful Master of a Lodge], by our moral teaching, we require to conduct us in all our understandings; *Strength* [represented by the Doric column and the Senior Warden], we need for supporting us in all our undertakings; and *Beauty* [symbolized by the Corinthian column], of holiness to adorn our mind and manner. As a further illustration: the universe is the temple of that Deity whom we serve, and from whom all goodness emanates. *Wisdom, strength, and beauty* are about his throne as pillars of his work; his wisdom is infinite, his strength is omnipotent, and his beauty shines forth throughout the whole of Creation in symmetry and order.” (How 1862, 382–383) Moreover, the three columns – pillars of Solomon’s Temple – represent the number three, which in Freemasonry “is the most important and universal in its application of all the mystic numbers ... There are three supports and three principal officers to a Lodge; three working tools to each degree; three greater and three lesser lights; ... three Ancient Grand Masters [Solomon King of Israel, Hiram King of Tyre, and Hiram

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.themasonictrowel.com/masonic\\_talk/stb/stbs/92-06.htm](http://www.themasonictrowel.com/masonic_talk/stb/stbs/92-06.htm)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.richardcassaro.com/tag/masonic-sun-and-moon/>

Abif, associated in turn with Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty].” (How 1862, 402) The Masons felt very much bound by the last from the three Grand Masters, “Hiram, the widow’s son” / “our Grand Master Hiram”, who became famous for his skill and talent and because of “the peculiarities of ornament [of the Temple] by which Hiram rendered the structure marvellous for *beauty*” (How 1862, 403-404).

In the Ancient and Accepted Rite, the three supporting pillars of the Temple / Lodge – mentioned above – were displayed “by three others of triangular form, representing the virtues of *Faith, Hope, and Charity*”. Over time, the Masons were inspired by St. Peter’s precepts from his second Epistle, through which the saint exhorted “his readers to the practice of what we are accustomed to call the cardinal virtues: ‘*add to your faith virtue; to virtue knowledge; to knowledge temperance; to temperance patience; to patience godliness; to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity*’” (How 1862, 408).

The fact that Brukenthal was familiar since his youth with this symbolic language indicates that the mythological scenes rendered in the decoration of the supraportes of the Palace have, besides their moralizing significance and their artistic valences, the load of deep Masonic meanings, and should be decoded in Freemasonic keys.

The four scenes from the Visiting Room on the left were selected by Brukenthal from the *Musen-Tempel* book, as we have already mentioned above. The book, illustrated by Bernard Picart and several other artists, depicted Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* – a narrative poem, focused on myths and legends in which transformation (metamorphosis) of identity, form, destiny *etc.* played the main role; Ovid intended “to speak of forms changed into new entities”. The poem has been appreciated and tasted for centuries, being of particular importance for the revival of classical mythology in the Renaissance literature and art. Ovidiu Publius Naso, the Roman poet of the Augustan age who spent his last ten years in exile on the Black Sea coast, in Constanța – where he wrote over one hundred stories of the *Metamorphoses*, was eclectic in his sources. Not only Hesiod, but also the late speculations of Greek-Roman thought are certain sources, his work being considered a fusion of Greek and Roman myths with moralizing meanings.

It does not surprise us that two of the four decorative roundels on the supraportes mirror mythological scenes related to the Sun and Moon: *Clytia changed into a Turnesole* and *The Moon and Endymion* (Figs. 12-13).

Without entering into the details of the Greek legend of *Clytia and the Sun*, written in verses by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* (IV, 190-270), we bring out the subject of the story in which, Clytia – a water nymph – fell in love with Apollo, the Sun god (and the god of the arts and of prophecy). Hoping to share her love, Clytia desperately awaited him, sitting on the ground and watching his move across the sky all day long, until she grew roots and metamorphosed in a Sunflower. The artistic composition is emphasized by some symbolic elements: the crown on the nymph’s head, in form of a sunflower; Apollo’s appearance with his back to Clytia, leaping aboard his glowing chariot and flying on the sky; the representation of Cupid sleeping on Clytia’s knees point out the abandonment of Clytia. Because of the myth of Clytia and Apollo, the sunflower became an emblem of adoration, loyalty, constancy and strength (Bulfinch 1913, XIII.c. *Clytie*); it also could symbolize worship and faithfulness because of its resemblance to the sun, which is associated with spiritual knowledge and the desire to seek light and truth.

Bernard Picart’s engraving as well as the painting *Clytia* of the Flemish artist Pieter de Bailliu (1613–1660) are copies after the picture with that subject of Abracham Jansz van Diepenbeeck (1599–1675). The oil painting on canvas, the *Abbandonata dal Sole* by Nicolas Bertin, lost today, was made between 1710 and 1720 after the same model.

The roundel featuring the scene *The Moon and Endymion* is another love story, reported by the Roman poet Lucian in the *Dialogue of the Gods* (Dialogus XI, between Aphrodite and Selene). By asking Zeus to make immortal and forever young the handsome shepherd Endymion, with whom Luna fell in love, the king of the gods granted her wish as long as Endymion stayed asleep forever. Still, Luna continued to visit Endymion asleep every night and to take care of his flock of sheep meanwhile. (The Moon – Artemis in the Greek mythology – was often overlapped in Roman mythology with the goddess Diana, because she used to hunt at night.) The story suggests the dream of an everlasting love, of a love that survives death, in other words represents the

virtues of constancy, fidelity and integrity in love and life. This is an image of “heroic love”.

In *Crata Repoa or Highest Degree of Egyptian Initiation* – a book that Brukenthal had in his library (*Crata Repoa* 1785) – it is mentioned that “the Sun, Moon and stars were called upon to witness the oath [of a candidate]. Now the sun, the moon and the stars represent the doctrine, the church and the initiates...” (apud Farrel 2014, 57).

The following roundel, mounted above the entrance door into the Visiting Room on the left, illustrates the dramatic story of *Narcissus changed into a Flower*, described by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* (III, 339-510). The ravishingly handsome young Narcissus was punished by the goddess Hera – because of his unrequited love for the nymph Echo and for his indifference – to fall in love with his own reflection in the water. Self-destruction was his destiny. “Lack of wisdom and carelessness, wanting himself, one and the same person approving and being approved, seeking and being sought out, provoking and consuming passions, he looks at this deceptive beauty with an insatiable look and destroys himself through his own eyes.” (Morford et al. 1985, 225) “When his mother inquired if Narcissus would live to a ripe old age, the seer Tiresias answered: ‘Yes, if he will not have come to know himself’.” At his death, Narcissus turned into the flower that bears his name; his true beauty occurs with the flowering (understanding) of his feelings. Through Ovid’s poem – as well as according to other Roman poets –, Narcissus “was transformed in an art object and a viewer of art; Leon Battista Alberti deferred to them ... made Narcissus the inventor of painting. ... ‘What is painting but the act of embracing, by means of art, the surface of the pool? What a great art myth! Imbricated in one person are the roles of artist (creator of an image), model (the object of reflection), art work ... and viewer. Narcissus the artist creates an image of himself that Narcissus the viewer finds irresistible’.” (Sohm 2007, 39) For Freemasons, the myth expressed a warning against vanity and self-love.

The fourth roundel in this reception room, mounted above the large mirror on the wall between the windows, illustrates the scene *Arion preserved by a Dolphin*, a story related by Herodotus (1.23-24) and interpreted in verses by Ovid in *Fasti* (II, 83-118). Arion of Lesbos (early 7<sup>th</sup> century BC), court poet to Periander, the Tyrant of Corinth, became famous and rich for his dithyrambic poems – the sacred chorales

performed in honour of Dionysus. The legend says that Arion was saved by a dolphin (fascinated hearing Arion playing his lyre) after being thrown into water by the sailors on the ship, who wanted to steal his money. After the incident, Periander sentenced the guilty sailors to death. The meanings of Arion’s myth are multiple: hope, salvation, justice etc. In Freemasonry, the myth of Arion symbolically illustrates the degree of Master Mason (Scholl 2006, 133), due to Arion’s contribution to the spread of the Dionysian Mysteries – an ecstatic cult and ritual reserved for initiated.

The supraportes of the Visiting Room on the right side of the Large Room / Concert Hall depict four scenes from Dionysus’ life – whose birth was described by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* (III, 310-312) –, namely: *The Childhood of Dionysus*, *The Education of Dionysus*, *The Triumph of Dionysus* and *Dionysus and Ariadne* (Figs. 20-23). Dionysus (Bacchus) was the son of Zeus and the mortal Semele, thus semi-divine or heroic. Jealous, Hera stretched a race to Semele, advising her to ask Zeus for the favour of seeing him under his true appearance as the god of thunder. In this way, when she was pregnant, Semele was killed by a thief of Zeus, but he managed to save the unborn baby and sewn him in the leg of his foot from where, after a few months, Dionysus was born the second time; finally he was accepted in Olympus as a god. “Dionysus still remains an enigma. By his origin, by his particular way of being, by the rites he inaugurated, he distinguished himself from the other gods.” (Eliade 1978, 357-359) In folk culture he was considered the god of wine, although originally he was the god of vegetation, and also the god of ecstasy and mysticism; he was considered the essence of life, the flow of blood through veins, the rebirth of nature, fertility. The fact that he appears in many artistic representations singing on drums is an allusion to the secret rites accompanying his veneration. Through his mysteries the ancients tried to obtain spiritual experience. Due to the theatrical contests of tragedies and comedies carried to honour him, he was also worshiped as the theatre’s god.

Freemasons felt very much indebted to the Dionysian artificers, whose tradition tried to maintain and glorify. The “Dionysiacs of Asia Minor were undoubtedly all association of architects and engineers, who had the exclusive privilege of building temples, stadia, and theatres, under the mysterious tutelage of Bacchus, and were distinguished from the uninitiated or profane

inhabitants by the science which they possessed, and by many private signs and tokens by which they recognized each other.” (Mackey 1882, 47) Hiram, the architect of King Solomon’s Temple, adopted the Grecian style of architecture in building the temple; he united the masons “in a society, similar in many respects to that of the Dionysian artificers. He inculcated lessons of charity and brotherly love; he established a ceremony of initiation, to test experimentally the fortitude and worth of the candidate; adopted modes of recognition; and impressed the obligations of duty and principles of morality by means of symbols and allegories.” (Mackey 1882, 45)

The Large Room and the two Chinese Cabinets on the corner of the building’s frontage have chintz tapestry (Fig. 24), and respectively wallpapers (Fig. 25) hung on the walls, colour printed with floral motifs, birds, dragonflies etc. in Japanese and Chinese styles, which create images of a paradisiac garden. Behind the fireplaces in the Chinese Cabinets the walls were decorated with frescoes with the same decorative motifs (Fig. 26). Oriental decoration charmed the whole Europe during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The idea behind many Chinese gardens – which had the oldest traditions in the world – was to recreate or mirror the paradisiacal land of the Immortals (a group of semi-human, semi-divine beings who possessed the secret of eternal life). “Another tradition that influenced Chinese gardens was geomancy or *feng shui*, as the Chinese call it (meaning literally ‘wind and water’), the belief that the configuration of a landscape or garden can affect events in the life of the owner.” (McIntosh 2011) The supraportes in each of the two cabinets are decorated with Chinese male and female characters (Figs. 27, 28); it is very likely that they are related to the China Taoism religion, “with its belief in a universal force called the *ch’i*, which has a feminine and a masculine form, yin and yang, which have to be balanced in the landscape so that the *ch’i* can flow properly” (McIntosh 2011). Gardens have always been places of refuge, relaxation, and meditation, of finding the harmony between human and nature. Brukenthal was undoubtedly acquainted with the subtle esoteric and initiatory symbolism of the gardens and landscapes, as it emerges from his own conception of the Avrig garden design (German: *Freck*), where he succeeded to recreate an ideal microcosmos, properly appreciated at the time as

the “Transylvanian Eden” (Hermann 1779; Fischer 2007, 125-130).<sup>11</sup>

Attached to the Chinese Cabinet on the right is a small darkened room (Fig. 7), painted *en camaïeu* technique (in light brown tones), with images of *The Twelve Labours of Heracles* – the series of episodes concerning the penance carried out by the Greek god Heracles, whose name was later Romanised as Hercules. One of the traditional orders of the labours – found in the *Bibliotheca of Pseudo-Apollodorus*, dated in circa the first or second century AD –, presents *Slay the Nemean Lion* (Fig. 29) as the 1<sup>st</sup> labour, which in the Brukenthal’s Hercules Room is rendered above the door towards the corridor that goes to the Library. Because the order of the reproduced labours is not the acquainted one, we continue to identify the further represented scenes in their order from the first one to the right: (2<sup>nd</sup>) *Capture the Golden Hind of Artemis* (Fig. 30), (3<sup>rd</sup>) *Capture the Erymanthian Boar* (Fig. 31), (4<sup>th</sup>) *Slay the Stymphalian Birds* (Fig. 32), (5<sup>th</sup>) *Capture and bring back Cerberus* (Fig. 33), (6<sup>th</sup>) *Slay the Trojan Marine Monster* (Fig. 34), (7<sup>th</sup>) *Hercules wrestling of Antaeus* (Fig. 35), (8<sup>th</sup>) *The Cattle of Geryon* – represented by the episode of *The Pillars of Hercules* (Fig. 36), (9<sup>th</sup>) *Slay the nine-headed Lernaean Hydra* (Fig. 37), (10<sup>th</sup>) *Steal the Apples of the Hesperides* (Fig. 38), (11<sup>th</sup>) *Capture the Cretan Bull* (Fig. 39), and the last one, (12<sup>th</sup>) *Obtain the girdle of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons* (Fig. 40); it should be noted that two scenes – namely no. 6 and 7 – replace the traditional ones (*Clean the Augean stables in a single day* and respectively, *Steal the Horses of Diomedes*).

Franz Neuhauser junior (active in Sibiu between c. 1790 and 1836), who probably painted the twelve scenes (Avram 1998, 167-170), drew inspiration from several sources: Bernard Picart’s etchings for the *Musen-Tempel* book (Picart 1733) – namely the plates no. XXIV and XXV, *Achelous in the shape of a Bull is vanquished by Hercules* (for the 11<sup>th</sup> roundel) (Fig. 42) and *Hercules’ Combat with the Hydra* (for the 9<sup>th</sup> roundel in the Hercules Room) (Fig. 41) – or his engravings after antiques gemstones (Stosch 1724); for some other scenes can be found similarities with intaglios, engravings after ancient cameos and gemstones or sarcophagi: e.g. a gilt bronze medal representing *Hercules and the Lion from Nemea*,

<sup>11</sup> “Die Schönheit des hiesigen Gartens, welcher in hundertfaltiger Beziehung das siebenbürgische Eden heißen kann ...”

c. 1496, for the 1<sup>st</sup> roundel (Fig. 43); Picart's engraving no. 59 (Fig. 44) from the Stosch's book – that Brukenthal had in his Library – for the 3<sup>rd</sup> scene (Stosch 1724), engraving that seems to be inspired at its turn by a sketch of Giovanni Battista Franco after a cameo (Fig. 45) or by Giambologna's statuette *Hercules carrying the Erymanthian Boar* (Fig. 46); the intaglio *Hercules resting*, Italy, 16<sup>th</sup> century, for the 4<sup>th</sup> depicted scene (Fig. 47); another engraving by Picart, no. 133 (Fig. 48) from the Stosch's book for the 5<sup>th</sup> scene, which in turn reproduces the engraving of an Italian Anonymous of the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 49); the 7<sup>th</sup> scene from the Hercules Room is very appropriate with *Hercules and Antaeus*, a 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian bronze plaquette (Fig. 50), and also with an engraving (c. 1478) by Antonio Pollaiuolo, *Hercules wrestling of Antaeus* (Fig. 51), and a painting of the same artist from Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Hercules struggles were seen by Freemasons as initiation attempts. Hercules represented the ideal man of ancient Greece and the perfect embodiment of what the Greeks called *pathos*. For the penance he carried out and for his courage, wisdom and great soul, Hercules was worshiped as a hero, and became immortal.

A similar room dedicated to Hercules, painted – *en camaïeu* technique – with scenes rendering the hero's trials, is found in the Ráday Mansion in Pécel (Fig. 8); although the preserved pictures are much more deteriorated, it is possible to recognize some astonishing similarities between two scenes from the Hercules Room of the Ráday Mansion and the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> scenes from the Hercules Room of the Brukenthal Palace. Taking into account the small dimensions (of about 4.50 meters length x 2.50 meters width) of this room in the Brukenthal Palace, and the symbolism of its iconographical program, Hercules Room must have been a so-called “Chamber of Reflection”, used for meditation and contemplation. The plan of the stoves in the Brukenthal Palace, drafted by Simon Hoffmeyer in c. 1785/1786, designates only a single access door in the Hercules Room, the one from the cabinet (Avram 1998, 170-171). The small room was probably arranged and its wall painted with *The Twelve Labours of Hercules* during 1790 or immediately after, by Franz Neuhauser junior most probably.

When Ferenc Kazinczy visited the Brukenthal Palace in 1816, Johann Friedrich Seiwert told the

guests that he had the intention to make a medal in the memory and honour of his uncle, Baron Samuel von Brukenthal. His project provided that in the foreground of the obverse of the medal, Brukenthal was going to be portrayed as a hero, in Roman clothing, accompanied by his life years (1721–1803) and the most important function he held, that of governor; on the reverse of the medal, the image of *Hercules Versalien musarum* was intended to be represented, along with the inscription *INVIA VIRTUTI NULLA EST VIA* [For virtue there is everywhere a way] (Ovid Met. XIV.113), and below the coat of arms of the Saxon Nation (Ordeanu 2010, 142). Kazinczy's commentary was that the one who had done so much to the good of the Hungarian and the Saxon Nations, deserved it, and this will be “followed by a fame that remains forever”, citing the German poet Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock's verses. The epithet “Musarum” made reference to the fact that Hercules was known in Greece as “Herakles Musagetes”, which meant “The Muses' Hercules” [Leader of the Muses / Defender of the Muses]. Most of *Hercules Musarum*'s representations are similar to Robert Boissard's engraving that illustrates the *Pattern Book of Ornament*, published in Bern, in c. 1605 (Fig. 52). A Temple of Hercules Musarum [*Aedes Herculis Musarum*] was built and dedicated to Hercules in ancient Rome.

Both the opposite Chinese Cabinet and the Visiting Room on the left of the central Large Room led to the Dining Room of the Palace, in which Brukenthal, after his wife's death in 1782, arranged his own Work Office and Bedroom (Dâmboiu 2015, 122-123). The room – with a view to the inner courtyard of the Palace – is decorated on the supraportes with vases of fruits and vegetables and diverse Masonic tools, each with specific symbolic Freemasonic meanings: wheat spikes, grapes (Fig. 53) and olive leaf garlands (representing corn, wine and oil – which have been used from the earliest time during the ceremonies of dedication, consecration and constitution of a lodge; they are symbols of sacrifice, of fruits of labour, of reward deserved), torch (“Torch of Enlightenment”), trowel (symbol of the spread of brotherly love and affection), square (wisdom, morality and virtue), hammer (emblem of authority, as well as of monitions against vices) and sickle (with the same symbolism as the scythe, is an emblem of time, “which cuts the brittle thread of life, and launches



us into eternity”)<sup>12</sup>. In the *camera caritatis* [the charity chamber], as Brukenthal called this room, a close circle of intellectuals from Sibiu used to hold lectures on scientific and political themes, and if the circle was wider, the lectures were held in the Reading Room of the Library or, more festive, right above this one, on the second floor, in the Large Room in the Gallery with stucco on the ceiling – *Im großen Saal zwischen des Bildergalerie* (Fig. 54) (Schuller 1969 II, 302; Fischer, 70, n. 185; Dâmboiu 2014, 124-127).

The Freemasonic Lodge in Sibiu was profoundly focused on scientific research, and Brukenthal became more involved, especially after his retirement. Until the dissolution of the Lodge in 1790, the literary circles were held in the lodge or its members' houses, pretty often at Hochmeister's. After 1790, Brukenthal hosted the reading circles in his Palace, and even deposited the lodge inventory for a while. Thanks to him and to these circle debates, Brukenthal Palace activated as a workshop of Freemasonry thinking and served as a cultural institution. The participants were part of the political, intellectual and scientific elite of the country, and their number increased to 40; lectures were organized here every Wednesday, and diverse newspapers were available for individual study; enrolment required an annual membership fee of 8 guldens (Fischer 2007, 67-68, footnotes 177-178). “The conclusions of these debates were published in *Siebenburgische Quartalschrift*, written by the Brother Mason Johann Filtsch and edited by Brother Martin Hochmeister's typography. This periodical publication played the role of an opinion former and the function of a moral platform; in addition, it gave Brother Masons the opportunity to express the Enlightenment ideas and to make known the results of their scientific work outside the narrow circle of the Lodge.” (Fischer 2007, 67) Many of the authors of the journal *Siebenburgische Quartalschrift* were teachers at the Evangelical Gymnasium in Sibiu (e.g. Jakob Aurelius Muller and Daniel Georg Neugeboren were both teachers and rectors of the Gymnasium and later, both became bishops of the Protestant church of the Augsburg Confession in Transylvania); this explains why, in 1802, the Evangelical Gymnasium in Sibiu was designated by Brukenthal as the heir of his rich collections,

receiving also a generous money donation (Fischer 2007, 80).

At Brukenthal's suggestion, Johann Filtsch and Johan Seivert contacted and collaborated with the University Professor August L. von Schlözer from Göttingen for writing a history of Transylvania (Schlözer 1795–1797). Interested among other scientific fields in the history of Transylvania, Brukenthal succeeded in acquiring for his archaeological collection, besides numismatic pieces, the priceless *Biertan Donarium* – a fourth-century Christian votive object, testimony of the existence of a Christian Latin language population in Dacia, and the triad statue found at Salinae, Ocna Mureș, *Hekate trifomis* (Koeppen 1823, 21) – a Greek deity that is strongly connected to the number three: she has three forms, three bodies, three heads; she has power in underworld, on earth and in heaven – Olympus; she is honoured on three-way crossroads etc.

These effervescent cultural and scientific activities that took place in Sibiu and in the Brukenthal Palace echoed the Enlightenment phenomenon spread across Europe, where “the reading societies were the most widespread. They emerged from groups of literary and scientifically interested citizens and expanded since about 1770/75 to reading cabinets, the own rooms, sometimes even own houses, a reference library, also had writing and entertainment room. Its members belonged to the upper bourgeoisie and the literary and philosophical intelligentsia; lower social classes remained largely excluded. The goal was the ‘promotion of science’ and ‘the refinement of morals’. This coincided to a large extent with the ideas of the Enlightenment and suggested that, despite differing views in the interpretation of this movement, an approximately uniform self-understanding of the Enlightenment has existed. The meaning of the reading societies lay in the reading offer, since thereby the information requirement could be covered. The reading societies reshaped the convivial intercourse of the members, who shared the need for knowledge. It was all about better information and common debate about the events of the time.” (Reinalter 2000, p. 15)

The synthesis of the cultural and scientific preoccupations that animated Brukenthal and the leading intellectuals with whom he was connected is reflected in the Austrian Baroque painter Johann Michael Rottmayr von Rosenbrunn's painting *The Triumph of Arts and Sciences*, a great tondo of 274 × 180 cm, oil on canvas, signed and

<sup>12</sup>[http://www.themasonictrowel.com/Articles/Symbolism/comprehensive\\_files/short\\_symbolism/the\\_meaning\\_of\\_the\\_scythe.htm](http://www.themasonictrowel.com/Articles/Symbolism/comprehensive_files/short_symbolism/the_meaning_of_the_scythe.htm)

dated in 1710, inv. 982; Mureşan 2005, 69), mounted on the ceiling of the Cabinet on the left of the Gallery, at the second floor (Fig. 55)<sup>13</sup>. The allegorical picture represents the Muses of arts and sciences grouped around their protective goddess, Athena – depicted with helmet, lance and the shield emblazoned with Medusa's head, and as a sign of victory – pressing her foot over Cronus (the Greek leader of the Titans), seen as the Angel of Death holding a scythe, symbolizing the passage of life and death, so meaning, forgetfulness, indifference and ignorance. This painting can be considered emblematic for the cultural institution that Brukenthal projected to be his Palace in Sibiu, a real “Temple of the Muses”.

In pendant with *The Triumph of Arts and Sciences*, the ceiling of the opposite cabinet (the Cabinet on the right, at the second floor) is embellished with another painting attributed to Johann Michael Rottmayr von Rosenbrunn, the *Rape [Abduction] of the Sabine Women* (Brukenthal National Museum, oil on canvas, 204 x 516 cm, inv. 631) (Fig. 56). During Renaissance and Baroque, the subject was popular as a story symbolizing “conception of Concordia as not only a marital ideal but a paramount social and political as well” (Brown 1995, 292).

We cannot fail to mention, in the Transylvanian Enlightenment context, the special relationship between Samuel von Brukenthal and Count Sámuel Teleki (1739–1822)<sup>14</sup> – (two personalities from Transylvania – one of Saxon Nationality, the other Hungarian – related to the common passion of collecting books, but also to the Freemasonry ideals) –, which is reflected in a “friendship painting” from 1787, by Johann Martin Stock (Mesea 2017, 14-16) (Fig. 57). “Stock portrayed both Teleki and Brukenthal at their desks. Teleki, in Hungarian national costume, poses in a way commonly adopted by scientists and is within a context suggestive of a study. In the background, Brukenthal is portrayed dressed in casual garments in the pose of a French encyclopaedist-philosopher; the portrait provides a fitting detail for the interior. In addition, the picture includes motifs relating to freemasonry for on the desk, among other objects suggesting scientific study, is a map of Háromszék County in Transylvania showing the names of cities particularly active in

freemasonry. The bust of Joseph II, also on the desk, is significant in that the Edict of Tolerance issued by the Emperor in 1781, made Sámuel Teleki's public career possible permitting, amongst other things, his appointment as Vice Chancellor of Transylvania in 1787.” (Buzási 1984, 203; Buzási 2018) The very significant double-portrait in oil on canvas (41.50 x 33 cm), signed and dated, is in the collections of the Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.

For the purchase, arrangement, administration and promotion of his collections, for building his Palace and mansions, and the developing of the marvelous Garden in Avrig, and last but not least, for his entire political, cultural and scientific activities, Brukenthal made much effort – in his words, “...the investment of endeavor, diligence and perseverance deserves even more attention than the spent money ...” (Ittu 2000, 83). This overview idea was suggestively expressed by the two Atlantes that support the portal towards the second courtyard of the Palace, executed by Anton Hertzum in 1786<sup>15</sup> (Fig. 58). *Atlantes* is the Greek plural form of the name of the Titan Atlas, who was forced to hold the sky on his shoulders for eternity. The Atlantes sculptures were a common model for conceiving of the Baroque palaces' gateways, impressive sculptural forms suggesting force, endurance, patience, determination. Such a Portal with Atlantes is that of Palazzo Davia Bargellini in Bologna, sculpted in 1658 by Gabriele Brunelli and Francesco Agnesini (Fig. 59). The closest model of both portals – in Bologna and Sibiu – is the woodcut illustration for a Venetian chimneypiece, by Vincenzo Scamozzi, *Aspetto della Nappa a Padiglione*, signed *Vinc' Scam'* (Scamozzi 1615, 167) (Fig. 60).

Through this chain of continuous symbols, the Brukenthal Palace turns out to be a place where the aesthetic and the esoteric were combined.

“Freemasonry is a science of symbols, in which, by their proper study, a search is instituted after truth, that truth consisting in the knowledge of the divine and human nature of God and the human Soul.” (Mackey 1882)

<sup>13</sup> After its restoration in 1897, the painting was no longer mounted on the ceiling, but exhibited on the wall of a Gallery hall.

<sup>14</sup> Chancellor of Transylvania between 1791 and 1822, founder of the Teleki Library in Târgu Mureş.

<sup>15</sup> Contract execution from June 1, 1785. (Sibiu County Department of National Archives, Colecția Brukenthal, CD 1-51, nr. 33, fi la 27.)

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<sup>17</sup> MNB – [Palatul Brukenthal] Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu. © Muzeul Național Brukenthal

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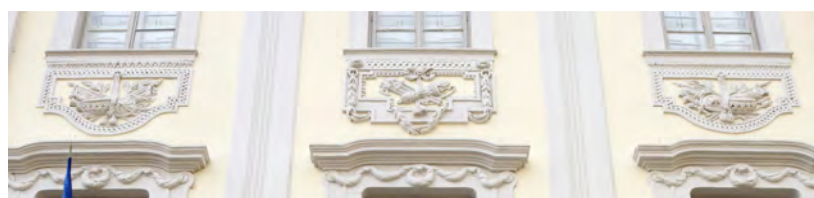


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Fig. 18. Bernard Picart, *Narcissus is changed into a Flower*, BNM

Fig. 19a. Bernard Picart, *Arion preserved by a Dolphin*, BNM

Fig. 19b. The Visit Room on the left with *Arion* roundel above the mirror, BNM



Fig. 20. Roundel with *The Childhood of Dionysus*, BNM

Fig. 21. Roundel with *The Education of Dionysus*, BNM

Fig. 22. Roundel with *The Triumph of Dionysus*, BNM

Fig. 23. Roundel with *Dionysus and Ariadne*, BNM



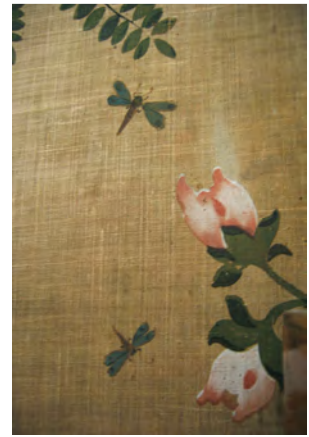


Fig. 24a,b,c. The chintz tapestry from the Large Room, with details, BNM

Fig. 25. The wallpapers from the two Chinese Cabinets, BNM

Fig. 26a. Frescoes from the Chinese Cabinet on the left, BNM



Fig. 26b. Frescoes from the Chinese Cabinet on the right, BNM

Fig. 27a,b. Roundel with a pair of Chinese characters in the Visit Room on the right, BNM

Fig. 28a,b. Roundel with a pair of Chinese characters in the Visit Room on the left, BNM





Fig. 29. *Slay the Nemean Lion*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 30. *Capture the Golden Hind of Artemis*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 31. *Capture the Erymanthian Boar*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 32. *Slay the Stymphalian Bird*, Hercules Room, BNM



Fig. 33. *Capture and bring back Cerberus*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 34. *Slay the Trojan Marine Monster*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 35. *Hercules wrestling of Antaeus*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 36. *The Cattle of Geryon (the episode of The Pillars of Hercules)*, Hercules Room, BNM







Fig. 37. *Slay the nine-headed Lernaean Hydra*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 38. *Steal the Apples of the Hesperides*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 39. *Capture the Cretan Bull*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 40. *Obtain the girdle of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons*, Hercules Room, BNM

Fig. 41. Bernard Picart, *Achelous in the shape of a Bull is vanquished by Hercules*, etching for the *Musen-Tempel* book, 1733

Fig. 42. Bernard Picart, *Hercules' Combat with the Hydra*, etching for the *Musen-Tempel* book, 1733

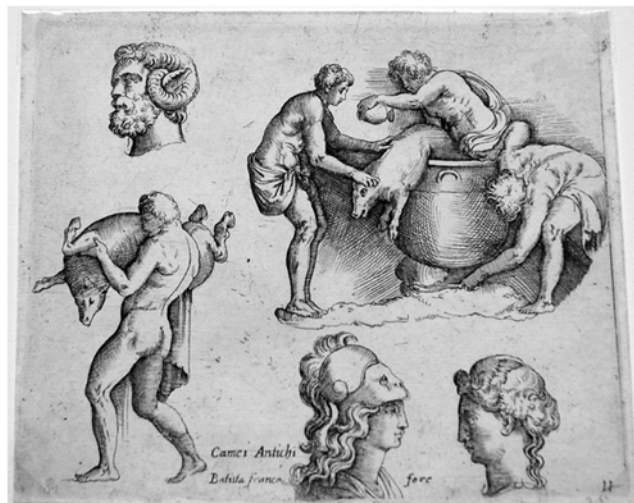


Fig. 43. A gilt bronze medal representing *Hercules and the Lion from Nemeea*, c. 1496.  
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Fig. 44. Bernard Picart's engraving no. 59 from the Stosch's book

Fig. 45. A sketch of Giovanni Battista Franco after a cameo. © Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence

Fig. 46. After Giambologna, *Hercules carrying the Erymanthian Boar*, mid-17<sup>th</sup> century.  
© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Fig. 47. The intaglio *Hercules resting*, Italy, 16<sup>th</sup> century. © The State Hermitage Museum



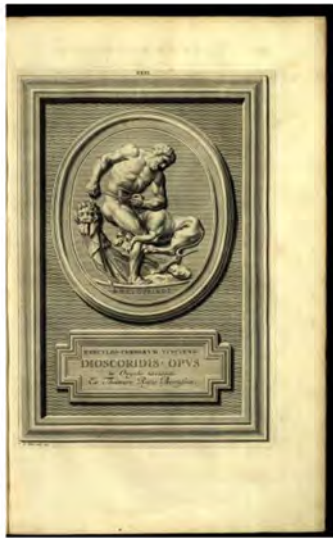


Fig. 48. Bernard Picart's engraving, no. 133 from the Stosch's book

Fig. 49. Italian Anonymous, *Hercules and Cerberus*, 16<sup>th</sup> century.

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Fig. 50. *Hercules and Antaeus*, a 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian bronze plaque

Fig. 51. Antonio Pollaiuolo, *Hercules wrestling of Antaeus*, c. 1478.

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Fig. 52. Robert Boissard, *Hercules Musarum*, engraving for the *Pattern Book of Ornament*, published in Bern, in c. 1605



Fig. 53. Freemasonic decorations on the supraportes of the Dining Room / Bedroom / Work Office, BNM

Fig. 54a,b,c. Masonic decorations on the ceiling of the Large Room in the Gallery, and on the corner of the Visit Room on the right, BNM





Fig. 55. Johann Michael Rottmayr von Rosenbrunn, *The Triumph of Arts and Sciences*, 1710, BNM

Fig. 56. Johann Michael Rottmayr von Rosenbrunn, *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, BNM

Fig. 57. Johann Martin Stock, *Portrait of Count Sámuel Teleki with Baron Sámuel Brukenthal's half-length portrait*, 1787.  
© Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, Budapest





Fig. 58. Anton Hertzum, The Portal with Atlantes of the Brukenthal Palace in Sibiu, 1786

Fig. 59. Gabriele Brunelli and Francesco Agnesini, The Portal with Atlantes of Palazzo Davia Bargellini in Bologna, 1658

Fig. 60. Vincenzo Scamozzi, woodcut illustration for a Venetian chimneypiece, 1615





## AN UNKNOWN RENDERING OF ST. THOMAS OF VILLANUEVA IN THE COLLECTION OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM

Alexandru Gh. SONOC\*

**Abstract:** *In the Brukenthal National Museum's collection was identified a painting rendering St. Thomas of Villanueva as Archbishop of Valencia giving alms to the poor. Considering both the deficiencies of this work and its similarities with genuine paintings by Giovanni Francesco (1610–1662) and especially the good quality of its design, it should furtherly be seen as a product of the latter's studio. Its true author could be, most likely, Urbano Romanelli (c. 1645–1682), an artist about whose work there is unfortunately too less information, who at the time when the painting was made (c. 1659–1662) did not work on his own, but still under the careful supervision of the great Viterbese artist, his father and teacher. Now, when so much is known about the work of Johann Martin Hohenberg alias Martino Altomonte (1657–1745), there are no sufficiently convincing evidences to continue to assign to him this painting. The Austrian-Italian artist was, undoubtedly, a more skilled painter then the author of the aforementioned work.*

**Key words:** *St. Thomas of Villanueva, architecture monuments from Valencia, Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, Urbano Romanelli, Roman school*

**Rezumat:** *În colecția Muzeului Național Brukenthal a fost identificat un tablou reprezentându-l pe Sf. Toma de Villanueva ca arhiepiscop de Valencia, dând de pomană săracilor. Având în vedere atât deficiențele acestei lucrări, cât și asemănările ei cu tablouri originale de Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (1610–1662) și mai ales buna calitate a desenului său, ea ar trebui considerată pe viitor ca fiind un produs al atelierului acestuia din urmă. Adevăratul ei autor ar putea fi, cel mai probabil, Urbano Romanelli (cca. 1645–1682), un artist despre a cărui operă din păcate există prea puține informații, care pe vremea când tabloul a fost executat (cca. 1659–1662) nu muncea pe cont propriu, ci încă sub atenta supraveghere a marelui artist din Viterbo, tatăl și dascălul său. În prezent, când se cunosc mult mai multe date despre creația lui Johann Martin Hohenberg zis și Martino Altomonte (1657–1745), nu există argumente suficient de convingătoare pentru a mai continua să i se atribuie acest tablou. Artistul austro-italian a fost, neîndoiește, un pictor mai iscusit decât autorul lucrării anterior menționate.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Sf. Toma de Villanueva, monumente de arhitectură din Valencia, Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, Urbano Romanelli, școala romană*

In the Brukenthal National Museum's collection of European Painting there is an interesting, but less known work (Die Gemälde- Galerie 1844, 19, cat. 98; Führer 1893, 13, cat. 166; Csaki 1901, 263-264, cat. 942; Csaki 1909, 288, cat. 960; Csaki 1926, 24, cat. 960; Vollmer 1934, 545; Spek 1941, 27, cat. 960) (Fig. 1), which renders an archbishop in liturgical garments on the steps of a building's entrance, which is flanked by columns. With his left hand, he lifts his pluvial, into a fold of whose he seems to hold coins, of which he takes with his right hand to give alms to the poor who flocked around him. On the left side of the work is rendered a kneeling woman in a red

ragged robe, whose head is covered by a white scarf and who receives the coin offered by the archbishop. Her left hand grasps the right arm of a bare-headed lass with brown hair, whose shoulders are covered by an ochre kerchief. Between the feet of the latter and those of the archbishop other two characters are crowding: a half-naked child, wearing only a blue shirt, who grasps by his left hand the sleeve of the first woman's red robe, and another lass, who grabs by her right hand the pluvial's lap lower side. Also at the left there is a beggar leaning on a rod, stretching his hand to the archbishop and asking as well for alms. On the right side of the work are rendered two beggars: one, with bare bust, wearing a green cloth and a red cloak and behind him a teenager whose head is only visible. In a

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further ground, turning his back to the onlooker, there is an Augustinian friar, whose right hand is pointing to the archbishop and to the beggars. In front of him there is an archbishop's companion, maybe a deacon, wearing the archbishop's crosier topped by a large golden crucifix surmounting an orb. In the background, at right, there is a building with a curved wall, whose form would vaguely suggest an amphitheatre.

In earlier publications, the work was known as *Bishop Giving Alms to the Poor*, *The Charitable Bishop* or *The Merciful Bishop*, which intrigued me so much, that I assumed that it would be either an image of St. Nicholas or a possible rendering of a papal alms giving, due to the archbishop crosier with crucifix. For this reason, in various temporary exhibitions organized during 2011–2013 it was shown as *Papal Charity*. This archbishop crosier alone could not identify the character as St. Thomas of Villanueva, an Archbishop of Valencia well-known for his charitable deeds, although it is a specific attribute to several statues rendering him and occurs as well in his posthumous portrait due to Francisco Camilo (1610–1671) from the Museo del Prado in Madrid (oil on canvas, 208 x 111 cm), now in custody at the Consejo de Estado (Fig. 2), which obviously is made during c. 1659–1671. Besides the depiction of an alms giving, a first clue for an undoubted identification of the character was the quite late remark of an Augustinian monk among the secondary characters of this scene, which immediately remembered me the life and iconography of St. Thomas of Villanueva, an Augustinian friar himself. Moreover, in terms of his physiognomy, the main character resembles St. Thomas of Villanueva, rendered generally as an archbishop or even as an Augustinian monk (but in this case, of course, without an archbishop crosier), having an average body and with a shaved sharp and bony face and a high forehead, often showing an incipient baldness. Considered together, all these elements are, therefore, strong arguments to support the identification of the main character from the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum as St. Thomas of Villanueva.

After the study of several 17<sup>th</sup> c. paintings and especially dated during 1658–1678, thus during the first two decades after his canonization, as well as of some later works, I believe that these physiognomic features surely corresponds to the real appearance of this important character of the Spanish Golden Age (*El Siglo de Oro*). Besides Francisco Camilo, among the painters who

rendered St. Thomas of Villanueva so early, during the first two decades after his canonization, are Lorenzo Lippi (1606–1665) with a work in the Sant'Agostino's church in Prato, Luca Giordano (1634–1705), in a youth work dated right in 1658, from Museo del Capodimonte in Napoli, which comes actually from the local San Agostino degli Scalzi's church (now Santa Maria della Verità), Mateo Cerezo (1637–1666) in a work dated c. 1660 from Musée du Louvre in Paris (oil on canvas, 246 x 208 cm, inv. MI 888) and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682), in 5 paintings, as follows: two in the Museo de Bellas Artes in Seville (dated during c. 1665–c. 1670, respectively c. 1668–1669), one at the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena (dated c. 1678), one at the Cincinnati Art Museum (dated in 1667) and one at the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (dated in 1668). These early renderings of St. Thomas of Villanueva are particularly important, due to the fact that the character's physiognomic and somatic features are quite similar, although (excepting of course the painting by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo from the Cincinnati Art Museum, which shows the future Archbishop of Valencia during his childhood, dividing his cloths among some beggar boys) he is rendered in various moments of his ecclesiastical career, as an Augustinian friar or as an archbishop, generally giving alms and rarely healing the sick (the painting by the aforementioned artist from the Alte Pinakothek in Munich) or praying (one of the paintings by the same artist in the Museo de Bellas Artes in Sevilla) or even more rarely as a posthumous portrait, following the portraits d'apparat of the Catholic bishops (the painting by Francisco Camilo from the Museo del Prado in Madrid, now in custody at the Consejo de Estado). A notable exception, certainly dating from the period before his canonization (most likely, c. 1632–1648), is a posthumous portrait as a donor, staying in front of the Virgin Mary and of the Child Jesus (oil on canvas, 240 x 155 cm), due to Simone Cantarini (1612–1648), in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fano (Fig. 3), which shows him with the previously described physiognomic features. The same physiognomic features of St. Thomas of Villanueva are occurring as well in mural paintings, in graphics and even in sculptures. The explanation is that, with his canonization was spread a physiognomic type and an iconography based not only on oral narratives or even on contemporary or more or less later written sources, as in the case of many other saints, but rather on a contemporary image of him (like a donor portrait), made *ad vivum* (now most likely

lost), which became generalized, maybe through copies or even by later works inspired by them, as the aforementioned one from Fano. Another example of composition rendering the beatified Archbishop of Valencia (dating therefore from the period before his canonization) is the painting *St. Thomas of Villanueva Giving Alms to the Poors* (oil on panel), dated c. 1653, by Juan de Valdés Leal (1622–1690) from the El Paso Museum of Art (Fig. 4). There is a small number of deviations from this physiognomic type, which seems to be rarer in Europe and in Latin America as in other regions and the most are quite recent, dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> c. and less to the 20<sup>th</sup> c., when the spread of the photographic technique had as result also the popularization through various items of personal devotion and through illustrations in the religious literature of images in which the physiognomy of St. Thomas of Villanueva is that which became "canonical", i.e. less influenced by the fantasy of the artists and, therefore, closer to his real appearance and to the works from 1658–1678.

St. Thomas of Villanueva (1488–1555), Archbishop of Valencia (1544–1555), was an Augustinian friar, a noted preacher, ascetic and religious writer, as author of some collections of sermons and of various tracts, among the most famous is one dedicated to the communion. He was born in Fuentellana as Tomás García y Martínez in the family of a miller who was known for his charitable deeds, and under the influence of the education he got, the future archbishop used to give to poor children his own cloths, that he went almost naked. He was educated in Villanueva de los Infantes (hence his future name, *Tomás de Villanueva*, how he was recorded in the academic and church documents), but at the age of 16 he went to study Arts and Theology at the university of Alcalá de Henares (1502–1510), where he later became a professor (1512–1516). Then he got a job of Professor of Philosophy at the university of Salamanca, but after a visit at the Augustinian monastery from there he became a friar (1516) and later was ordained a priest (December 18, 1518). Through the eloquence and the efficiency of his sermons, which are considered as masterpieces of the 16<sup>th</sup> c. homiletics, he became famous in the churches of Salamanca and earned the appreciation of Emperor Charles V. Thus, he became royal councillor and court preacher in Valladolid, although because of his destructive attacks against some bishops he was considered as a reformer. He was also noted for condemning the cruelty of the bullfighting and by his great devotion to Virgin

Mary, whose heart he compared with the burning bush of Moses, which is never consumed. He ascended the steps of the Augustinian Order's hierarchy till that of Prior Provincial for Andalusia and Castile, being preoccupied with the reformation of this order, whose canons' opposition he had to break. He supported the Catholic mission to Mexico, but refused the post of Archbishop of Granada (1534), offered him by the emperor. In 1544, until ordered to accept by his superior, he agreed very reluctantly to become Archbishop of Valencia. Visiting every parish in his Archdiocese, he wanted to discover the true needs of the people, which in pastoral respect had been neglected since more than a century. As archbishop, he had an extremely austere way of life, allocating to a hospital a donation made in order to decorate his residence. He established boarding schools for pupils and high schools, among which a special college for Moorish converts and with great passion he devoted himself to the endowment of the hospitals and to the ceaseless help of the poor, especially of the orphans, of the women without dowry and of the sick. Being so charitable, he sought as well to obtain definitive and structural solutions to the problem of poverty, by giving work to the poor, in order to make thus that both the philanthropy and the earnest work bear the so much wished-for fruits. His whole pastoral activity took place according to the spirit of the decisions of the Trent Council (1545–1547; 1547–1549; 1551–1552), which he however did not attend (for health reasons and due to his dedication to the pastorate of his archbishopric and of his believers), but whose works he pursued with interest. He died of angina pectoris, on September 8, 1555. He was beatified on October 7, 1618 by Pope Paul V and canonized by Pope Alexander VII on November 1, 1658, and his feast is on September 8, in certain regions of Italy even on September 18 and in Spain and within the Augustinian Order on October 10. (For the life of St. Thomas of Villanueva: Quevedo 1620; Salón 1793; Marcos 2005; Campos y Fernández de Sevilla 2008.)

As the identification of the main character rendered in this painting from Brukenthal National Museum's collection is clarified, another problem remains to be solved: where should be located the depicted scene? Undoubtedly, the building with a curved wall is not an amphitheatre, but a part of the archdiocesan cathedral of the Ascension of the Virgin in Valencia (commonly known as *Iglesia de la Seu* and officially called, since 1866, *Basilica Metropolitana de la Asunción de la Nuestra*

*Señora*), namely its Renaissance gallery known as *Obra Nova* (Fig. 5), whose construction started in 1566 (for the elements of the Archbishop's Cathedral of Valencia and its history, see Fig. 9-10; cf. Simó, Sebastià 2005, 216). This gallery with Tuscan arcades on its first floor and Ionic arcades on the second one was used in the past to watch public events as processions and executions and is located to the right of the Apostles' Gate of the archdiocesan cathedral (Fig. 6). As depicted, the *Obra Nova* is seen from Plaza de la Virgen / Praça de la Mare de Déu (Fig. 7), near the entrance to Our Lady's Church of the Forsaken (*Basilica de la Madre de Dios de los Desemparados* / *Basilica de la Mare de Déu dels Desamparats*), where indeed there are columns (Fig. 8). However, this church entrance is not depicted exactly, although the painter who certainly had quite good and detailed information about St. Thomas of Villanueva's life and deeds and obviously wanted to suggest quite precisely where the rendered alms giving event happened, knew well (though indirectly, perhaps from maps, drawings and prints) the topography of this Spanish city (Fig. 7), but less the true aspect of its monuments. However, the depiction of these monuments is an additional proof that the rendered character is indeed St. Thomas of Villanueva.

This interesting work was purchased by Baron Samuel von Brukenthal as being made by an Italian anonymous, but since 1844 it was attributed to Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (1610–1662), called *il Viterbese* or *il Raffaellino*. Even in the gallery guide published in 1964 (Muzeul Brukenthal 1964), there is no mention of a change of this attribution. However, in the inventory register the painting is assigned, for unknown reasons, to Martino Altomonte, respectively to Johann Martin Hohenberg (1657–1745), as this new attribution is not mentioned at all in the works containing the results of the later research on the Italian school (Tudoran Ciungan 2007), respectively on the German and Austrian one (Mureşan 2007, 22-23). Thus, it is necessary to verify both attributions known until now.

Giovanni Francesco Romanelli is considered as one of the major Italian Baroque painters, known for his bright, vivid colours and also for the clarity of the details. At the age of 14 he went to Rome, where he studied at first with a relative, at the L'Incarnatini, then with Domenico Zampieri called *Domenichino* and finally, as a protégé of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, with Pietro da Cortona,

whom he left after some misunderstandings, although he was his favourite disciple. He became noted initially while working in the circle of Andrea Sacchi and later, coming under the influence of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, through whom he obtained many commissions, he changed his style, which becomes more elegant, more delicate, but less elaborate than that of his former teacher. On May 30, 1638 he was elected Director (*Principe*) of the Academy of St. Luke. Later, when the Barberini family lost its political influence under Pope Innocent X, he had to leave for Paris, where he was summoned to work by Cardinal Mazarin, whose palace he decorated during 1645–1647. In a second stay in France (1655–1657), during which he decorated rooms in the Louvre palace and in the Le Raincy castle, as well as the bishop's palace of Carpentras built by Cardinal Alessandro Bichi, he was made a knight of the Order of St. Michael by King Louis XIV. In this period, on various royal decoration projects he collaborated with the landscape painter Pierre Patel called *Le bon Patel*. The painter returned to Viterbo, his native city, where he died suddenly, as he was preparing again or a journey to France. Besides frescoes with mythological or religious themes (which represent the most part of his work), he did as well easel paintings with religious, mythological, historical or allegorical subjects. For Pope Urban VIII (respectively Maffeo Barberini, by his birth name) he made tapestry cartoons in the manner of Raffaello Sanzio, during 1637–1641. (For the biography and work of Giovanni Francesco Romanelli: Ticozzi 1818, 191; Lanzi 1828, 269-271; Ticozzi 1832, 261-262; Gould 1838b, 454; Spooner 1853, 796; Pilkington 1840, 502-503; Farquhar 1855, 147-148; Bryan 1904b, 267; Vollmer 1934, 544-546; Waterhouse 1962, 55; Wittkower 1973, 321-322; Myers 1979, 420.)

Although seen by Rudolf Wittkower as a failure (Wittkower 1973, 141), because of the return to a dry and archaizing Bolognese manner, of its emphasized design and the complete turning away from Venetian colour (Wittkower 1973, 322), the vigorous, chiefly ornamental and sometimes pleasing style (Farquhar 1855, 147) brought by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli to France, actually a watered-down and classicized version of Pietro da Cortona's manner (Wittkower 1973, 321) in much colder colours (Gould 1838b, 454; cf. Pilkington 1840, 502), but not inferior in ideas and composition (Pilkington 1840, 502), was extremely influential for the future development of the art from there, especially for Eustache Le



Sueur (Waterhouse 1962, 55). Luigi Lanzi was as well very critical to the Viterbese painter's innovations due to the influence of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, believing that they opened the way to the caprice, abandoning the true, which they substituted with false precepts of art and that Giovanni Francesco Romanelli was one who caused the apparition of pernicious principles in the schools of painting and particularly in that of Pietro da Cortona (Lanzi 1828, 263-264). However, Giovanni Francesco Romanelli is his teacher's only early disciple of any marked originality, although Ciro Ferri carried with remarkable purity the style of Pietro da Cortona, watering it a little as well, but adding nothing on his own (Waterhouse 1962, 55). Excepting its graciously treated characters, the work from Brukenenthal National Museum's collection shows some similarities with the style of Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (Waterhouse 1962, 55; cf. Pilkington 1840, 502), but rather less in the choice of the colours (excepting of course the use of honey-yellow), as its blue is less bright as it is specific for him. Rather by its structure of composition than by its warmer colours, the painting from Sibiu recalls in a certain measure, I think, a work by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, which Luigi Lanzi praised so much, as being made for the St. Peter's basilica in Rome (Lanzi 1828, 271), wherefrom it was moved at the occasion of its replacing by a mosaic (Lanzi 1828, 271; cf. Spooner 1853, 796; Pilkington 1840, 503; Farquhar 1855, 147; Bryan 1904b, 267): *The Presentation of Mary in the Temple in Jerusalem*, dated by Rudolf Wittkower during 1638–1642 and kept now in the Santa Maria degli Angelli's church in Rome, a former charterhouse (Wittkower 1973, 322). But *St. Thomas of Villanueva* from Sibiu seems closer rather to some later paintings of Giovanni Francesco Romanelli: two works in the dome of Viterbo, dated in 1648, namely *The Holy Family with St. Bernard* (Fig. 12) and, considering how the physiognomies are treated, with *St. Lawrence Glorified* (Fig. 13 and 13a), as well as *Moses Makes Water Flowing Out from a Rock* from a private collection in Morancez (France), whose date is unknown and in which can be noted a brown haired woman on her knees, in a red robe, wearing an ochre scarf on her shoulders, recalling a character in the painting from Sibiu. A similarly dressed woman, also on her knees, but without ochre scarf on her shoulders is rendered in a better known painting, namely *The Jews Gathering Manna in Dessert* (Fig. 14) from the Musée du Louvre in Paris (oil on canvas, 199 x 213 cm, inv. 576), which was

commissioned in 1657 to Giovanni Francesco Romanelli in order to decorate the summer apartment of Archduchess Anna of Austria (1601–1666), the consort of King Louis XIII and mother of King Louis XIV. The less carefully way in which the painting from the Brukenenthal National Museum's is executed would suggest either a later date, in the last years of the artist's life (obligatory after November 1, 1658, when St. Thomas of Villanueva was canonized by Pope Alexander VII) or (considering especially the poorer quality of the characters' faces) that the work should be assigned to the painter's studio, maybe to one of his two disciples: Urbano Romanelli (c. 1645–1682) and Giovanni Moneri/Monevi or Monevo (1637–1714).

On the biography and work of the former there is less information, mostly mingled from one biographer to another (Ticozzi 1818, 191; Lanzi 1828, 271; Ticozzi 1832, 261; Gould 1838b, 454; Pilkington 1840, 503; Spooner 1853, 796; Bryan 1904b, 267; Vollmer 1934, 547). Thus, it is known that after his father's death Urbano Romanelli entered the studio of Ciro Ferri and painted for churches from Rome, Velletri and Viterbo. It should be noted, however, that Luigi Lanzi, although mentioned that the main altar rendering St. Lawrence in the dome of Viterbo was painted by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (Lanzi 1828, 270), assigned however to Urbano Romanelli the works from there which are inspired from St. Lawrence's life (Spooner 1853, 796; cf. Lanzi 1828, 271), considering perhaps his participation in their execution, as a collaborator of his father and, maybe, after the latter's death, in the completion of the already commenced or only contracted commissions. Currently, in the dome of Viterbo to Urbano Romanelli is assigned only *The Martyrdom of St. Lawrence* (Vollmer 1934, 547), which obviously must be dated later than the others paintings from there, made by the painter's father in 1648. John Gould had a quite harsh opinion about the talent of Urbano Romanelli: "He [...] adopted the manner and style of his father, but was not in any respect comparable to him. And yet some of his copies after the works of Francesco, and also some of his own compositions, have been ascribed to his father though a judicious eye will readily discern the difference, especially in those which were designed by Urbano, as they are very deficient in regard to correctness and grace, which are always to be found in the genuine works of Francesco" (Gould 1838b, 454). Although in a slightly different way, he shared actually Matthew Pilkington's view (Pilkington 1798, 559; cf.

Pilkington 1840, 503). Other authors (Lanzi 1828, 271; Spooner 1853, 796) preferred to take the brief appreciation of Stefano Ticozzi, according to which Urbano Romanelli was a promising painter, who died as a young man, before he could manage to fulfill the hopes of being not less important than his father (Ticozzi 1818, 191; Ticozzi 1832, 262), while later published biographical lexicons gave up such opinions. For the attribution of the painting from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection the opinion uttered by John Gould is of a particular interest.

The other student of Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, namely Giovanni Moneri (as he was mentioned, maybe erroneously, for the first time only in 1794), was a mediocre artist of regional importance, but with an own style, easily to distinct from that of his master, and in 1657 he worked already on his own in his native region, for the cathedral of Acqui, after he left his master's studio and studied for a while in Turin, improving continuously the artistic quality of his works (for the biography and work of Giovanni Moneri: Ticozzi 1818, 59; Pilkington 1840, 386; Spooner 1853, 578; Bryan 1904a, 354; Vollmer 1931, 61).

Among all works rendering St. Thomas of Villanueva known to me, the closest similarities to the painting from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection in respect of the composition shows an almost contemporary work due to the Florentine artist Lorenzo Lippi (1506–1665) from the Sant' Agostino church of Prato (Fig. 15), which is broadly dated (if considering the date of St. Thomas of Villanueva's canonization and that of the painter's death) between November 1, 1658 and April 15, 1665, but most likely in 1660. In the aforementioned work from Prato, St. Thomas of Villanueva is not rendered as an archbishop, but in a previous phase of his life, as a simple Augustinian monk, surrounded by several characters, the most of them of male gender. As other compositions by Lorenzo Lippi, it is dominated by dark brown tones, which are balanced only by the gentleness and naturalness of the forms, by the correctness of the outlines and by the structure of the composition (due to the elegant disposition of the figures), but the blue shade of its sky (although used sometimes also by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli) is not the same in the painting from Sibiu. (For the biography and work of Lorenzo Lippi: Pilkington 1798, 369–370; Gould 1838a, 303; Spooner 1853, 481; Farquhar 1855, 88; Vollmer 1929, 274.) But the colours of the two works are so radically dissimilar, that Lorenzo Lippi, who was educated under

completely different artistic influences than Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, can by no means be considered as the author of the work from Sibiu. Unfortunately, among the buildings in the background of the Florentine painter's work two church towers can hardly been identified among the still existing Valencia's monuments, but the rampart elements of a city wall's gate tower, although clumsy depicted, could suggest the identification of that tower as one of the Torres de Quart (located on a road leading to the archdiocesan cathedral and built during 1441–1480) (Fig. 16), in the vicinity of which the city wall is no longer preserved (Fig. 17), being demolished in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> c.

Very different is the situation in the previously already mentioned later work by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo from the Norton Simon Museum din Pasadena, dated in 1678 (Fig. 18), in whose background, behind St. Thomas of Villanueva can be clearly seen the archdiocesan cathedral of Valencia's tower of St. Michael, known as *El Miguelete* / *El Micalet*, which suggests that the depicted scene should happen in front of the actual St. Sebastian's chapel of the cathedral or rather of the former Chapter Hall, which being connected with the cathedral during the 15<sup>th</sup> c. was transformed into the chapel of the St. Chalice (*San Cáliz* / *Sant Calze*) and therefore the onlooker apparently would see it from the Plaza / Plaça de la Reina (Fig. 19). On this side of the cathedral, the mentioned chapels have no exits with lateral arcades through which El Micalet could be seen, and in the past they also never had ones. In 1678 did not exist the actual Puerta de los Hierros / Porta dels Ferros, which was built only during 1703–1713 and currently distorts a view like that in the painting from Pasadena, but even its predecessor dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> c. also had no arcades towards El Micalet and was as well too close to the latter to allow such a view (for historical details concerning this part of the archdiocesan cathedral of Valencia, see Simó, Sebastià 2005, 216; for the elements of the Archbishop's Cathedral of Valencia and the evolution of its ground plan, see Fig. 9–10).

At the present stage of research, it can be said only that the painting *St. Thomas of Villanueva* from Sibiu should be dated c. 1659–1662 and, therefore, it would be either a very late work of Giovanni Francesco Romanelli or one by his small studio, which for the mentioned period would imply, of course, the involvement of his son Urbano, at that time only c. 14–17 years old, as a collaborator (if not as the real author of much

of the work). However, the latter possibility seems to be the most likely one, given the qualitative deficiencies of the painting (especially in respect of the characters' corporal proportional and of the shadows on their faces, but also less interest for details and for the legibility of the outlines), in comparison with other works whose undoubted author is Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, particularly from this late period of his activity, as the mentioned painting *The Jews Gathering Manna in Dessert* from Musée du Louvre in Paris. If Urbano Romanelli was the author of the work from Sibiu, but not as the collaborator of his father, but on his own, during the time when after the death of his father he worked in the studio of Ciro Ferri, the date of the painting can be extended, theoretically, to the whole period c. 1659–1682 (but only because so less is known about the work of Urbano Romanelli, who according to the statements of his biographers does not seem to have had a very clear stylistic evolution during his short life). Considering both the elements of architecture in the background, sufficiently well rendered to allow their recognition and, implicitly, to locate the depicted scene and the quite important similarities with the work of Lorenzo Lippi and the later one by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, compared to other works with the same subject from c. 1659–1682 due to other painters it may be assumed that both Giovanni Francesco Romanelli's studio (respectively, the painter's son Urbano Romanelli) and Lorenzo Lippi and later maybe even Bartolomé Esteban Murillo may have been inspired by older or even quite recent, currently unknown models, perhaps of Spanish (or even Valencian) painters or at least due to Italian artists (as Paolo de San Leocadio, c. 1445–c. 1520 or also others) who travelled to Valencia or had a good graphic documentation about the monuments of this city and even about the appearance of the portrayed character, which enjoyed popularity and were copied, interpreted and widely spread during the canonization of St. Thomas of Villanueva and during the following decades.

By contrary, the more recent attribution of this painting to Martino Altomonte, respectively to Johann Martin Hohenberg, seems stylistically unlikely, if considering its imprecise drawing, the poorly individualized physiognomies and, generally, the lack of resemblance to the physiognomies of other characters in this artist's religious painting, as they are known from various churches and monasteries in Austria (Karlskirche, Peterskirche and Alserkirche in Vienna,

Ursulinenkirche and Prunerstift in Linz, the monasteries Lilienfeld and Zwettl) or in Slovenia (the Vergin Mary the Helper's church in Ljubljana, commonly known as *Križanke*, i.e. "At the Crossroads") or from museums in Hungary (Szépművészeti Múzeum in Budapest) and Slovenia (Narodna galerija and Narodni muzej Slovenije in Ljubljana, Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj Ormož) etc. Moreover, there are no similarities with the both unsigned works by this painter from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection, namely *The Sorrowful Virgin* (oil on canvas, 84 x 66 cm, inv. 18) and a more known historical composition, *The Death of Seneca* (oil on canvas, 85 x 141 cm, inv. 17), which recently was exhibited in the Stadtmuseum Simeonstift in Trier, in the exhibition *Nero. Emperor, Artist and Tyrant* (May 14, 2015 – October 16, 2016). But even in Johann Martin Hohenberg's large historical paintings with many secondary characters, as *The Battle of Vienna* and *The Battle of Parkany* from the Boris Voznitski National Gallery in Lviv or *The Electoral Diet of 1697* from the Royal Castle in Warsaw cannot be found similarities for the way in which the painter of *St. Thomas of Villanueva* used to treat the physiognomies of his characters. The only religious work of Johann Martin Hohenberg known to me which, in respect of the characters' physiognomies and of its more vivid colours, shows some more or less distant similarities is *The Immaculate* (oil on canvas, 56.5 x 39 cm), dated in 1719, from the Narodna galerija in Ljubljana (Fig. 20), with has however a later but better variant in less strident colours, painted by the same artist in 1728 for the altar of St. Peter's parish church in Sarleinsbach, Upper Austria (Fig. 21). Therefore, I think that now, when so much is known about the work of Johann Martin Hohenberg alias Martino Altomonte (on his biography and work: Aurenhammer 1965; Etzlstorfer 2002), there are no arguments sufficiently convincing evidences to continue to assign to him the painting *St. Thomas of Villanueva* from Sibiu. This Austrian-Italian artist was, undoubtedly, a more skilled painter than the author of this work.

Thus, considering both the deficiencies of the aforementioned work from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection and its similarities with genuine paintings by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli and especially the good quality of its design, it should be furtherly seen as a work of the latter's studio. Its true author could be, most likely, Urbano Romanelli, an artist about whose work there is unfortunately too less information,

who at the time when the painting was made (c. 1659-1662) did not work on his own, but still under the careful supervision of the great Viterbese artist, his father and teacher.

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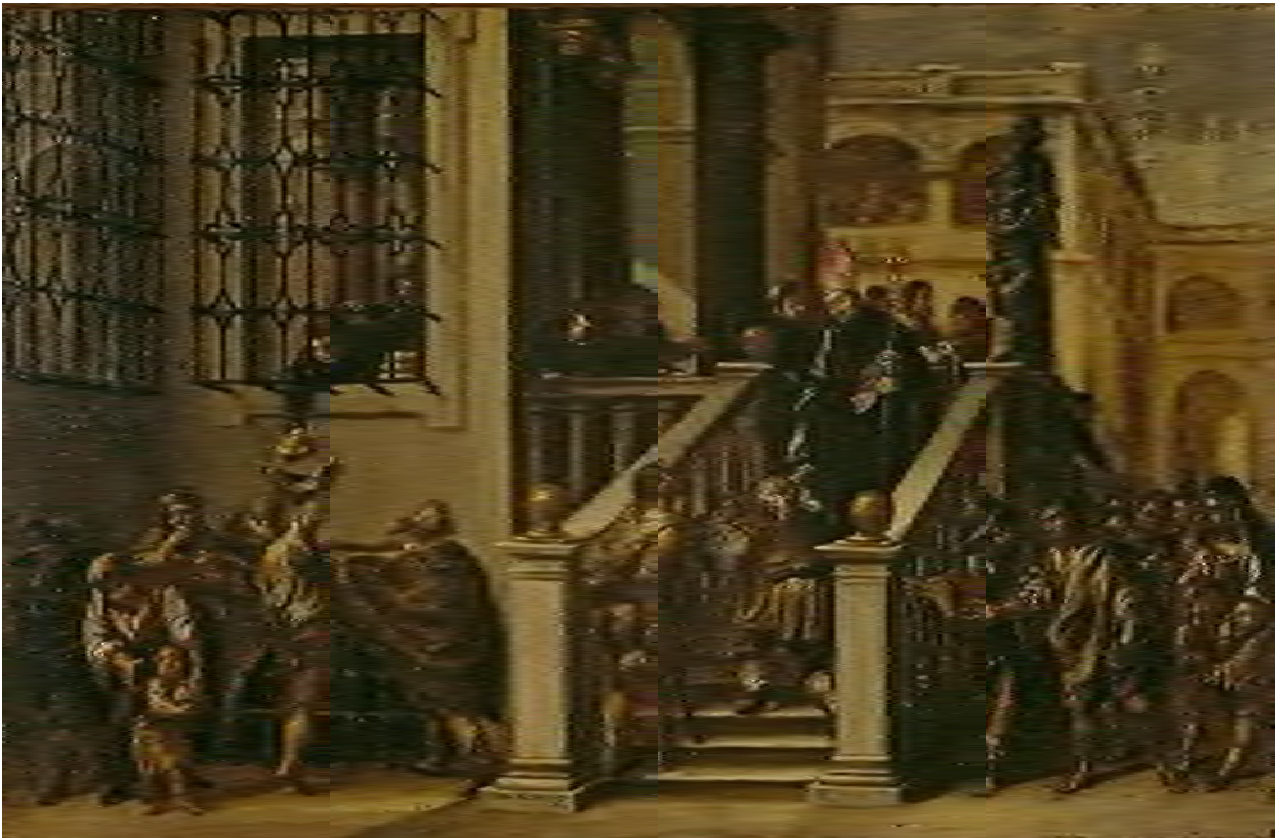


Fig. 4 – Juan de Valdés Leal, *St. Thomas of Villanueva Giving Alms to the Poor*, c. 1653.  
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Fig. 5 – The *Obra Nova* Gallery of the Archbishop's Cathedral in Valencia



Fig. 6 – The Archbishop's Cathedral in Valencia, seen from Plaza de la Virgen / Plaça de la Mare de Déu



Fig. 7 – Our Lady's Church of the Forsaken in Valencia

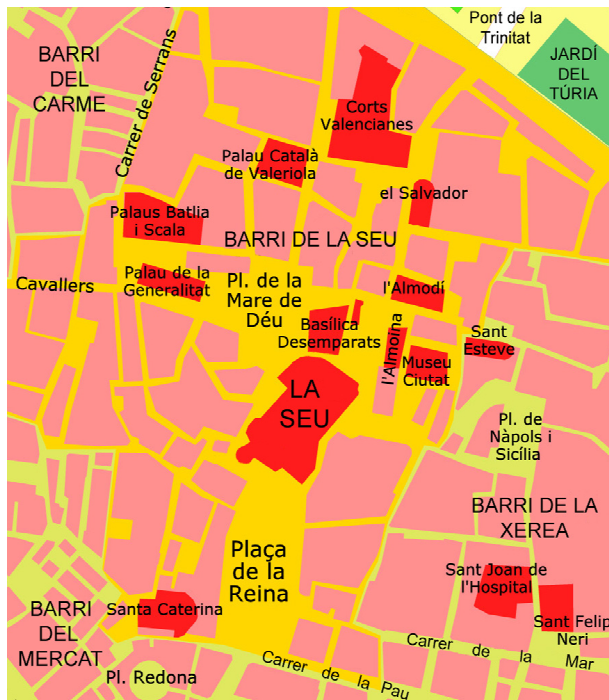


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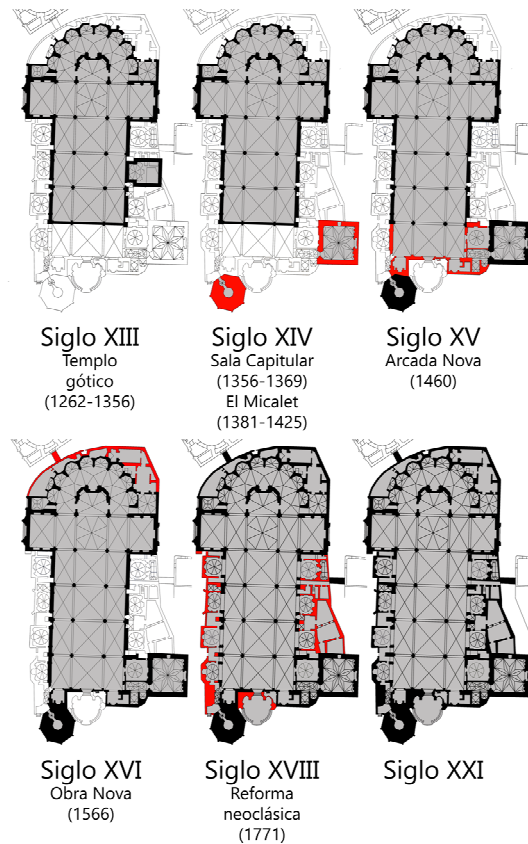
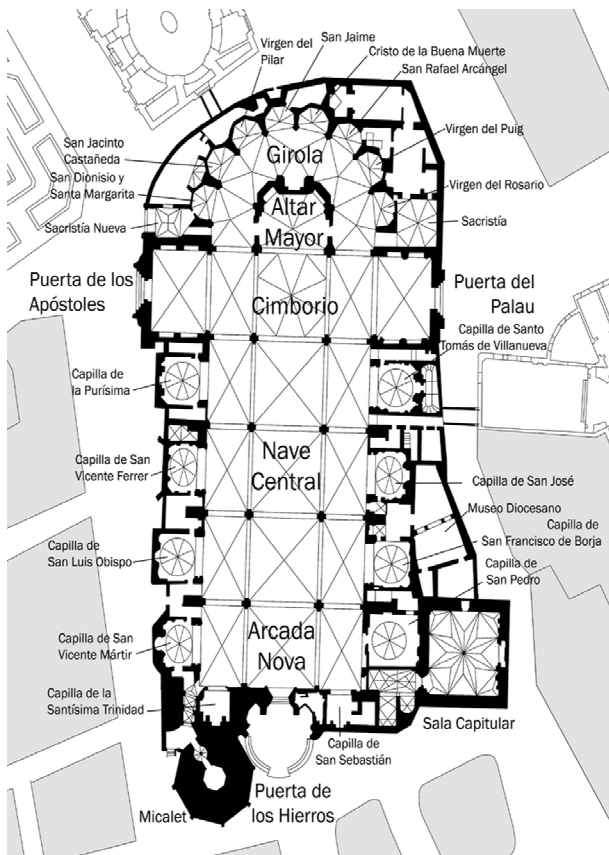






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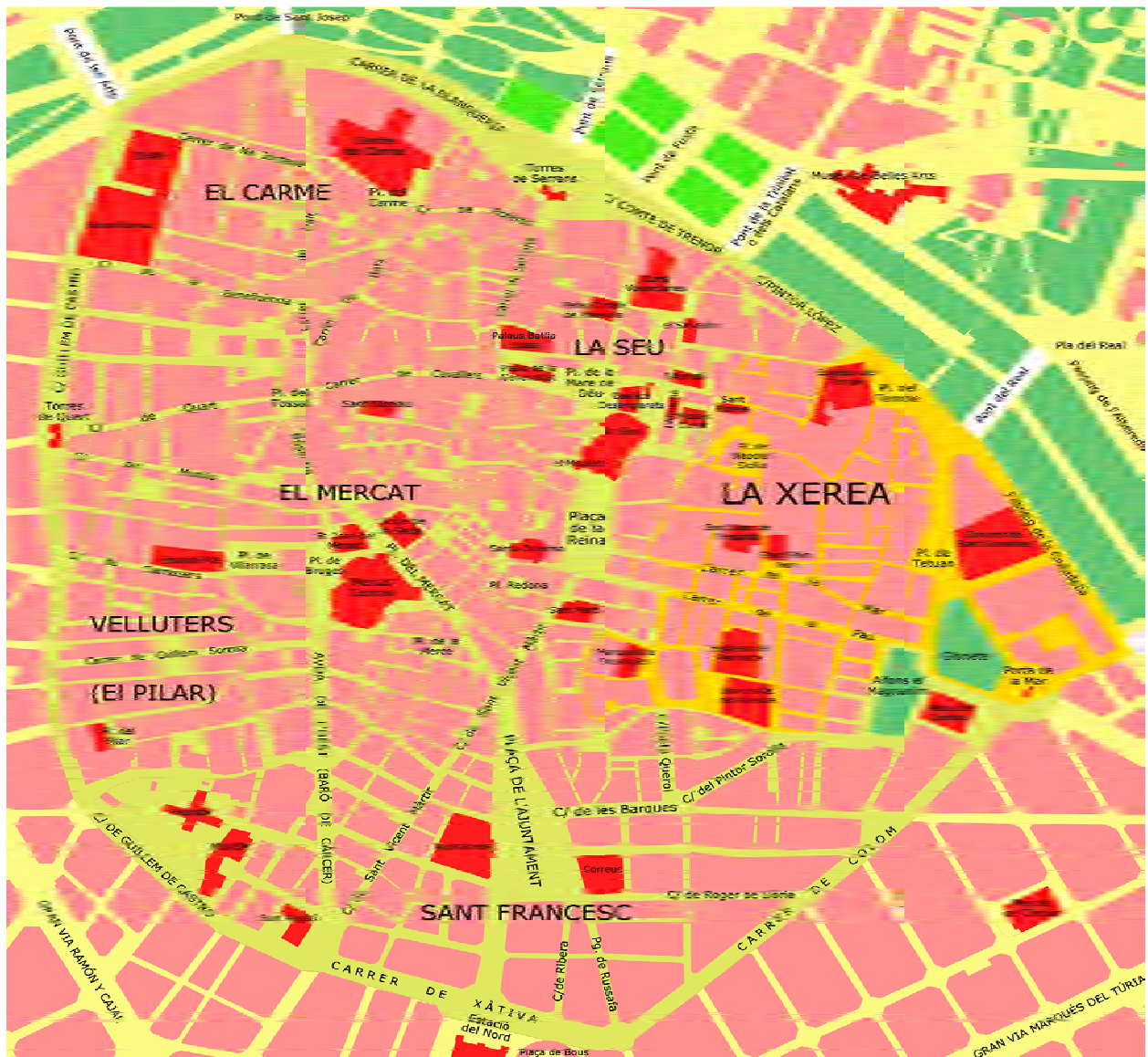


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## REMARKS ON THREE PAINTINGS WITH RELIGIOUS THEME BY FRENCH ARTISTS FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM

Alexandru Gh. SONOC\*

**Abstract:** *Three works with religious theme by French painters are discussed on this occasion. A quite well known and thoroughly analysed work by Sébastien Bourdon is dated, due to its analogies, during 1642–1645. An early 19<sup>th</sup> c. painting rendering St. Anthony the Great (equivocally mentioned as St. Anthony in the older literature) is assigned to Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve, due to the signature of this less known painter, which was ignored until now (although being noted already in the early 20<sup>th</sup> c.), as the traditional attribution to the more famous artist Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre was preferred. The work should be dated, most likely, during 1818–1824. A miniature on ivory, adorning a compact made of turtle shell and rendering Susanna and the elders, is actually made in late 18<sup>th</sup> c. (most likely in 1792), by a painter whose last name is Cornu and who can be identified with Jean-Alexis Cornu.*

**Keywords:** *French painting, religious themes, Habakkuk, St. Anthony the Great, Susanna and the elders.*

**Rezumat:** *Cu acest prilej sunt discutate trei lucrări cu tematică religioasă de pictori francezi. O lucrare de Sébastien Bourdon, destul de cunoscută și aprofundat analizată, este datată în perioada 1642–1645. Un tablou de la începutul sec. XIX care îl reprezintă pe Sf. Anton cel Mare (echivoc identificat drept Sf. Anton în literatura mai veche) este atribuit lui Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve, datorită semnăturii acestui pictor mai puțin cunoscut, care deși remarcată încă de la începutul sec. XX a fost până acum ignorată, preferându-se tradiționala sa atribuire mai celebrului artist Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre. Lucrarea ar trebui datată, cel mai probabil, în perioada 1818–1824. O miniatură pe fildeș, care decorează o pudrieră făcută din baga și o reprezintă pe Suzana în baie privită de bătrâni, este realizată de fapt la sfârșitul sec. XVIII (cel mai probabil în 1792), de către un pictor al cărui nume de familie este Cornu și care poate fi identificat cu Jean-Alexis Cornu.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *pictură franceză, teme religioase, Habacuc, Sf. Anton cel Mare, Suzana și bătrânii.*

In the collection of Brukenthal National Museum there are some paintings by French artists (or copies after their works), dated mainly during the 17<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> c., quite less studied until now (Lisan 1987; Deleanu 2006; Sonoc 2017) and among which there are also some interesting miniatures (especially portraits). My research, which has begun in 2011, led to the discovery of some signatures, which clarified or corrected the extant attributions or even to new attributions, but gave also the possibility to date more precisely some of the paintings and highlighted their cultural and historical significance. At the same time, it brought more information about the works of Nicolaus Müller, a Transylvanian-Saxon disciple of Antoine Pesne in Berlin (Albișor, Sonoc 2017).

On this occasion however, only paintings with religious theme will be discussed.

1. Sébastien Bourdon (1616–1671), *Habakkuk in Wilderness* [1642–1645]

Oil on canvas, 68.5 x 56 cm. Inv. 1281. Provenance: Baron Samuel von Brukenthal's collection.

Literature: *Gemälde-Galerie* 1844, 26, cat. 135; *Führer* 1893, 6, cat. 68; Csaki 1901, 347–348, cat. 1235; Csaki 1909, 386, cat. 1281; Csaki 1926, 31, cat. 1281; Spek 1941, p. 32, cat. 1281; Muzeul Brukenthal 1964, 11, nr. 101, ill. 101; Deleanu 1999–2000, 439–442, fig. 7; Lisan 1987, 218 and 220, cat. 4. (Fig. 1)

At left an angel, dressed in a white garment and pointing to the horizon, descends on a dark cloud, to divert the prophet Habakkuk from his path and to lead him through the wilderness from Judea to the city of Babylon, in order to bring food to the

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prophet Daniel, who has been thrown into the lions' den. Habakkuk, wearing a yellow tunic and a blue cloak, is rendered on an arid field, in front of a tree. He steps forward, to the onlooker, holding in his right hand a basket lined with a white wipe, in which there is a goblet with lid and a two-handled jug, both of metal, to which his left hand is pointing. In a more distant plan, at left, there are two cattle and at right, accompanied by a shepherd, three more, drinking from a stream which flows near to the edge of the forest. Very far, at the horizon, there are mountains. The faces of the characters are expressive: Habakkuk's is tired, a little questioning, while that of the angel is expressing confidence and encouragement. The monumental, well-structured composition is dominated by ochre and greenish brown tones and refreshed by accents of white, yellow and blue, which help to highlight the characters.

The painting is inspired by the biblical text (*Daniel*, 14:32-39). An interesting analysis of the compositional structures symbolism, as well as of the gesture of the characters was made by Natalia Deleanu (Deleanu 1999–2000, 440-442), although concerning the interpretation of some details, such as the tree with a trifurcate trunk symbolising the messianic history of the Jewish people (Deleanu 1999–2000, 441), her conclusions do not convince. She correctly observes that, within the pyramid structure of the composition, the light aerial elements (the foliage of the tree, the cloud, the angel) are found in the upper part of the work, while in the opposite part there are the heavy earthly masses (the rock, the roots of the tree, the prophet's sculpturally modelled legs), symbolizing the human's attempts to free himself, to ascend (Deleanu 1999–2000, 441). In the composition's centre of balance there is the basket with food, to which with a both explanatory and questioning gesture is pointing downward the forefinger of the prophet's left hand, which being on the same line with the tip of his right foot's big toe suggests a similar reaction concerning the way on which he was walking to bring food to the reapers when the angel appeared in order to diverge him to Babylon (Deleanu 1999–2000, 440). The work highlights, therefore, the crucial moment in the prophet's life: his choice by God, whose will is fulfilled by the angel, who showing him other direction than the way on which he was going, causes him to detach himself from the everyday routine and, raising his look, to opt for the spiritual ascension, which makes him to understand the destiny and the mistakes of his people, generating thus a moral and axiological

change (Deleanu 1999–2000, 441-442). Paradoxically, although she highlighted such a "great concentration of symbols" (Deleanu 1999–2000, 440), the mentioned researcher came to the too harsh conclusion that that this painting would be "not too valuable" (Deleanu 1999–2000, 442).

The work (Fig. 1) was purchased by Baron Samuel von Brukenthal as being made by Domenico Zampieri called *Domenichino* (1581–1641). With this attribution it is mentioned as well in the Brukenthal Museum's gallery guidebook published in 1844. Based on Karl Schellein's opinion, the painting was assigned to the school of Domenico Zampieri, beginning with the 1893 edition of the gallery guidebook. Subsequently, maybe due to a poor state of preservation, it was withdrawn from the exhibition, as in the 1925 edition of the gallery guidebook it is mentioned as being in the museum's store. Later it returned to the exhibition, where it is mentioned by the 1941 edition of the gallery guidebook. Most likely only after World War II the work was assigned to Sébastien Bourdon (Muzeul Brukenthal 1964, 11, nr. 101, ill. 101), due to some stylistic features stressed in the lively correspondence between the museum's curator Theodor Ionescu (1915–1998) and various researchers (Lisan 1987, 218), respectively Georges Wildenstein and Charles Sterling (Muzeul Brukenthal 1964, 8), but also Marielle Latour (and not *Marie-L. Latour!*), as mentioned by Mariana Lisan in her study dedicated to the French painting from the museum's collection, where this attribution occurs without any reference to Theodor Ionescu as initiator of this correspondence (Lisan 1987, 214), just because of his conviction (1971) after the art theft of 1968, which was followed (as so many other times in that age) by *damnatio memoriae* in the cultural and academic life (on the activity of Theodor Ionescu: Tudoran Ciungan 2007). However, more recently, Maria Olimpia Tudoran Ciungan stated that the attribution of this painting to Sébastien Bourdon was actually proposed to Theodor Ionescu by Roberto Longhi (Tudoran Ciungan 2007, 18). Unfortunately, at the present stage of research on the correspondence of Theodor Ionescu kept in the museum's archive and knowing from its study his method of research, I can only assume that Roberto Longhi's hypothesis was verified by asking for the opinion of the three French researchers, based on the examination of some black-and-white or perhaps



even colour photos which the mentioned curator from Sibiu had sent to them.

About the authorship of Sébastien Bourdon there are no doubts. In respect of composition and chromatics, the work has analogies in the religious painting of Sébastien Bourdon, an artist who is famous for the vivid colours which he preferred (Rosenberg 1982, 104): *Moses and the Burning Bush* (oil on canvas, 136 x 106.5 cm), dated more recently during 1642–1645, from the State Hermitage in St. Petersburg (Fig. 2) and *The Martyrdom of St. Andrew* in the Musée des Augustins from Toulouse (oil on canvas, 305 x 260 cm, inv. 2004 1 52), dated c. 1645 (Fig. 3) and even *The Presentation in the Temple* at the Musée du Louvre (oil on canvas, 71 x 61 cm, inv. 2802), dated c. 1644 (Fig. 4). Considering these analogies, it seems more appropriate that the work from Brukenthal National Museum's collection should be dated during 1642–1645 than c. 1650, as in the museum's inventory register or during 1637–1640, as I proposed when the painting was classified in the national cultural heritage. The reason for which the painting from Sibiu was initially assigned to Domenico Zampieri could be, I think, its relative compositional resemblance (and, to a certain extent, even in respect of the characters' physiognomy) with Domenico Zampieri's work *The Sacrifice of Isaac* in the Museo del Prado in Madrid (oil on canvas, 147 x 140 cm, inv. P00131), dated 1627–1628 (Fig. 5).

Sébastien Bourdon was born in Montpellier, in the family of a glass painter of Reformed faith. After he was apprenticed to the Parisian painter Jean Barthélémy, he went in 1634 to Rome, where he studied the works of various artists (Caravaggio, Peter Paul Rubens, Gaspar Dughet, Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, Nicolas Poussin, Claude Lorrain, Andrea Sacchi, Pieter van Laer etc.), which subsequently allowed him to approach an eclectic style. In 1637, following heresy charges, he was forced to flee to Venice, where he studied certain composition and chromatic patterns of the Venetian classics, especially of Veronese. Returned to France, in Paris (1641), he developed a more original and better defined style and was quickly appreciated as an Italianate painter and became one of the founding members of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture (1648), wherefrom he was however expelled as a result of his reputation, being considered as a *pasticheur*. In 1652 he became the first painter at the court of Queen Christina of Sweden and after her abdication (1654) he returned to Paris, where he was readmitted to the Academy, becoming even

its rector in 1655. In 1657 he returned to Montpellier, where he painted portraits and works with religious themes, but after a conflict with the local artists who were dissatisfied that he had taken the most of the commissions, he came back to Paris, where he remained until the end of his life. In his late work he was influenced by Nicolas Poussin and by the brothers Le Nain. In Paris he made several ceiling and wall paintings, largely missing now and known only from sketches. He was also noted as an engraver, by etchings and copper engravings. His success allowed him to have an extensive studio, with many students, including Nicolas-Pierre Loir, Jacques Antoine Friquet de Vaurose and Pierre Mosnier. (On the biography and work of Sébastien Bourdon: Ponsonailhe 1883; Thuillier 2000; Bornscheuer 2005; Cousinié 2011).

Consequently, it can be said that the work from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection was painted in Paris, when the artist began to be noted and his style is better defined. As in case of other paintings by Sébastien Bourdon depicting biblical themes which are less common in the Catholic religious art of that time, like the mentioned work *Moses and the Burning Bush* from the State Hermitage in St. Petersburg, *Solomon Sacrificing to the Idols*, dated 1646–1647, from the Musée du Louvre in Paris (oil on canvas, 156 x 145 cm, inv. 2800), *The Metal Serpent*, dated 1650–1660, from the Museo del Prado in Madrid (oil on canvas, 113 x 151 cm), *The Finding of Moses*, dated c. 1655–1660, from the National Gallery of Art in Washington (oil on canvas, 119.6 x 172.8 cm, inv. 1961.9.65) etc., it is believed to express the inner tension of this painter of Reformed faith, which had to be concealed in the Catholic environment in which he lived.

2. Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve (1760–1824), *St. Anthony the Great* [1818–1824] Oil on canvas, 86.5 x 74 mm. Inv. 892. Signed right below with brown, on the spine of the book: *C. Petit*. Provenance: the painter Franz Neuhauser the Younger's collection.

Literature: Die Gemälde- Galerie 1844, 68, cat. 219; Führer 1893, 31, cat. 234; Csaki 1901, 244, cat. 875; Csaki 1909, 266–267, cat. 892; Csaki 1926, 23, cat. 892; Spek 1941, 25, cat. 892; Bielz 1960, 91, n. 27; Lisan 1987, 222, cat. 18; Mesea 2007, 77, n. 11. (Fig. 6–7)

The painting equivocally titled *St. Anthony* (Fig. 6), which previously was erroneously attributed to Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre, is a pyramid-structured portrait whose background is occupied



by a blue sky with white clouds. The character is rendered as a bust, a little to the right, under the expressive appearance of a meditating elder man with long grey hair and beard, wearing a hooded monk's habit. He rests on his left hand, whose elbow is resting on a book. In the right hand, resting next to the book, he holds a rosary. The flesh colour and the warmer, ochre-brown tone of the book harmoniously balance the well-executed composition. A cleansing of the otherwise well preserved painting would bring out even more clearly its pleasant colours, which has to suffer because of the varnish, which became yellowish, as a result of the passage of time.

The true identity of the character has been an object of confusion from the very beginning, as in the Brukenthal Museum's gallery guidebook, printed in 1844, as well as in the 1893 edition of the gallery guidebook, it is erroneously mentioned as St. Anthony the Hermit. Later, however, all the works in which there is a reference to this painting, the character represented is equivocally identified just as St. Anthony, without any further specification. However, the T-shaped stick, provided with a bell (a specific attribute of St. Anthony the Great), which is leaning against his left wrist, but also his age, as well as the absence of the Franciscan tonsure, removes any possibility of confusion with St. Anthony of Padua (c. 1195–1231) or, less likely, with another namesake Catholic saint of those having a well-established iconography and specific attributes, namely St. Anthony the Hermit (c. 468–c. 520), a former disciple of St. Severin of Noricum and known also as St. Anthony of Lérins, St. Anthony of Kiev (c. 983–1073), also known as St. Anthony of the Caves, St. Anthony de Sant'Anna Galvão (1739–1822) and St. Anthony Maria Claret y Clará (1807–1870). Thus, excluded are not only St. Anthony of Antioch (martyred in 302), due to the lacking of a specific, well personalized iconography, but also some saints venerated by other Christian churches: a saint of the Eastern Orthodox Church, namely St. Anthony the Younger (785–865) and two saints of the Russian Orthodox Church, namely St. Anthony the Roman (deceased in 1147) and St. Anthony of Siya (1479–1556).

From this perspective, the painting presents a special interest, because starting with the 16<sup>th</sup> c. (and especially in the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> c.), in the (Roman-) Catholic art the renderings of St. Anthony the Great (c. 251–356) seem to be rarer than those of St. Anthony of Padua. Both Baron

Samuel von Brukenthal's collection and the current collection of the Brukenthal National Museum reflect to a lesser extent this phenomenon. From Baron Samuel von Brukenthal's collection comes another representation of St. Anthony the Great, in the painting "The Temptation of St. Anthony" (oil on canvas, 31 x 43 cm, inv. 819), whose author is an anonymous from the Low Countries who copied a painting by David Teniers the Younger (Paris 2009, 190). In fact, this painting is only a free interpretation of one of the artist's few works on this subject, which could be dated c. 1645–1650. I believe that the closest in terms of composition is the painting of the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon, which is however assigned to him only with reservation. In the actual collection of the museum, St. Anthony of Padua is rendered in two works: *Virgin Mary, Child Jesus and St. Anthony of Padua* (oil on canvas, 184 x 129 cm, inv. 717) attributed to the studio of Carlo Maratta (1625–1713), which also comes from the collection of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal, respectively *St. Anthony of Padua and Virgin Mary with Child Jesus* (oil on canvas, 82,65 x 63 cm, inv. 633) by Johann Mathias Kager (1566–1634), which was acquired after the death of the museum's founder, from the collection of the painter Franz Neuhauser the Younger (Bielz 1960, 91, n. 27; cf. Mesea 2007, 77, n. 11),.

The painting rendering St. Anthony the Great is undoubtedly connected with a form of Roman-Catholic devotion and especially with the monastic environment. Therefore, in a Protestant milieu it would have only a historical and artistic value. It did not belong at all to Baron Samuel von Brukenthal's collection, being another one of the 22 paintings purchased from the collection of Franz Neuhauser the Younger (Bielz 1960, 91, n. 27; cf. Mesea 2007, 77, n. 11), whose most part (according to the opinion of Julius Bielz) would have been acquired in Vienna, during a longer period (Bielz 1960, 90). The collector belonged to a Viennese family of artists of Roman-Catholic faith who settled in Sibiu in 1783 (On Franz Neuhauser the Younger and his family's life and work: Bielz 1956; Bielz 1960; Tudoran 1978; Popescu 2002; Mesea 2007; Popescu 2008). The purchase of a part of his collection, consisting of an important lot of paintings, other works of art and various books, on December 23, 1834, for 1 000 Rfl. (Bielz 1960, 91; cf. Tătaru 2007, 171; Sonoc et al. 2010, 916–917), was one of the most important events of this kind not only during the 19<sup>th</sup> c., but in the whole history of the museum

before 1948, if considering not only the diversity of its items, but also the large number of original works of European paintings, of a certain historic, documentary and artistic value. In the sell proposal, Franz Neuhauser the Younger (1763–1836) stated that the author of this painting would be *Joh. Mar. Pierre*, i. e. Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre (Mesea 2007, 77, n. 11). In the first printed guidebook of the Brukenthal Museum, published in 1844, the author of this painting is mentioned for the first time as Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre (1714–1789). Surprisingly, this attribution, mentioned as well in the 1893 edition of the Brukenthal Museum's Gallery guidebook, was maintained by Michael Csaki even in the 1909 edition of this gallery guidebook, although he reproduced in facsimile the signature in cursive writing (*C. Petit*), which is on the bottom right (on the book's spine) and which in the 1901 edition was read by him as *C. Perr*. The curator reminds however (both in 1901 and 1909) the existence of an old gallery label, according to which the author of the work would be Sébastien Bourdon (1616–1671), a much better known painter. This assignment is obviously false, its purpose being to deceive the buyer. That is why both Michael Csaki, in the shortened edition of the Brukenthal Museum gallery guidebook (1926) and Rudolf Spek, also in a shortened edition of the guidebook (1941) and later both by Mariana Lisan, in a study on the works of French painting in the museum's collection (1987), as well as Iulia Mesea (2007), continued to regard Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre as the author of the painting, maybe rather because of the difficulty (at that stage of the research) to authenticate it on the basis of the stylistic comparison, than due to inertia, although Iulia Mesea noted that most of the assignments dating back to the age of Franz Neuhauser the Younger are kept until now (Mesea 2007, 74), despite more or less obvious evidences against some of them, debated openly (but unfortunately never in writing) especially during the 21<sup>st</sup> c., after the museum's collection became more and more accessible to foreign scholars and connoisseurs. That is why, in such conditions, it was easier to keep a dubious, but ancient attribution, than to undertake a difficult research on the work of a later artist, who was less famous than Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre or Sébastien Bourdon and about whom the museum's custodians knew nothing. Maybe, as resulting from interesting discussions with a foreign colleague, it was believed that the signature *C. Petit* on the spine of the book would be rather the name of a religious author, perhaps a monk or a hermit, as suggested

by his name, which alludes in a such context to humility, like that of the famous Dionysius Exiguus (c. 470–c. 544) from Scythia Minor (now the Romanian province Dobruja). Such a view on the identity of the rendered character and on the meaning of the inscription on the spine of the book would not surprise in a period when none knew that here is rendered is right St. Anthony the Great and not a later namesake saint and when, first of all, the hagiographies and iconography of the saints were not a strong point of the art historians' lay curricula. As a result, the signature on the book's spine, which is well visible on the still uncleaned painting (Fig. 7), wasn't mentioned anymore, although its facsimile has been published already in 1909. Now, due to this signature, I believe that it is highly necessary to abandon the traditional, but obsolete attribution of this painting and therefore I assign it to Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve (1760–1824).

Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve is a painter born in Troyes, where he also lived. It is known that his brother Simon was a painter of genre scenes, of portraits and an engraver, documented in Paris during 1781–1797. Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve is known as the author of some portraits and seascapes (some preserved in the Louvre), but also of some miniatures. At the Museum in Troyes are kept 9 pastel portraits by him. (For the biography and work of Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve: Vollmer 1932, 489.) In the museums and art collections from Romania, I do not know any other painting signed by this French artist or at least which is attributed to him. So far, the work from the Brukenthal National Museum collection is also the only religious theme by him known to me, although the painter preferred to treat it in his habitual way, as a portrait painter. To date this portrait is quite difficult, at the current stage of research and in the absence of clearer chronological references. Considering the artistic quality of the painting and the hostile attitude of the French Revolution towards the Roman Catholic Church, it is hard to admit that it was a youth work from 1780–1789. Therefore, it seems most likely a later work, which must be dated in the period of the Empire (1804–1814) or even later, during the Restoration, in the last years of the artist's life, that is in 1814–1824.

I believe that *St. Anthony the Great* from Sibiu must be considered as a genuine work by Claude-François-Henri Petit of Villeneuve, as it seems very unlikely that this painting due to a talented

but obscure artist could have been already faked after only one or two decades after it was made.

**3. Jean-Alexis Cornu (1755–1807), *Susanna Bathing* [1792]**

Gouache on ivory (diameter 65 mm), fixed on the lid of a tortoiseshell pyxis (used maybe as a compact). Signed and dated with ochre, right below, on a stone plate of the pool's edge: *CORNU / 17[92]*. Inv. 2433. Provenance: purchased from Maria Filoliti, Sibiu (1967). Literature: Unpublished. (Fig. 8-14)

The miniature is fixed on the lid of a turtle shell pyxis used maybe as a compact (Fig. 8), whose maximum diameter is 73.10 mm, its minimum diameter (in the area where the two pyxis parts are joining) being 71.60 mm and its height 22.50 mm. The maximum thickness of the pyxis walls is 4.40 mm. The compact's bottom interior side is not decorated at all, but is covered by a round piece of purple cotton cloth and its lid's interior side is not decorated as well (Fig. 9). The most part of the field of the bottom's exterior side is adorned with the motif of a five-pointed star, placed inside each square of a network of such squares, whose borders recall a braided wire. The whole network of squares is confined by a pearl circle. Within a short distance of each other, outside this circle, there are groups of two dots. The whole motif is gold painted (Fig. 10). The side of both parts of the compact shows a similar decoration, although much damaged by wear and tear (Fig. 11).

The round miniature (Fig. 12) shows two old men harassing Susanna, who is sitting almost nude, bashfully covered only by a white cloth, on the edge of a pool build of ashlar, into which the water is splashing from an artesian fountain with a parallelepiped shaped socket in the work's right side. At the left side there is the thick trunk of a tree. The left elder, in a red tunic and an ochre cloak, holds a cane under his right arm and by his left hand he grabs the right forearm of the woman who tries to beware herself both of him and of the other elder, in a blueish-grey tunic and a red cloak, with grey on its edge. The latter put his right hand on her shoulder, pointing with his left hand to the fountain. At right, on the light blue background can be seen the trunk and a branch of a tree belonging to a species which is difficult to determine. The three characters are disproportionately rendered, as their heads are too small in relation to their bodies. The figures of the woman and of the elder at left are more briefly sketched, while the elder at right is more strongly individualized, due to his strong baldness and his

long and bushy beard. The composition, inspired by a biblical text (*Daniel*, 13) is dynamic, well structured, chromatically balanced, in dominant grey, blue and ochre tones, with red and white accents.

The choice of this biblical theme to decorate an item of personal use could be perhaps that the compact was made for a beautiful young woman, who may even have been (or not) a namesake of the biblical heroine, noted both for her beauty and chastity. But another reason appears from the reading *in malo* of the message of this scene: what the violence and the guile of the old harassers could not achieve, this exquisite gift may do, just because of the supposed weakness of the Eve's daughters and their vane love for such beautiful and precious items, otherwise known as *vanities*.

Unlike the paintings mentioned by the older gallery guidebooks or even by certain older studies written by various foreign or native scholars, the paintings acquired during 1956–1971 remained almost unknown to the public and are also less studied by the museum's curators, due to the fact that their authors were either anonymous or less known or just because of the simple fact that, when the aforementioned curator Theodor Ionescu was arrested and convicted after the art theft of 1968 and, as the perpetrators could not be discovered and captured, many of the sellers of paintings were asked to compare as witnesses at his trial, in order to testify about alleged illegal benefits he used to have from this trade and the most documents concerning these acquisitions and maybe the whole correspondence with foreign scholars (but not only) concerning their attribution (and about the assignment of the stolen paintings as well) were taken by the authorities which inquired this theft. These documents never returned to the museum, although none of the 8 stolen paintings was newly acquired by the museum during the period when Theodor Ionescu worked as curator (1956–1971), but belonged to the former collection of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal.

Thus, unfortunately and although many of the paintings acquired due to the recommendation of the mentioned curator are of a particular interest, due to the rarity of their themes or of their authors' works in public and private art collections from Romania, there are only few archive records about these purchases and, as it is known to me, no recorded statements of their sellers on the provenance of the paintings, made to Theodor Ionescu. Unfortunately, the sellers

already died, their close relatives emigrated long time ago or, after so much time, cannot be identified and therefore it does not seem possible to collect written memories or oral information about these works. From former employees of the museum whom I questioned about the trial of the mentioned curator, I got only few and very general information about the taking of the acquisition documents and of the correspondence by the authorities, which were confirmed by the study of the correspondence archive, which keeps however some records on the taking of such archived documents. So, about Maria Filoliti from Sibiu, the previous owner of the compact decorated with this miniature there is no information.

As regards the attribution of this work, the inventory register of the collection *European Painting* records only the existence of a signature, incompletely transcribed (*Cor*) and that the painter's name would be Pierre Cornu, without other mention excepting that he would be a French artist, maybe a 19<sup>th</sup> c. one. This uncertainty about the attribution and the belief that the work could be dated in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. may come from the doubts about the reasons of its purchase by the museum, intermediated by Theodor Ionescu: it is known that during his stay in Paris, the Romanian painter Nicolae Grigorescu (1838–1907), a former disciple of the miniatures painter Anton Chladek (1794–1884) (Oprescu 1961, 19) and strongly influenced by him (Oprescu 1961, 24), worked for some months in the studio of Sébastien-Melchior Cornu (Cebuc 2008, 10; cf. Cioflec 1925, 14; Brezianu 1959, 64; Vlahuță 1969, 18). The mission is therefore to try to specify which of the two painters (respectively Pierre Cornu or Sébastien-Melchior Cornu) would be the true author of the work, as its attribution was questionable due to the partial transcription of the signature (and the failure to note the existence of a date), but also to the uncertain dating of this miniature in the 19<sup>th</sup> c., flagrantly contradicted by the extant information about the works of Sébastien-Melchior Cornu and especially about the biography of Pierre Cornu.

The painter, draughtsman and photographer Pierre Cornu (1895–1996) was born in Salon-de-Provence in the wealthy family of a merchant of oil and soap, which provided him a happy childhood, during which he manifested early his attraction to drawing and colour. He was the disciple of Othon Friesz (1879–1949) and throughout his whole lifetime he had the chance to devote himself to his passion for painting. The

artist, a real epicurean spirit and master of the intimate scenes, became the leader of the so-called "Sensualist school". His works had always a place of honour in the great Parisian salons, but he also exhibited regularly with Auguste Chabaud and René Seyssaud in Marseille. Later, some financial troubles prompted him to spend some years in Morocco, where he began a new life, but he never abandoned painting and even perfected his style by the abundance of beautiful colours, resembling the Oriental tapestries. The artist continued to work in Morocco even after the end of the French and Spanish protectorate (1956), as confirmed by a portrait of a man in navy blue suite and striped tie against a draped background (oil on canvas, 57.78 x 50.16 cm) from a private collection (Fig. 16), painted in Port Lyautey (now Kenitra, Morocco) in 1957, so only 10 years before the compact decorated with the scene of Susanna's harassment by the elders was purchased by the Brukenthal Museum. Later, the artist returned to France due to the internal and external conflicts which Morocco faced during the first decades after its independence and settled in Aix-en-Provence, where in the 70's a studio was made available to him by the art dealer M. Caille. There he spent the whole rest of his life, enjoying appreciation and exhibiting in the region and in its surroundings. He was influenced by the Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and Fauvist painting, especially by Auguste Renoir, Paul Cézanne and Henri Matisse. He painted portraits and genre scenes, nudes, landscapes, still lifes (especially flowers), but he is known mainly for the voluptuous renderings of women. His experience of a photographer helped him a lot in structuring his compositions. (For the biography and work of Pierre Cornu: Perreau 2001).

Generally, Pierre Cornu preferred to sign (usually right below), as: P. CORNU (Fig. 15). Sometimes, extremely rarely, his works are located and dated, under his signature, as the above mentioned portrait of a man in navy blue suite. The dated works of Pierre Cornu are very rare, as a female nude from a private collection (Fig. 17), signed and dated in a very unusual way: PIERRE CORNU / 1934. Although the miniature decorating the compact from the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum has an obvious erotic message, no other biblical scene by this artist is known until now. Neither the specific features of his style (vivid colours, good design, skilful rendering of the female body) nor the influence of the modern art cannot be recognized in this miniature, whose characters have too small

heads in relation to their bodies, recalling the Mannerist painting or rather (considering as well the colours preferred by the artist) the figures in late 18<sup>th</sup> c. works of French decorative arts, especially on the ceramics, sometimes similarly disproportioned. These stylistic differences to Pierre Cornu's habitual works cannot be due simply to the fact that the miniature would belong to a very early age, being made by the young artist as an experiment or in order to fulfil an important commission.

The signature on the miniature decorating the compact (Fig. 13) did not contain at all the initial of the artist's first name. Regarding the duct and proportions of the letters, but also the span between them, it differs from the signatures which I could study on various works by Pierre Cornu occurring on the international art market (Fig. 15), whose images could be found on internet. Only the first two digits (17) of the miniature's date can be easily read under the microscope (Fig. 14). Although the last two digits (92) are damaged now by wear and tear, they can be reconstructed due to the rests of their duct. Through the lens of an ordinary camera (Fig. 15), only the first digit (1) of the date can be easily read, while due to the wear and tear the second digit would be read rather like as 9 than as 7 and the last two digits cannot be read at all.

Despite the damage of the last two digits of the date, it is impossible to consider this work as being newer and to continue to assign it to Pierre Cornu or, also without any reason, to Sébastien-Melchior Cornu (1804–1870), known as a disciple of Fleury François Richard, Claude Bonfond and Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres and, due to the influence of his wife Albertine-Hortense Cornu née Lacroix, as a recipient of many commissions from Emperor Napoleon III, for whose mother the artist's parents-in-law served as chambermaid and butler (for the biography and work of Sébastien-Melchior Cornu: Bryan 1903, 332; Thieme 1912, 446). For the same chronologic reasons some other 19<sup>th</sup>, respectively 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> c. less known artists, as the landscape painter Jean-Jean Cornu (1819–1876) or Oscar Cornu (1866–1939) cannot be considered as the author of this miniature (for the biography and work of Jean-Jean Cornu: Thieme 1912, 445–446) nor Oscar Cornu (). Still more useless would be the efforts to identify the author of this miniature with earlier and extremely less known 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> c. painters having the same family name (Thieme 1912, 445–446), as: the stained glass painter Jean

Cornu (documented in Troyes during 1502–1533), Robert Cornu (documented in Paris during 1678–1729), Gabriel Cornu (documented in Paris during 1751–1763), known as a disciple of Nicolas de Largillière and even J. B. Cornu (18<sup>th</sup> c.). About the latter any more precise chronological information is lacking and about whose works nothing is known.

Although, unfortunately, the signature on the miniature decorating this compact from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection does not contain the initial of the artist's first name, I believe that the author of this miniature could be, most likely, Jean-Alexis Cornu (1755–1807), a French painter and engraver, born in Etrepigny, in Jura, to a family whose origin was in Besançon. According to his own statements, he studied at French and Flemish academies of art. Since 1781 he lived in Besançon, before moving in 1791 to Vesoul, in Haute-Saône, where he was a teacher of drawing at the École Centrale. Among his paintings works are known: the main altar (showing St. George) of the church in Vesoul (whose commission determined the artist to settle in Vesoul), a gouache depicting the celebration of the General Federation Festival in Besançon (on July 14, 1790) in the museum of Besançon, as well as two cityscapes of Besançon, also in gouache, depicting the church and St. Peter's Place and dated in August 1782. Among his engravings are mentioned 8 medallions with cityscapes of Besançon. He was also a miniaturist, being however previously known only by his work *The Blessing of the Seven Daughters' Marriage* (1782), depicting an event of November 20, 1781, organized in the local cathedral's Chapel of the Holy Shroud by Madame de Lacoré, the wife of the province's Intendant in order to celebrate the birth of King Louis XVI's son, the Prince Heir Apparent (*le Dauphin*). The work, popularized by posters, contributed greatly to the local fame of the painter. The artist died in Vesoul, on July 25, 1807. (For the biography and work of Jean-Alexis Cornu and Jean-Jean Cornu: Suchaux 1864, 367–368; Thieme 1912, 445.) Another work of historical importance by him, inspired by the French Revolution, are the coloured etchings *The Storming of Bastille on July 14, 1789* (15 x 19 cm), published in Paris by Laurent Guyot (1756–1806), maybe c. 1789 and *The Patriotic Gift of the Canonesses of Maubeuge, on November 24, 1789* (10 x 14.5 cm), published as well in Paris by Laurent Guyot, in 1790. In both works, especially in the first, could be noted characters with too small heads in



comparison to the size of their bodies. As the mentioned gouache rendering the celebration of the General Federation festival from the collection of the museum of Besançon, these two prints express the artist's support for the French Revolution during 1789-1790. However, Jean-Alexis Cornu seems to have been rather a moderate revolutionary, most likely a supporter of the constitutional monarchy, as later, in 1796 (according to the research of Christine Godfroy-Gallardo in the archives of the Musée du Louvre), he acted as proxy for Louis François II de Bourbon, Prince de Conti (1776–1814), in order to recover the rest of the latter's assets which were taken from him during the Revolution, including the paintings in the Louvre.

More recently, on November 24, 1993, was auctioned a gouache (42 x 56) painted by Jean-Alexis Cornu in 1792, showing a view taken from Our Lady's Cave of Salborde near Vesoul. Interestingly, the head of the main figure rendered in this work is also too small in relation to the size of his body. On the international art market I could note as well some miniature portraits by the same artist. Of them, the oval shaped *Young Officer in a White Coat with Red Facings* (1781), sold for 1 440 £ on November 22, 2006 by Bonhams in London (lot nr. 98<sup>Y</sup>), signed and dated CORNU / 1781, is fixed on the lid of a rectangular tortoiseshell box (Schidlof 1964, I, 164 and III, pl. 141, fig. 253). In 2018, the Viennese auction house Boris Wilnitsky Fine Arts offers for 750 \$ a framed miniature oval portrait of a young gentleman (watercolour on organic wafer, unframed 3.5 x 2.7 cm, framed 7.4 x 6 cm, Fig. 18-19), signed and dated CORNU / F(ecit) 1777 (lot nr. 24463), as well as other two round miniature portrait, but of round shape: for 2700 \$ the portrait of Madame Viney de la Verne (watercolour on ivory, framed 6 cm diameter, unframed 9.9 cm diameter), signed and dated CORNU / A(nno). V, which means 1798 (lot nr. 34098) and for 1 700 \$ that of a gentleman in blue redingote (watercolour on ivory, unframed 5.5 cm diameter, framed 9.6 cm diameter), signed and dated CORNU / AN 9, which means 1801-1802 (lot nr. 42084). The same year, a cavalry battle scene by the same painter (gouache on paper, 38.7 x 54.6 cm), signed and dated CORNU / 1790 from a private collection in the U. S. A. was offered for 2 500 \$ (in comparison to 2013, when the same painting was offered for 3 500 \$). According to the equipment of the cuirassiers, the depicted event (recalling works by Peter Meulenaer, Jacques Courtois or Antonio Maria Marini)

happened rather in mid-17<sup>th</sup> c. and could be considered as an occasional work, made during a period when the artist had to accept various commissions in order to survive. All the artist's signatures which I could see (especially on the miniatures auctioned by Boris Wilnitsky Fine Arts) resemble very well that on the miniature from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection.

### Conclusions

The recent research brought new information about three works with religious theme by French painters from the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum. A common problem was the date of these works, in all three situations. This is due to the poor information and literature which was available in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. and even later to the previous researchers among the museum's employees, that rarely the paintings of the museum collection were dated more precisely as during the lifetime of their authors, excepting of course the situation when the works were already dated by the painters themselves or when they were exhibited abroad and thus it was easier to date them, due to the co-operation of better informed foreign researchers.

The painting *Habakkuk in Wilderness* by Sébastien Bourdon from the former collection of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal should be dated during 1642–1645, being made therefore quite early, after the artist's return from Italy to France, when he developed a more original and better defined style. After the discussion of the already noted signatures on two of these paintings, the true author could be precisely determined only for one of them, by Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve (1760–1824), which comes from the former collection of the painter Franz Neuhauser the Younger and should be dated, most likely, during 1818–1824, therefore under the Restoration regime. Due to the lacking initial of the first name and the late date (1792), the other signature (on a miniature on ivory, decorating a compact purchased by the museum in 1867) could not lead directly to the precise identification of the painter, who is not Pierre Cornu (1895–1996), as previously believed, than a much earlier artist. For chronologic reasons, supported by stylistic similarities, it could be attributed to the miniaturist Jean-Alexis Cornu (1755–1807), considered by Leo R. Schidlof as a good miniaturist, although not of the highest order, but superior to most of his provincial colleagues.

A thorough study of the other works from this collection attributed to French artists of the 17<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> c., of which many were acquired during the

19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> c. will contribute as well to a better knowledge of the French paintings from Romanian museums and collections.

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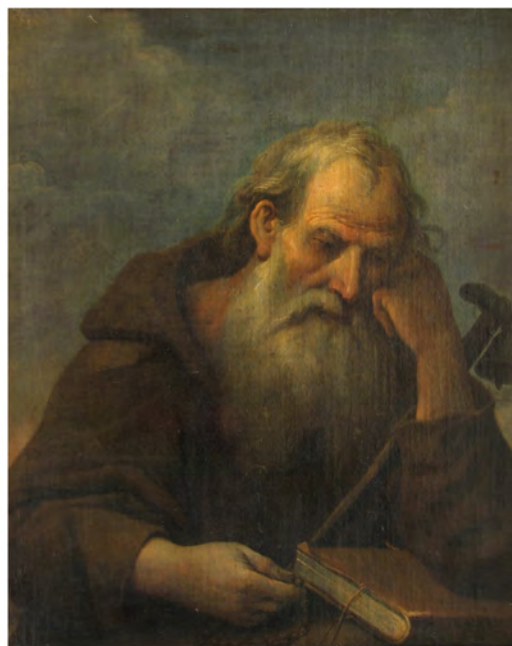


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Fig. 7 – Claude-François-Henri Petit de Villeneuve (1760–1824), *St. Anthony the Great*. (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu.) Detail



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

Figs. 8-11 – Views of a turtle shell pyxis.  
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Fig. 13 – Jean-Alexis Cornu (1755–1807), *Susanna Bathing*, 18<sup>th</sup> c. (Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu.) Detail



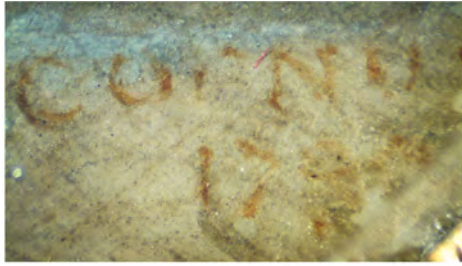


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Fig. 16 – Pierre Cornu (1895–1996), *Portrait of a Man in a Blue Suite*, 1957. (Private collection)



Fig. 17 – Pierre Cornu (1895–1996), *Female Nude*, 1934. (Private collection)



Fig. 18 – Jean-Alexis Cornu (1755–1807), *Young Gentleman*, 1777. (Private collection)



Fig. 19 – Jean-Alexis Cornu (1755–1807), *Young Gentleman*, 1777. (Private collection.) Detail (signature specimen)





**A NEW CONTRIBUTION OF THE TRAVELLING PAINTERS  
TO THE ARTISTIC LIFE OF THE ROMANIAN PROVINCES.  
THE FIRST PAINTING REPRESENTING THE TISMANA MONASTERY**

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**Abstract:** *Heinrich Zuther is one of the travelling artists who worked in Sibiu together with the artists Theodor Glatz, Heinrich Trenk, Theodor B. Sockl, etc. in the middle of the nineteenth century contributing to the evolution of artistic life in this region and its connection to the European artistic trends. The painter spent here a short period, between 1845 and 1848, after which he continued his journey south. It was known that he headed for Egypt, but the date of the work we refer to, 1850, lets us know that he spent at least two years in Wallachia. The recently discovered work – in a private collection in Bucharest – is the first representation of the Tismana Monastery in a painting (oil on canvas). An important element in this rendering is the presence of the tricolour flag on the towers of the monastery. The painting is a valuable piece both documentary and artistic.*

**Keywords:** *Heinrich Zuther, Tismana Monastery, the tricolour flag, travelling artists, painting in the Romanian provinces, 19<sup>th</sup> century painting*

**Rezumat:** *Heinrich Zuther este unul dintre artiștii călători care au activat la Sibiu la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea. Pictorul originar din nordul Germaniei a petrecut aici, alături de artiștii Theodor Glatz, Heinrich Trenk, Theodor B. Sockl etc., o perioadă scurtă, între 1845-1848, după care și-a continuat călătoria spre sud. Se știa că s-a îndreptat spre Egipt, dar datarea lucrării la care ne referim, 1850, lămurește că a petrecut în Țara Românească încă cel puțin doi ani. Lucrarea nou descoperită într-o colecție particulară din București este prima reprezentare în ulei a Mănăstirii Tismana. Un element important în această redare este prezența drapelului tricolor arborat pe turnurile mănăstirii. Tabloul este o piesă valoroasă atât din punct de vedere documentar, cât și artistic.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Heinrich Zuther, Mănăstirea Tismana, drapelul tricolor, pictori călători, pictura din provinciile românești, pictura secolului al XIX-lea*

The contribution of travelling artists to the evolution of Transylvanian and Wallachian painting, the bridge they built between local art and the European artistic phenomenon – thus accelerating the progress of the former – the models they brought along have, on occasion, stirred the interest of Romanian art historians, after quite a long time when the undifferentiated and harsh appreciation of the creation of these artists as „documentary” led to the marginalization of their work and their endeavour.<sup>1</sup>

While it's true that they left their homes in search

of a market for art it is also true that on a psychological level they were motivated by the romantic breeze of the time, by the thrill of discovering new territories – little or totally unknown – with spectacular geography, fascinating history and people who spoke different languages and whose lives were governed by unique traditions. In search of exoticism, these travelling artists underwent an arduous process of initiation through which each of them somehow tried to find his inner self, in the search of an impossible happiness. Romanticism, that spiritually and stylistically gently touched their profile, brought besides the attention given to the natural beauties, the emphasis on the interest for the past and for the values of tradition, for the ancient or medieval monuments and for

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ethnography. Stunning landscapes, monuments, ruins led to sketches often not completed or transposed into oil. In order to preserve the image as accurately as possible or to further inform, the sketches had an accentuated mnemotechnical character. Therefore, their archaeological, ethnographic, anthropological, historical or architectural content is kept up to the present day, even if the aesthetic aspect of the works was not always of equal artistic value.

The places and the people they found on Romanian territories provided the artists with never-ending diverse spectacular and surprising sources of inspiration. Coming from Central Europe, they found in Transylvania breath-taking landscapes and amazing people – probably less exotic than they had expected but nonetheless original. The mixture of ethnic groups – which spoke two, three languages – and religions, the distinguishing traits of villages and cities won them over and the result is seen in their works, engravings, drawings and oil paintings, preserved till nowadays.

Sketching and watercolour (versatile and flexible media which suited artists during their travels) were the easiest ways to cope with the pleasure of immortalizing an overwhelming feeling of a certain place or a picturesque scene on the spot. Some of this kind of graphic works has been preserved in public and private collection, but many were lost because of the perishable technique. The collection of the Brukenenthal National Museum, as well as other public and private collections, preserves hundreds of 19<sup>th</sup> century works in graphic techniques signed by Franz Neuhauser (1763–1836), Theodor Glatz (1818–1892), Robert Krabs (1817–1881), Carol Popp de Szathmari (1812–1887), Martin Schlichting (active in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century), Adam Slowikowski (active in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) etc.

While the itineraries and works of the artists who came here and settled are decently or even very well documented, things are quite different with the artists who came, spent some time in the major cities of the provinces and then left again, some of them leaving behind just the memory of their name and no works. Notwithstanding, these painters brought significant contribution to the development of local art through their creations, examples of the new tendencies in European art, to the attention of the public. Moreover, their works document geographical, human and

ethnographic aspects with great accuracy. Details which, to the local artists were often common place caught their eye and were transposed to canvas.

Which is why a creation of this kind, especially when it cumulates both artistic value and documentary contribution, can be a major asset, an important piece in the puzzle of every day as well as artistic life of the mid nineteenth century Romanian provinces.

### **Heinrich Zuther: biography and known works**

We do not know much about the time Zuther spent in Transylvania. The information comes from a source some forty years after he had left Sibiu: he was mentioned in the Catalogue of the 1887 Art Exhibition organised here – the first in the city and, indeed, the first in Transylvania and, since the organizers invited local and European artists, and collectors to contribute, the exhibition had an international dimension. This is how a few of Zuther's creation were exhibited (Katalog 1887). The author of the catalogue was Heinrich Müller and this information was then included in the art dictionaries (Thieme, Becker, vol. XXXVI, 604). Heinrich Zuther (active in Sibiu between 1845 and 1848) is mentioned painting in Munich in 1844 (where he had also studied) landscapes, portraits and genre scenes. In Sibiu the artist became part of the group of painters active here in the middle of the century – Theodor Glatz, Theodor Benedikt Sockl (1815–1861), Gustav Albert Schievert (1826–1881), Clara Soterius von Sachsenheim (1822–1861), Heinrich Trenk (1818–1892), Wilhelm Berg (1807?–1872), Carl Berg (?–1867) –, and kept the connection with the style, attitude and ideas promoted in the central European artistic centres where he, as well as the other painters active in Sibiu, had studied and initially activated. After the three years spent in Transylvania, he left to the Orient where he died, either in Alexandria or in Cairo (Müller 1887, 109). At the 1887 Art Exhibition five of his oil paintings, at that time part of private collections, were exhibited (Katalog 1887, 10–11, cat. 216–220).

The inspiring milieu in Sibiu, where the most numerous and important group of artists active in Transylvania at the time was settled, was the reason why Zuther decided to stay for a time in the South of the province. While Theodor Benedikt Sockl, Gustav Albert Schievert, Clara Soterius von Sachsenheim were portrait painters, Heinrich Trenk depicted both portraits and

landscapes, and Theodor Glatz, the best known artist of the group, was mostly a landscape painter, but there are also some portraits in his creation, Zuther's preserved works are exclusively landscapes.

The only painting we know and believe had been created before his Transylvanian stage is *Landscape with Mountain, River and Travellers Resting*, and was on sale in 2008 and 2009 in a German, then in an Austrian art auction house. It is a very good work, displaying a composition and chromatic much like his well-known oil paintings.<sup>1</sup> Here too, just like in the Tismana landscape we are bringing to attention with this essay, the foreground is dark, with a fallen tree overgrown with fresh vegetation. The colours are lighter with each screen that goes to the background of the composition. The elements that build the composition as well as the use of the stafe and the entire approach of the motif are also similar.

Soon after his arrival in Sibiu, Zuther depicted the most important monument of the city: the Evangelic Church. In fact, we owe Zuther the first oil painting representing the Evangelical Church, the Gothic edifice from Sibiu, a recurrent theme especially in graphic representations, but also in paintings (*The Evangelical Church in Sibiu*, oil on canvas on plywood, 54 x 71 cm, signed and dated bottom right: „ZH”, dated: [18]47, private collection, Germany) (Katalog 1887, cat. 217, 10; Bielz 1977, 50–51; La peinture roumaine 1995, 126, cat. and repr. 58; Mesea 2011, 144). Zuther approaches it from the west wing, with the parish court yard on the right. Artistic quality individualizes Zuther's work, compared to the representations of the edifice depicted by Heinrich Trenk and Johann Böbel (1821–1887) a few years later. (Mesea 2011, 129, 147–149).

In the oil painting *Winter at Cârța* (oil on canvas, 25.5 x 31.5 cm, signed bottom right in brown: „Zuther”, undated, Brukenthal National Museum Sibiu, inv. 1446; Thieme, Becker, XXXVI, 604; Mesea 2011, 12), Zuther is concerned with the picturesque, with exploiting the intimism of the Biedermeier landscape. The colours are conventional, dominated by ochre, but the strokes are light, even spontaneous, and the whole atmosphere is somewhat romantic.

Rather gauche in spite of the attempt to induce a romantic feeling, is the oil painting *Fortified Church*, (oil on paper, 30 x 44.6 cm, unsigned

undated, Brukenthal National Museum Sibiu, inv. 3044; Mesea 2011, 145). The ruins of the building are rendered with great care in the middle of the composition while, seemingly focused on these interesting and impressive vestiges, the artist all but ignores the landscape. The skyline is lowered to the foreground of the painting where the ripples of the Olt River blend with the haze of the sky, while the hills appear flattened by the megalithic dimensions of the stone ruins and a menacing, mysterious silence seems to have descended upon the ensemble. Brown with touches of green and white dominates the chromatic, while hues of orange light the sky at dusk and enhance the atmosphere of graveness and a few spots of light on the walls and on the crumbled arches complete this troubling vision.

Oozing a strange atmosphere, with elements of fantasy, is *The Broken Tower* (oil on paper, 30.5 x 44.8cm, unsigned, undated, Brukenthal National Museum Sibiu, inv. 3046; Mesea 2010, 144–145), where the land surface seems to be of another world and the light enhances the turmoil of the entire landscape.

His best creation in a romantic approach is *Ocnei Gate* (oil on canvas, 22 x 30.3 cm, unsigned, undated, Brukenthal National Museum Sibiu, inv. 3052; Mesea 2011, 144). It is an original vision, a nocturnal city scape, where strange lights enhance the atmosphere of mystery. In ruins, with rotten woodwork, empty passages, rooms and lofts where ghosts of the past walk unperturbed, the once fortified, now run-down, sad gate, is about to collapse. Among the ruins a strange mixture of characters – peasants, the poors of the slums, cattle, horses, carts – all form a strange, unsettling genre scene. The composition is well built and balanced and the colours, shifting gradually from greys to earthy browns with accents of red and greyish white and bluish-grey for the dusky sky, turn this romantic landscape into a remarkable creation where poetic expressiveness surpasses the documentary.

From the catalogue of the First Art Exhibition in Sibiu we learn that, at that time, there were also other works signed Zuther in private collections: *The Turnu Rosu Pass* (which later became part of the Brukenthal collection), *Fire in Sibiu*, *The Stairs Passage*, and *Talmaciu Fortress* (Katalog 1887, 10–11, cat. 216, 218, 220). All these creations reveal an artist with much potential, who went through several manners of interpreting landscape, who easily adopted and combine elements characteristic to the documentary, to the

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.artnet.fr/artistes/heinrich-zuther/>

classicist, and all the way to the romantic landscape.

Zuther's presence in Sibiu infused novelty and freshness into the local art (much like the creation of Heinrich Trenk, active in Sibiu during the same period of time), but true to his romantic destiny, forever in search of an illusory happiness, the painter did not settle here for good, restricting the possibility to play an important part in the art of this geo-cultural area.

### **The Tismana Monastery**

This painting which depicts the Tismana Monastery is the first painting signed Zuther we know of the years after the artist had left Sibiu.

The Tismana Monastery is the oldest monastic settlement in Wallachia. It is one of the most remarkable monuments in Wallachia, a fourteenth century church of impressive dimensions for that time, comprising sanctuary, naos, pronaos and an open exonarthex and it was crowned with three towers. It was founded by the Greek-Serbian monk Nicodim the Holy (1310–1406) with the help of princes Vladislav, Radu I Basarab (1374–1385), and his sons, Dan I (1385–1386) and Mircea the Old (1386–1418). The first edifice was erected in the last quarter of the fourteenth century and, according to a document issued during the reign of Dan II, it was consecrated in 1377–1378. The second edifice dates from the reign of Radu the Great (1495–1508). Construction and decoration works continued during the reign of the following princes: Neagoe Basarab, Radu Paisie, Petru the Younger, Matei Basarab, Constantin Brâncoveanu. Between 1646–1651, Matei Basarab built the small chapel situated in front of the entrance, on the eastern plateau, and refurbished the parts that had been damaged thirty years before by the soldiers of Prince Gabriel Bethlen. In the eighteenth century the painting of the interior was restored and other minor repairs were carried out on the exterior decorations of the church.

The conflicts with Austria, which happened between 1787 and 1792, damaged the monastery which was repaired with great difficulty. In the nineteenth century, it continued to play an important part in protecting Orthodoxy and freedom of Romanians. Tudor Vladimirescu used it to “keep an eye on” the local authorities in Oltenia. It was there that two units led by D. Macedonski and D. Garbea, about 3500 people, came together. During the 1821 revolution

several monasteries (Strehaia, Cozia, Bistrita, Polovragi) served as strongholds for the revolutionaries, but Tismana, which also served as a training camp, was undoubtedly the most important; it was here that the Padeş Proclamation was launched (as mentioned in a historic plaque placed in 1971 to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> commemoration of the events).

But the monastery was more than a place for prayers and a stronghold. It had a tremendous cultural importance: Nicodim founded a school of calligraphy where religious books in various languages were copied. There was also a school for the education of monks who later held ranks in the church hierarchy or wrote official documents for the chancelleries of the princes.

As a religious institution, Tismana had a privileged position with a high degree of autonomy, as established by Nicodim who had brought the model of Mount Athos. The monastic community was neither subjected to Ungro-Vlach, nor to Severin Metropolitans, being led only by its own council. The state of autonomy was also supported by considerable wealth, the monastery possessing the largest monastery domain in the voivodship.

It is no wonder, therefore, that Zuther stopped his attention here in order to immortalize this edifice, whose grand aspect was doubled by a history and cultural importance.

### **Graphic Representations**

The first description of the monastery dates back to 1657 and belongs to Paul of Aleppo, the disciple, archdeacon and secretary of Patriarch Macarie of Antioch, in his visit to the Romanian monasteries. “Its beauty indeed cannot be compared to any other in the country or abroad and is given by the beauty of the place and its settlement, the multitude of its waters and the strengthening it has, and helped to protect its surrounding walls. (...) at the end of a narrow path (,,) there is a fountain of sparkling water and above a large tower that serves the gate, and the walls with many crenellations. After we passed through this gate we reached a second iron one, above which is the belfry.” (Călători străini, 199)

Despite its spectacular beauty, the monastery had not been often depicted. The first known graphic description belongs to the Austrian engineer Johann Weiss dated 1730, and was made after the occupation of the province Oltenia, during an

inspections of the imperial troops.<sup>2</sup> Though schematically drawn, the surveying properly catches the monumentality of the fortified edifice and its spectacular position in the natural surroundings.

The chronologically next engraving shows the buildings during the restoration works in 1844<sup>3</sup> and another one, immediately after they were fulfilled. This last one is much similar to the image in Zuther's painting, from the position from which it is depicted to the majestic placement and the architectural details, and very close in time. The genre scene in the foreground in this drawing has a different proportion of the characters which are bigger represented without the contrast effects in Zuther's work. This time there are three peasants in everyday cloths and a boyar in specific old fashion garments. The almost identical cropping of the motif, the construction on the two well-defined registers (even if not in the same contrast, the presence of the genre scene in the foreground make us consider the possibility that the engraver has started in its composition from Zuther's painting, which would mean, in fact, that the engraving is not earlier than 1850. The prevailing documentary interest of the engraver, could have led him to renounce the scene and romantic scenery on the other side of the river (at Zuther), to depict instead the group of boyar houses.

### **Heinrich Zuther, *Tismana Monastery***

Oil on canvas, 63 x 48 cm, signed and dated bottom left: HZ (1)850.

Adrian and Dana Năstase Collection, Bucharest

With a poor preservation condition, the painting had to undergo restoration interventions. During the restoration works performed by the expert restorer Ion Sfrijan in Bucharest, the monument depicted in the painting was identified (as Tismana Monastery), and the signature and the date were discovered. Mr. Sfrijan advanced the possibility that the monogram HZ might indicate the German painter Heinrich Zuther, hypothesis we confirm in the present article. Next to the signature which is the artist's authentic monogram, the entire approach of the motif allows the conclusion that the author of this painting is Heinrich Zuther.

The painting is built on two levels, well individualised from the point of view of the motif,

chromatic and eclairage, even message, the lower level being dedicated to the mundane while the other to the spiritual. Their encounter of the two registers gives support to the effect of the romantically approached spectacle.

The landscape is wildly beautiful with the diagonal of the Tismana River, moving from left to right through a forest of secular trees. The river bank closest to the onlooker (the foreground) is darkened by fallen tree trunks, overgrown with ferns, grasses and wild flowers meant to support the succession of levels which grow increasingly lighter towards the background. The next level is more luminous. Here is where the artist places a minuscule genre scene. Depicting the human silhouettes in very small dimensions, the artist underlines, in a classical note, the smallness of man, ignorant not only of the greatness of nature, but also of the spectacular image of the place of worship which is, both compositionally and symbolically, placed on an upper level.

The artist considers that the characters he places in his picture are representative of the place and, although they are so tiny, their specific gestures and folk costumes display certain characteristics. The peasant woman is standing with her back to the onlooker. She is wearing a traditional white chemise, a skirt and a red and blue apron the likes of which are worn in the Gorj area. The artist skilfully rendered the chromatic harmony, the vivid blue, red and white and the pale, beautiful cotton or floss silk head kerchief tied at the back and left flowing on her back. Her posture seems to indicate the fact that she is spinning: in her left hand she is holding a spindle, while her right hand is twisting the yarn.

The shepherd is leaning against the thick trunk of an oak playing the whistle. He is wearing a typical shirt, or chemise, tied round the waist with a leather belt, white trousers and a wide brimmed hat. In the middle of the composition, on the opposite bank of the river, there is another shepherd, standing on the path near the river. He is similarly dressed, only he is wearing a sheepskin cap; his long hair falls from under the cap. With the staff held high in his right hand he is leading his sheep. A few frisky goats and the dogs suggest movement.

On the opposite bank, where there is only one character whose identity is hard to recognise, the vegetation is just as luxuriant. The tiny source of light and the contrast it makes with the darkness of the forest create a mysterious place.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.manastirea-tismana.ro/?page\\_id=83](http://www.manastirea-tismana.ro/?page_id=83)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.manastirea-tismana.ro/?page\\_id=83](http://www.manastirea-tismana.ro/?page_id=83)



The monastery is placed in the upper level, on a steep, barren peak of Mount Starmina, surrounded by forests and rocky peaks, not far from the cave of Saint Nicodim. Surrounded by massive walls and guarded by defence towers, in a slight raccourci from the horizontal of the plateau, it dominates the landscape. The position of the architectural ensemble is in itself overwhelming for the people in the valley. A third of the composition is dominated by the sky and the way in which the monastery is reflected against the sky enhances its magnificence. On the right side a steep, barren cliff closes the composition. A spring with "magic water" emerging from under the wall of the monastery spectacularly turns into a waterfall (as we know, about 40 metres in height) which ends in the Tismana River.

Zuther painted the monastery after it had undergone a series of transformations. In 1844, Prince Gheorghe Bibescu ordered the restauration of several historical monuments, the entire project being executed by foreign architects led by the Austrian Schlatter. Originally, the Tismana Monastery was built in Byzantine style, but the restorers followed the Neo-Gothic model. The result was a complete lack of coherence which nevertheless did not affect the majestic appearance of the monastic complex and the overwhelming romantic atmosphere so skilfully rendered by Zuther.

The colours are also classic (shades of green and brown build the landscape, ochre and brown define the elements of architecture, blue, grey and coloured whites paint the sky), but Zuther displays his outstanding skill in employing the light – the eclairage plays an important role in the overall effect of romantic essence. The source of these effects is the dusk: a stripe of clear blue sky, the clouds coloured pink and purple by the setting sun. The diagonal rays give the entire architectural ensemble a shade of golden ochre. On the lower level, the thick forest does not allow for a lot of light. In contrast with its darkness, the artist sheds light on the minute genre scene unfolding on the bank of the river. The source of light on the opposite bank cannot be identified, it could be a fire. However, it is the part of the painting with the strongest chiaroscuro. This manner of creating effects reminds of another one of Zuther's creations, *Ocna Gate*, part of the Brukenenthal collection, as we already mentioned.

Arriving at Tismana, impressed by its beauty, the painter sketched the basic elements of the

compositions, noted the details of the natural surroundings and of the architecture on the spot. The finite work would not be totally confined to the impressions gathered on the scene, as it went through workings and "improvements", staging and additions to the staffage, but fantasy, ingenuity and a certain naturalness as well as excitement in the face of nature's motif, would be embedded, reflecting an early relationship between the artist and his motif.

### The Tricolour Flag

The Tricolour Flag flying over the crenels of the two defence towers at the entrance of the monastery is a detail of the painting that draws the attention of the viewer. The artist came to Wallachia after having witnessed in Transylvania some of the national aspirations and fight of the Romanians in the revolutionary year 1848. The image of the waving flag above the towers must have stirred his memories and emotion. There is no doubt an element which, as far as the painter is concerned, speaks about the significance of the monastic settlement in the religious and cultural life of the Romanians. In those years immediately following the revolution of 1848 and around the 1859 Principality's unification, the national spirit and consciousness manifestations of the unity vibrated in the atmosphere and were quickly felt and understood by the seismograph sensitivity of the artists. For a travelling painter it was one of the defining symbols of these places and people, of their history and aspirations.

The tricolour as a symbol of the Romanian nation appeared at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The flags on the monastery's towers in Zuther's work are still those with the arrangement of colours in horizontal strips. It was the revolutionary year 1821, on the battle flags of Tudor Vladimirescu's army, when the colours were first attributed to the meaning: "Freedom" (blue of the sky), "Justice" (yellow field), and "Brotherhood" (the red blood).

In 1834, the Tricolour would become a battle flag in Wallachia during the reign of Prince Alexandru D. Ghica who asked from sultan Mahmud II the approval for the models of naval pavilions and battle flags. The latter was a "flag with a red, blue and yellow face, with stars and a bird head in the middle." Soon, the order of colours was changed, so the yellow appeared in the centre.

The vertical arrangement of the three colours (blue, yellow and red) was decided in 1848 by the Provisional Government, headed by Metropolitan

Neofit, who gave the first Decree on the National Flag (Decree 252 of 13/25 July 1848), possibly under the influence of the French model.<sup>4</sup> The tricolour national flag was sanctified the day after the Decree on June 15<sup>th</sup> /27<sup>th</sup> 1848, at a large popular gathering on the Filaret Plain, which became the Plain of Freedom. These symbols have been widely used in demonstrations and have been flown on public buildings, ships and bastions. (Dogaru, 866)

After the defeat of the revolution, they returned to the old flags, and the revolutionaries were persecuted for wearing the revolutionary tricolour signs. Next year, ruler Barbu Știrbei adopted a new model for battle flags, while maintaining the horizontal mood of colours and changing only the decorative elements. This pattern, similar to that of 1834, was in force until 1856. It is the one in Heinrich Zuther's painting.

The Tricolour Flag contained the idea of unity of all Romanians. In 1848, on the Liberty Plain of Blaj they brought a large tricolour flag from Wallachia, which was placed in front of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Blaj. On the yellow colour of the flag it was written: "The Virtue of Entire Romania". The city of Sibiu, where the peregrine painter Heinrich Zuther had arrived a few years ago, had an important role in the events of 1848, to which the painter was certainly not a stranger. The national flag had been prepared at the Sibiu Conference in April-May 1848.

A few years later, in 1859, the Tricolour became a symbol of the unity of the Romanians in the Principalities, being, as Alexandru Ioan Cuza, the first prince of the United Principalities said: "The flag is Romania! This blessed land of the homeland, sprinkled with the blood of our ancestors, abounding with the sweat of the peasant and the Romanian worker; it is the family, the field of everyone, the home of our parents and children. The flag is the symbol of the devotion, faith, order and discipline of the army. The flag is always the past, present and future of the country, the entire history of Romania. In a word, the national flag represents all the victories and all the military virtues that comprise the two words spoken on the Romanian eagles: honour and homeland." Until 1861 both the old flags of the Moldavian and Wallachian Principalities and the tricolour were used at the same time. On 22 June 1861, Alexandru Ioan Cuza decreed the tricolour

as the official civil flag of the United Principalities (Năsturel 1900, 253).

The tricolour flag appeared in the Romanian painting at the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in some of the works with historical and national significance: Constantin Daniel Rosenthal, *Revolutionary Romania*, depicted in 1848, and *Romania breaking its shackles on the Liberty Plain* (The flag is in the version with the vertically coloured bands), Costache Petrescu, *Tricolour*, in 1848 (watercolour), Constantin Lecca, *The Union of the Moldavians and the Wallachians*<sup>5</sup>, *The Murdering of Michael the Brave*<sup>6</sup>, Gheorghe Tattarescu, *February 11<sup>th</sup> 1866 – Modern Romania*<sup>7</sup>.

The presence of the tricolour flag in Zuther's painting is of much importance as it helps support the information concerning the official use of this variant with the colours placed horizontally in 1850. It may have marked an official visit or a major religious holiday, but so far we have not been able to find out if in 1850 Tismana was visited by the ruling prince or what religious holiday was celebrated. We believe it may have been August 15<sup>th</sup>, the commemoration of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary who is also the patron of the Monastery (a lovely summer's day). It is also possible that the flag was there permanently (probably after 1821), as it appears in the engraving we mentioned (as dated sometime after but close to 1844), on the three defence towers (visible from that angle)<sup>8</sup>; however, it does not appear in Auguste Lancelot's engraving dated 1860 (Oprescu 1926). Neither does it appear in the engraving representing the visit Carol I paid to Tismana in 1867, published in 1909 by Alexandru Ștefulescu in his monography dedicated to the Monastery. The flag might also have been hoisted

<sup>5</sup>In Lecca's painting the rulers of the two countries are represented shaking hands. There are also depicted the flags of Moldavia (blue and red) and Wallachia (yellow and blue). These combinations of colours had not been documented before 1832–1834 (Năsturel 1909, 253).

<sup>6</sup>In this painting Lecca depicted the flag that combines the symbols of the three provinces: yellow for Wallachia, red in the middle for Moldavia and blue for Transylvania (Pălăncăanu 1974, 138). Available online at:

[https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drapelul\\_Rom%C3%A2n\\_ici#cite\\_note-autogenerated18-30](https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drapelul_Rom%C3%A2n_ici#cite_note-autogenerated18-30).

<sup>7</sup>Private Collection (available online at: <http://alis.ro/rpictura.htm> and Action House ALIS, March 14, 2009, catalogue no. 455).

<sup>8</sup>[http://www.manastirea-tismana.ro/?page\\_id=83](http://www.manastirea-tismana.ro/?page_id=83)

on the occasion of the fulfilment of the restoration works developed in 1844.

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The painting depicting the Tismana Monastery is built on the model of the classical landscape imbued with romantic effects. It confirms the fact that Zuther is an artist of great versatility who approaches all types of landscapes, who pays careful and equal attention to factual and to artistic aspects, to emotions. He vacillates between dry correct objectivity, a classicist academic approach and a romantic manner, often combined. The artist displays great skills in building his composition and in obtaining the desired chromatic effects. Although the documentary aspect is very well preserved, the work does have real artistic value. Of all the

landscapes painted on Romanian territory at that time, this is, probably, the best.

The originality and the importance of this painting also reside in the fact that, up until now, it seems to be the earliest painted image of the Tismana Monastery.

Also, the date, 1850, brings further information concerning Zuther's presence in the Romanian Principalities two years after he was supposed to have left.

Henrich Zuther's painting of Tismana Monastery is a new proof of the importance played by the travelling artists in making connections between the development of the artistic life in Europe and in the Romanian countries as well as transporting into Wallachia the innovations brought in the southern Transylvanian towns.

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7. Heinrich Zuther, *Tismana Monastery*.



- 8. Heinrich Zuther, *Tismana Monastery* (detail)
- 9. Heinrich Zuther, *Tismana Monastery* (detail)





10. Anonymous, *Tismana Monastery*  
11. August Lancelot, *Tismana Monastery*  
12. Anonymous, *King Charles I visiting Tismana Monastery*



## OBJECT-SHAPED WORLD OF BALLET IN THE EXPOSITIONS AND FUNDS OF THEATRICAL MUSEUMS OF THE WORLD: TO THE QUESTION OF THE STUDY OF CHOREOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Tatiana PORTNOVA\*

**Abstract:** *The present article makes an attempt to show the artistic and aesthetic potential inherent in the material, objective and visual artifacts associated with the ballet theatre, stored in funds and exhibited in theatre museums all over the world. The whole subject-shaped world of dance is viewed from the position of the main bearer of the theatrical idea towards the level of perception by the spectator. Three major problem-thematic groups of museum collections are identified, which are the basis for their classification and are representative for the history and current state of the ballet theatre. The typology and variability of museum theatrical expositions are shown, showing the subject-material world of a choreographic culture (photographs, graphic and pictorial portraits of ballet dancers, sculptural images and statuettes of actors in roles, call boards and posters for performances, theatre masks, and book editions). This leads to the creation of a subjectively new artistic product that ensures the expression of exclusive value through the authenticity of museum exhibits. Considering the subject field of the exhibitions of specific theatre museums, the author of the article touches upon possible aspects of their study. It is concluded that the creative method of organizing a modern ballet exhibition requires the synthesis of individual artistic skills of the museum specialists along with the use of advanced design exhibition technologies. Presented as a result of observation and generalization, the panorama of the modes of exposure of the ballet tangible world has formed the basic layer of scientific understanding of the further vectors of development of this sphere that comes into contact with artistic projection and outlined the potential possibilities of studying choreographic sources in the space of world culture.*

**Key words:** *theatre exposition, museum exhibit, ballet heritage, object-material world, research ways, choreographic sources*

**Rezumat:** *Articolul de față intenționează să pună în evidență potențialul artistic și estetic inherent al artefactelor materiale, obiective și vizuale asociate cu teatrul de balet, stocate în colecții și expuse în muzeele de teatru din toată lumea. Întreaga tematică a dansului este privită din prisma principalului purtător al concepției teatrale înspre nivelul de percepție al spectatorului. Sunt identificate trei grupuri tematice importante de colecții muzeale, folosite ca bază a clasificării și sunt reprezentative pentru istoria și stadiul actual al teatrului de balet. Sunt prezentate tipologia și diversitatea expozițiilor de teatru din muzee, cu reflectarea lumii materiale a unei culturi coregrafice (portrete ale actorilor în diverse roluri în fotografii, lucrări de grafică, pictură și sculptură, panouri cu programe și afișe ale spectacolelor, măști de teatru și ediții de cărți). Acest lucru conduce la crearea unui produs artistic subiectiv nou, care asigură exprimarea valorii exclusive prin autenticitatea exponatelor muzeale. Având în vedere domeniul tematic al expozițiilor anumitor muzee de teatru, autorul articolului se referă la posibilele aspecte ale cercetării lor. Se concluzionează că metoda creativă de organizare a unei expoziții moderne de balet se bazează pe ansamblul competențelor artistice ale specialiștilor muzeului, pe lângă tehnologiile avansate de design expozițional. Prezentată ca urmare a observării și generalizării, panorama modurilor de expunere a lumii tangibile a baletului a format stratul fundamental de înțelegere științifică a vectorilor de dezvoltare a acestei sfere care intră în contact cu proiecția artistică și subliniază posibilitățile potențiale de studiere a surselor coregrafice în spațiul culturii mondiale.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *expoziție de teatru, expunere muzeală, patrimoniu de balet, lumea materială / lumea obiectelor, căi de cercetare, surse coregrafice*

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## Introduction

For modern scientific knowledge in the field of ballet science, the question remains of the sources, the locations of which are mainly theatre museums. By now, there has been a certain tradition in the study of theatrical art, which is preserved in the study of the choreographic heritage in the form of theoretical written sources. However, the practice of scientific search is in constant dynamics. The basis for historians and experts of the ballet theatre is often the material accumulated in the field of the material and objective world and imprinted on paper, canvas, sculptural material. It is known that the traditional classification of museum expositions is based on the method of its construction, that is, the order of grouping of exposure materials. This provision applies to the expositions of the theatrical and ballet subjects, which can be of interest to both ordinary viewers and dance researcher specialists. Photographs, engravings, paintings and sculptures, costumes and personal belongings of artists are one of the truly invaluable sources of studying the history of ballet for them. Therefore, it is no accident that most of these works are stored in the funds of historical and theatrical museums of different countries. "State theatre museums pursue the goal of collecting and studying the subjects of Russian theatrical art, antiquity and life in all areas of the theatre (drama, opera, ballet, pantomime, circus, booth, etc.)" (Mints, Georgiyev 1969, 11) These are theatrical scientific and cultural and educational institutions that collect, store, study, exhibit and publish monuments of theatrical culture, among which it is necessary to name profile collections of museums, such as the A. Bakhrushin State Central Theatre Museum (Moscow), Museum of Theatre and Musical Culture (St. Petersburg), Latvian Museum of Literature, Theatre and Music (Riga), Estonian Museum of Theatre and Music (Tallinn). Another category of museums includes museums created at famous theatres of world significance (the Museum of the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre, the Mariinsky Theatre Museum, the Alexandrinsky Theatre Museum, the Covent Garden Theatre Museum (England), the Grand Opera Museum (Paris), La Scala in Milan, Italy, the Museum of the Vienna Opera (Austria), etc. One more group of collections that deal with the storage of the graphic materials of dance has historically developed at the academic ballet schools: the A.Y. Vaganova Museum of the Russian Ballet Academy, the Museum of Perm State Choreographic School, etc. The listed

collections, which include exhibits of the dance culture, were the organizational base of the research. The museum items dedicated to the ballet that are part of these collections were an important group of sources in this article.

Ballet iconography is one of the most important branches of theatrical studies, a science dealing with pictorial material, in which certain aspects of dance performance are reflected. Iconographic sources can answer important questions related to the history and technique of the ballet, questions related to ballet costume, questions characterizing the characteristics of various choreographic schools, questions concerning the attitude of choreography and culture in general.

The ballet theatre exists as a momentary performance. Each performance exists only at the moment of its presentation. This ensures an understanding of the idea of historicity in the theatre perception. The viewer in the theatre has direct access, involvement in the product regardless of the kind of epoch in question. The dance is not preserved due to the momentary nature and exists only at the current moment; any transfer to the film makes it possible only to fix the movement. In this case, it seems that the magic of art is lost. However, the theatre museum with its filling has always attracted its special atmosphere associated with the mystery of the imaginary action. "Theatre museums widely use the second type of 'theatricalization', which face the problem of showing a theatrical process that is momentary and directly dependent on the personal contact of spectators and actors." (Piotrovsky 2005, 254) For a long time the ballet theatre developed in parallel with the dramatic theatre, using the same repertoire, having practically the same circle of spectators, since it was an integral part of the structure of the plays of the 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Perhaps for this reason the museum originals related to the dance with their specific characteristics always served as a metaphorical expression of those aesthetic and professional issues of the existence of the choreographic art that the researcher encountered while considering the theatrical exposition.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the artistic and aesthetic features of museum exhibits dedicated to the dance, in the context of their specific features and belonging to an artistic culture.

Proceeding from this goal, we can formulate the research tasks of the article as follows:

- to study the structure of expositions and the classification of museum items related to the choreographic culture;
- to give an overview of the current state of dance collections and identify approaches to the potential aspects of its study;
- to identify the sign properties of the exhibits included in the exposition of the theatres' museums;
- to highlight the universal properties of theatrical communication, which make it possible to characterize the complex of significant functions performed by the museum exposition in the space of a choreographic culture.

### **Literature review and the degree of the topic development**

Investigating the literature on the general problems of modern exposition and exhibition activities, there is a special role for science, which enters into a dialogue with a variety of author's positions and creative concepts (Maistrovskaya 1997; Shlyakhtina 2011). Turning to the works of the historical and cultural and art plan containing separate materials on museum practice not of the theatrical profile, we note that some authors notice the analogies between the museum and the theatre, manifested in the scenario construction of the exposition on dramaturgic laws, the use of theatrical techniques in museums, in the expansion of the museum space to display performances, etc. The desire for dramatization, for plot action in turn, blurs the boundaries of the traditional museum exposition (Gribkova, Gordeyeva 2015; Shchepetkova 2006).

An analysis of the special literature devoted to the creative problems of exhibiting museum items showed that the sources devoted to theatre museums are not very numerous. Some historiographical facts are described in introductory articles to museum albums and guidebooks of famous theatres of the world (Lushin 1986; Galabutskaya, Pitoyeva 1985; Yasulovich 1971; Zemleroyev 1964; Museum of Theatre and Music...1975; Schouvaloff 1987; The Theatre museum unpacs...1987). And theatrical collections are considered in passing and, as a rule, in the context of the theatre's activity in this or that period of its creative activity. The materials of theatre museums mainly attract attention at special exhibitions organized on the occasion of certain memorable dates related to staging performances, the activities of directors, artists and painters. You can put private ballet

meetings with published catalogs and introductory texts in a separate section, where their owners give a description of the composition of their products (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1982; Mints 1989; Bowlt 1994; Burnim 2001; Näslund 2008; Nijinska Collection 2002). Other materials are reception and reviews on theatre exhibitions (Prestenskaya et al. 1989; Sarabiyanova 1988; Owes 2004; Baer Nancy van Norman 1991); essays in periodical literature and some references in the works on ballet (Borisoglebsky 1939); memories of choreographers, artists, other figures of the ballet – S. Lifar, N. Shifrin, B. Nizhinskaya etc (Lifar 1994; Shifrin 1966).

As you can see, there are no general works examining theatrical collections from the standpoint of studying the choreographic heritage. The mechanisms of the addition of the mental image of dance as a result of the perception of museum exhibits are not in the focus of attention. The offered perspective of the "interrelationship" of the subject – figurative world of the ballet, found in the funds of theatre museums and exhibited at exhibitions in the context of its research directions, proposed in this article, was not previously formulated and studied in specialized literature. Thus, systematic study of the museum exposition as a semantic system, which is part of the choreographic culture sphere, defines a new aspect of its study.

### **Methodology**

The theatrical exposition created on the basis of funds and collections of the museum is a complex phenomenon of human culture, which has its own specific semantics. Both the understanding of the dance, consisting of moments and containing a unique meaning, directing the researcher to a certain way of studying it depends on its correct organization. The methodological basis of our research is a multifactorial analytical approach to understanding the theatrical exposition and the ballet exhibit in the context of modern conceptual methods of its study. The culturological approach applied in the article makes it possible to study museum objects of ballet subjects as an integral set of material and spiritual realities created in the course of historical development (Zakharyina 2008).

Methodological approaches also include a direct acquaintance with the content of funds, the composition of theatrical collections, the identification of objects of ballet theme, their classification, analysis and photography of exhibits. In addition, the methodological base of

the research includes both the main elements of the theory of museology (the theory of documentation and the theory of museum communication) (Kolganova 2013, Kochetov 1959).

The method of observation and generalization of the experience of building ballet exhibitions, embracing the existing practice of the leading theatrical museums in the world, made it possible to present a panorama of the creative techniques used.

The theatrical museum, as a rule, has manuscript-documentary exhibits (books, records of libretto of plays, pictures of scenes from performances, artists, etc.) and figurative sources (sketches of scenery and costumes, video recordings). Hence the concept of the actor's personality, the character of his actor's way, suggests at least two basic interpretations for the researcher. In one case, one can talk about the path of an actor, a director, first of all, like his position, his credo, his chosen moral and ideological and aesthetic principles, in the other – as his development (evolution) of creativity.

## **Results**

The most frequently used today is the classification of the types of museum exposition, the basis of which is the method of building the exposition, that is the order of grouping and organization of exposition materials: systematic, ensemble and thematic. Each of the methods underlies the corresponding type of museum theatrical exposition. The emergence of these exposure methods and their corresponding types of exposure is a process that covers a fairly long period of time.

Items submitted in accordance with the systematic method of exposure are selected, interpreted and placed in accordance with the classification system of the profile direction of the exhibition or permanent exhibition presented in the museum. The main structural unit of such an exposure is a typological or systemic series. An illustrative example is the exhibition "The Lawless Comet" of Maya Plisetskaya held in the A.A. Bakhrushin Theatre Museum. The main roles of her stage life are traced successively in the images of Odette, Odile, Kitri, Carmen, Zarema, Isadora, Anna Karenina, Nina Zarechnaya, revived by virtue of costumes, photos, videos.

The exposition complex of objects, called "vital" or "natural" – is the main structural unit of the

ensemble exposition. It is an interior in which museum items are presented in the midst of their existence. This is typical for the memorial museums of theatrical figures, museums-apartments, museum-workshops of artists and directors. So, for example the apartment of G.S. Ulanova in the house on Kotelnicheskaya embankment in Moscow, which became a museum of the great ballerina of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who became a legend still during her lifetime, has hardly changed. The situation in the rooms says that it is a continuation of the world that the ballerina created on the stage. Everything is present here, as was during the life of G.S. Ulanova – favorite things, photographs, paintings, porcelain, furniture, books, gifts of friends and admirers.

Thematic exposition with the help of exposition materials reveals a certain theatrical theme, a plot, a problem, creates a museum image of the reflected phenomenon. The structural unit of the thematic exposition is a thematic-exposition complex, which includes objects of different types, united by the ability to visually demonstrate a specific conceptual idea. Such is the exhibition "Grand Ball", which took place in the park "Tsaritsyno", dedicated to the ball tradition of the Russian society of the 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, featuring original ball gowns, a collection of shoes, fans, handbags and other elegant ballroom accessories, as well as musical instruments and notes from personal collections of the members of the Romanov Imperial House. The exhibits for the exhibition were provided by ten museums of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Let us note that the classification of theatrical expositions that we have singled out is conditional. Today, more complex "museum configurations" become characteristic, which also cover the groups we have examined. It is rather difficult to determine their place in the framework of one of the existing classification schemes. The development of conceptual ideas of uniqueness in the future will require the expansion of the exhibition structure in connection with the possible emergence of new areas of human activity and innovative technologies that will become the subject of museum interest in the field of ballet theatre. Today, museum items in the exhibition space are increasingly included in a certain visual-conceptual series and action, which is inherent in the morphological nature of the theatre itself. In the future, the development of the theatrical exposition will go along the line of

interpreting the meaning and degree of interrelation between the subject-semantic range of theatrical exhibits, subordinating it to artistic and scientific ideas and time criteria each time.

The theatrical exposition of museums is very diverse and each of its facets could become an object for a separate conversation. Let us review briefly the general features of the fund structure and exhibiting collections, highlighting the themes of dance in them.

Documentary and artistic photographs occupy the overwhelming majority of theatrical expositions, as well as portraits in roles performed by artists, providing unforgettable shots that capture the world of the theatre in such a way that the lens of the camera or the artist's eye see it (Balanchine 2014). Analyzing such materials, it is worth noting that the photographs are of great documentary and artistic value, since they give a visual representation of the figures of the theatre whose legacy played a big role in the culture of this or that era. They are joined by graphic, pictorial and sculptural theatrical portraits of ballet dancers, as witnesses of life and their work they remain forever an integral part of the museum heritage. Images of artists in art works become something inseparable from the spiritual interpretation of the authors-artists. Here one often has to deal with a deeply legitimate paradox of the pictorial transmission of their personal artistic perception. The more individual the perception is, the higher it is on the spiritual level, the brighter and fuller in the story about the actor is the personality of the artist himself, and here it is important for the narrator not to obscure his hero and not to substitute him with the bright creation of his rich and professionally competent vision. Therefore, a synchronous analysis of photographs and portraits performed by the artist in the same image, *mise en scene*, role, etc., is especially natural and legitimate here. So, for example the A.I. Vaganova museum of the Academy of Russian Ballet opened in 1957 was part of the Methodical Cabinet of the Choreographic School at first (Borisoglebsky 1939; Zemleroyev 1964). The first exhibits were photographs of the graduates of the Theatre School, preserved from pre-revolutionary times and the lifetime portrait of the choreographer Sh. Didlo. There is also a valuable collection of iconographic materials, including a theatrical photograph of the period of the 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the painting of artists E. Wiesel, V. Svarog, S. Gershov, Yu. Pugachev. The specificity of such museums was affected by

young cultural scientists: "Theatre groups that have entered their name in the history of the theatre have permanent expositions deployed in a special room – a museum. Such exhibitions not only acquaint spectators with the history of the theatre, but gradually educate young actors and directors." (Lifar 1994, 259)

Portraits of theatrical figures in life and personal belongings of artists are close to this group of exhibits. When you look at them you can imagine the spiritual and psychic world of the artist, as this person walked, spoke or smiled, the objective world of their surroundings, and the way to the visual representation of the image on the stage can be seen from this world.

Interesting, but quite a rare area of theatre meetings is a sculpture depicting artists primarily in roles or in portraits. Sculptural figurines depicting ballet dancers in the dance and molds from the feet of famous dancers are particularly impressive. The plastic form is important here, thanks to which the image arises. In such exhibits, it is necessary to emphasize the biodynamic characteristic of the artist's movement, to show the level of technique of classical dance, in which it was in the times of M. Taglioni or A. Pavlova. Three-dimensional (using circular circumvention) perception allows you to see the voluminous structure of plastics. The Museum of the Bolshoi Theatre and the A. Bakhrushin State Theatre Museum have such collections, and also a branch of the Museum-apartment of G.S. Ulanova (Lushin 1986; Beskina 2016).

History of the theatre has long been associated with masks, which are found in the expositions of theatrical museums. They perform, first of all, the personage function, demonstrate the psychological mechanisms of the game simulation of the ballet image, as well as often associated with the methods and techniques for teaching the actor. Cultural and art history analysis of the researcher here can be based, on one hand, on the use of mask image modeling as a method of self-knowledge, as an instrument of physical and psychological emancipation, and as one of the techniques for developing the actor's creative abilities. On the other hand – from the positions of skills of working with a mask in a single plastic complex of expressive means. You can get acquainted with masks from the ballet "Coppelia" at the museum of the Milan Theatre La Scala (Rava 1964).

A rich material for the analysis of the author's concept is the director's sketches made by the

artists themselves or by the directors of the performances. This working graphic material with attentive, close examination (as a rule, such drawings are not large) provides the key to understanding the compositional, semantic, stylistic parameters of the future issue, sketch, performance. The facets of a universal creative personality, which shed new light on their own works are found in these sketches. Considering the sketches of the choreographer O. Vinogradov for the ballet "Asel" by V. Vlasov, which are in the A.A. Bakhrushin State Central Theatre Museum, separate sheets are in the museum of the Mariinsky Theatre, you can imagine his work as an artist, and as a director. They represent a rhythmically multi-figure graphic fixation of a ballet performance in several sheets. The dance scenes depicted in the chart, shown in one general plan, look like frames recorded automatically or projected onto the film.

A high level of visual culture, in particular the artistic solution of such an important component as costume and decoration in many respects explains the success and dignity of the theatrical performance. The decorating artist is a theatre worker, a representative of the oldest theatrical profession, whose importance is steadily increasing with the evolution of the art scene. The main concept of decorative art is the emotional relationship of design, theatrical action. Sketches of costumes and scenery, exhibitions carry in themselves the energy of plans, ideas, and artistic fantasies. "The theatre entirely relied and relies on conditional forms of expression; they have a genetic predisposition to the methods of conditional direction." (Kharitonov 1992, 124) The scenery for the plays contains that transition, when the individual, fictional conditioned world closes with reality. It was the graphic nature of the acting that made one see the character, the very appearance of the acting. The largest artists of scenography, represented in the expositions of theatrical museums, disclose a wide panorama of the images of performances, the structure of their poetics, and the scenic direction. The general processes of creativity of the artist and director, creating visible images of the play is obvious. At the junctions of painting and drama there is a new "visual spectacle". Theatrical work is always something that captures the attention of the audience, which reflects their active interest, expressed in contemplation of what is happening. Thanks to the work of the artist-decorator, the play appears to be born from the elements and acquires a refined, beautiful form. The collection

of the Petersburg Museum of Music and Theatre Culture has almost no analogues in terms of historical coverage, variety and value of exhibits, including the decoration of ballet performances (Metelitsa 1989; Lobanov-Rostovsky 1982). In the museum collection, represented by world-famous names, theatrical sketches by L. Bakst, A. Benois, A. Golovin, K. Korovin and other masters open a wide field for art studies.

The assertion of three-dimensionality on the stage entailed the return of the layout to the theatre, which are often on display at exhibitions (Pausch 1988). Scenic design in them is considered more spacious, the theatre seems to be striving to comprehend its own structure. Lines, color, texture, shape, perspective, space and movement of the actor become the basis of meaningful comprehension in such expositions. Here we suggest that tourists look at the inner space of the layout, drawing attention to the topography of the stage tablet, as we perceive the space in its theatrical transformation. It is important to be able to use the structure of the stage site, because we, while inside the theatre building, never see more than three sides that protect its space. A layout is a working tool of an architect reflecting on the appearance of the theatre. With its help, you can check the effectiveness of the adopted composite solutions, trace the possibilities of creating new accents, see the results of creative ideas. The compositional combination of colors, their ratio, the dynamics of the motion of searchlights and light spots in conventional scenery is important. The architect, art director and director participate in the creation of the layout. The library-museum at the Grand Opera in Paris owns a large collection of layouts.

The search for a costume is a serious stage in the work of a theatrical artist and an actor in an image. The costume in the theatre is also a work of art, an integral part of the scenography of the play. It is important to say that the stage costume is a complex work by its nature (though sometimes simple in form) built on its own compositional principles, the laws of plastic organization, with its rich expressive language. Characters' clothing on the scene interacts with both the actor's drawing of roles, and more broadly – with the author's thought. Focusing on the actor, his psychological condition, the artist in his sketches sort of opens the aesthetic value of the composition, allowing you to sense the spatiality of the plastics, the versatility of shapes and silhouettes in its imaginative structure. It is



interesting to draw parallels with the costumed portraits of actors in roles, which are usually included in the exposition of theatrical museums, as well as created according to the sketches of artists, exhibited under glass-cases (Höller 1986; Lobanov et al. 1979).

The special feature of the costume in the ballet theatre, such as its object-material proximity to the scenery, attracts attention. Often it is performed from the same materials as the spatial scenic environment. Their artistic stylistic interaction is achieved by technical pictorial means. The art of theatrical costume, formed in the process of theatre development, receiving a powerful impetus from the first major works of older masters, develops into an original school of mastery of artistic and plastic understanding of the meaningful values of the stage image. Observing part of the expositions associated with the scenery and costumes, the visitors have an associative circle of views when they see the material embodiment of artistic ideas. At the same time, decorative means restore the historical appearance of the performances. Given the fixed nature of the sketches during the viewing, the viewer has the opportunity to dwell on the main directorial themes in more detail, on the tempo-rhythmic drawing of the images, in order to accentuate and highlight the significance of the graphic design in this fragment or in the performance as a whole. Almost all theatrical museums of the world have original ballet costumes. In the royal theatre of Covent Garden, they meet visitors, even in the lobby at the entrance to the theatre, exhibited in the windows.

There is another kind of exposition material – video films (historical, chronicle-documentary tapes, excerpts of performances), shown in the halls of theatrical museums. Often these are interviews with artists, directors, painters, fragments of staging work, rehearsals. Such films become a powerful artistic component of the study, as their power is in reliability. They greatly enhance the effect of the material perception, can serve as an introduction and are demonstrated before its immediate presentation or in the middle part of the exposure viewing. The film material reflects the material of life more directly. Here the connection between the image and the prototype is more clearly revealed. From this point of view, the museum opened at the Vienna State Opera in 2005, which is one of the most modern of such facilities in the world, may be of interest. With the help of information terminals of the museum you can get information about any performance that

was on the stage of the Vienna State Opera since 1955.

Finally, theatrical call boards and posters are no less interesting at the exhibitions of the theatre museum. A whole field of stage advertising has grown along with the history of theatre development, expanding its sphere of influence and involving more and more viewers in the process of mutual communication. The lithographed drawing poster, made by first-class masters, invades the streets, coloring, illuminating the urban environment in the XIX century in Germany, England, France, Holland, Belgium, the USA. Artistic merit, manifested in the decorative system of modern style, was particularly noticeable in the posters to the ballets “Russian Seasons” of S. Diaghilev in late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Posters and call boards included in the exhibition exposures have an undeniable communicative and artistic value already because they are deployed in the information-figurative world. As N.A. Shifrin noted in his book “My work in the theatre”: “Not only artists and paintings make up museums, but museums also make artists significant.” (Shifrin 1966, 169)

Other functions are performed by theatre programs and book editions. Speaking about their peculiarities it is interesting to use the method of comparison (general and special) in posters and call boards – monumental graphics and programs for theatre performances to books, where a significant place is occupied by the memoir heritage of the theatre’s actors – directors themselves and artists – to small-format graphics. Such exhibits contain collections of many theatrical museums, as well as the New York Public Library, private collections of N.N. Lobanov-Rostovsky (Great Britain) (Lobanov-Rostovsky, 1969–1975; 1968, Balanchine 2014), and of choreographers S. Lifar (Paris) (Lifar 1994) and J. Normayer (Germany). Despite the fact that they have their own expressive means, the similarity between them can be seen in the meaningful connections of theatre, literature, and image. They are documents of their time, visible, real, possessing their psychological and aesthetic qualities of reliability. Graphic genre, equipped with an informational text part – is sometimes a more convincing document than a photograph, which until recently was considered the most powerful and irrefutable authenticity carrier.

### **Discussions**

In-depth immersion of the researcher in the museum theatrical space can seriously be

hampered by insufficient thoughtfulness of the exposition and the lack of elaboration of information material and reference tools accompanying the exhibits. The order of materials exposure, the dependence of museum items on the movement of spectators can have great importance. It is important that the exhibitions of the ballet theme were of a problematic character and complemented, revealing the concept of understanding and display of ballet materials formed in the museum as a phenomenon of artistic culture, on a particular example. The exhibits related to the dance as part of the museum exposition create a spatio-temporal character environment in which, through the movement of the viewer, the original image obtained from the perception of objects undergoes a certain transformation. In this case, the semantic perception of the objective world of choreography is realized through understanding the choreography itself. Identifying the content plan for the subject-shaped world of ballet in the collections and expositions of theatrical museums, it is necessary to pay attention to the adaptation of the researcher to the subject of study related to dance, to the laws and professional features of dance art, where the researcher must be able to simultaneously apply methods of both choreography itself, and of art criticism analysis.

In practical terms, the typological differentiation of ballet expositions considered can serve as a methodological recommendation for the practical development of concepts for new exhibitions, both temporary and permanent. The research allows to optimize the process of the present exhibition design of ballet exhibits in the space of the theatre museum and to bring it to a new creative level of active interaction with new design technologies and related spatial arts directions that facilitates viewers' perception; it also facilitates scientists' research of questions on the theory of ballet theatre practice. The complex of materially substantive choreographic culture located in the funds of museum collections has a complex multi-level system, the methodological study of which can become necessary in the choreography and performing practice aimed at

solving the tasks of various stages of the staging work.

### **Conclusion**

So, the expositions of theatrical museums, conceptually constructed according to a certain principle, demonstrate the diversity of historical artifacts, forms, styles, genres, methods associated with the history of the development of choreographic culture and characteristic of the ever-changing currents in art; suggest each artist's search for their individual handwriting, position, manners. It is impossible to estimate such diversity without a true inner culture, unity of mind and emotions. The material seen in the theatrical exposition as a whole forms the very "divertissement", which deserves special attention, as it remains in the memory of the viewer. The penetration of the ballet theatre into the museum leads to the erasure of the differences between them, and the museum communication itself becomes theatrical. Co-creation is born in the museum just like in the theatre; only it is not a co-creation of the theatrical action and the viewer, but the spectator's active attitude to the exhibit and the experience of direct feeling. Being an active part of the communicative process, each museum storage unit associated with the choreographic heritage falls into the semantic field of the entire collection and transfers the information embedded in it. The creative activity of actors, directors, artists, composers, choreographers, captured in various museum exhibits – in photographs, sketches, sculptural images, on a film, sounding film, in reviews, memoirs of contemporaries – all this allows the researcher, historian or simply theatre lover to recreate the ideological-aesthetic, imaginative structure of the once existing performance. Hard-to-capture creativity of the actor in all individual uniqueness and originality can be kept for history nowhere as complete as in the museum. Thus, the theoretical provisions set forth in the article expand the field of historical and cultural knowledge and the problem field of museology in the framework of preserving and translating the spiritual component of the choreographic heritage concentrated in theatrical museums.

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## LA BELLE ÉPOQUE IN ROMANIAN FILM ADAPTATIONS OF THE NATIONAL-COMMUNIST PERIOD (1971–1989)

Mihaela GRANCEA\*

**Abstract:** *The article is a meditation on the Belle Époque adaptations in Romanian cinema, an attempt to shed light on the ways the filmmakers during state socialist regime chose and dealt with literary classics that could be used in order to produce nationalist propaganda. The focus is on the historical background, the rhetoric of protochronism, or the production histories of the film, mentioning the types/social class of characters the films, the different narrative patterns deployed by them. Despite censorship and self-censorship specific for the national-communist period, the films that present La Belle Époque have nonetheless been highly awarded at international film festivals. The paper attempts to clarify this paradox.*

**Keywords:** *La Belle Époque, rhetoric of protochronism, Romanian film adaptations, political thaw, cultural elites, the Transylvanian town*

**Rezumat:** *Articolul prezintă o incursiune în domeniul ecranizărilor românești din perioada comunistă despre La Belle Époque, o încercare de a evidenția relația dintre literatura clasică și instrumentalizarea acesteia în timpul regimului socialist pentru a produce propaganda naționalistă. Aspectele relevante ale studiului sunt reliefaarea contextului istoric, retorica protocronismului, istoria producției de film, menționând și tipurile sau clasele sociale reprezentate în filme, alături de diversele tipare. În ciuda cenzurii și auto-cenzurii specifice perioadei național-comuniste, filmele despre La Belle Époque au fost totuși premiate la festivaluri de film internațional, un paradox explicat în articol.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *La Belle Époque, retorica protocronismului, ecranizările românești, dezechetul politic, elitele culturale, târgul transilvănean*

### Introduction

During the post-Stalinist period (1953–1964)<sup>1</sup> the Romanian communist power began to understand that the entire cultural production promoted in the previous Stalinist years was unconvincing as a propagandistic means. Practicing a formalist and superficial filmic discourse had unfavourable effects, risking to put a distance between film and audience. Moreover, that strategy threatened to have the opposite effect on spectators so that they could develop the communist norms. Since the short and relative political thaw (1953–1956) the Romanian communist regime was preoccupied

with giving up the official aggressive and didactic discourse, specific to Socialist Realism in cultural area. Politruks' ideological texts of the era urged the writers and film makers to insert the communist ideology in a crafty manner into their works. The condition *ancilla ideologiae* transformed the cultural creation, especially the cinematographic work, in a significant factor for accomplishing the political project proposed by the communist system (Grancea 2014, 255-287).

The aesthetical aspect of the artistic film was a prerequisite for the Romanian cinema starting with the Stalinist period, given the fact that the Soviet cinematography imposed a cultural tradition in that respect. Aestheticism and imaginary were considered possibilities of involving empathically the audience and inducing the official discourse about the progress of the communist project (see the case of Soviet and Romanian films on collectivization Grancea, Gradinaru 2016, 708-737). When the Romanian politruks

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<sup>1</sup> Some researchers of the communist period in Romania support the idea that the regime dominated by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (except the year 1964) is characterized by a rigid Stalinism (Hitchins 1992, 1081).



acknowledged the fact that propaganda films are not convincing, they resorted to the idea of adapting literary works considered classical, which was already a tradition in the Soviet space and contributed to the development of national film schools in the Eastern Block. The first Romanian successful film adaptation was *Lucky Mill* (*Moara cu noroc*, 1955)<sup>2</sup>. Later on, the art film based on literary works reclaimed ideologically became a way of educating the public taste.

It is evident that the trend of film adaptation was brought on the Romanian soil by the Soviet tendency after de-Stalinization, when film adaptations were especially welcomed. Among the Soviet film adaptations, Anton Chekhov's works were highly regarded due to their melancholic tone and the atmosphere of nobles and intellectuals spending their time in the province at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see *Damas sobachkoy/ The Lady with the Dog*, directed by I. Heifitz, 1960; *Dyadya Vanya/ Uncle Vanya*, directed by A. Konchalovsky, 1971; *Chayka/ The Seagull*, directed by Y. Karasik, 1972). We have to mention the same tendency of shooting films about La Belle Époque in the Polish case, especially Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz's film adaptation *Brzezina*, directed by A. Wajda, 1971.

### Censorship and Ideological Mechanisms of Film Control and Coordination in National-Communism

After 1971 the filmic creation was determined by "party and state documents". We refer especially to "Theses of July 1971" or the Nicolae Ceaușescu's speech *Propuneri de măsuri pentru îmbunătățirea activității politico-ideologice, de educare marxist-leninistă a membrilor de partid, a tuturor oamenilor muncii* [*Proposals of Actions to Improve the Political-Ideological Activity, of Marxist-Leninist Education of Party Members, All Working Men*], which are the documents of the Plenary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) in November 1971. These documents triggered the small cultural revolution (Verdery 1991, 107) of Maoist inspiration (Tismăneanu 2005, 241-242) by

transforming Ceaușescu's discourse into a programmatic document (entitled *Expunere cu privire la programul PCR pentru îmbunătățirea activității ideologice, ridicarea nivelului general al cunoașterii și educația socialistă a maselor, pentru așezarea relațiilor din societatea noastră pe baza principiilor eticii și echității socialiste și comuniste* [*Presentation regarding the RCP for improving the ideological activity, raising the general level of knowledge and socialist education of the masses for establishing the relations within our society based on the principles of ethics and socialist and communist equity*]). Works of the National Conference of June 1972, the Law of the Press of March 28 1974 and the Conference from Mangalia of August 3, 1983 were used as instruments to control the artistic creation. At the last mentioned event the dictator Ceaușescu stated that the films must contribute to the effort of constructing socialism so that films would present contemporary subjects (loosely understood as political propagandistic content) and would approach a recent revolutionary mythology, highlighting the human pattern of communism. More specifically, Ceaușescu asked the Counsel of Culture, the Section of Propaganda and Ideological Commission of the Central Committee of the RCP to follow the way in which the film fulfilled its pedagogical and ideological function of idealizing the communist society.

Thus, after the "Theses of July 1971", the culture was monitored closely by the party. The neo-Stalinist art of the '70s-'80s was dominated by films with political content and historical films concerning the national epic and the communist underground resistance, the cult of the communist party and the cult of Nicolae Ceaușescu's personality.

In the communist period one of the most important forms to control the manner in which the cultural information reached the public was the institutionalized censorship. It had the role of controlling and verifying the way the authority's directives were put into practice. The fear of being sanctioned or repressed associated with the desire of social and professional growth determined self-censorship, the most dangerous form of censorship. The mechanisms of censorship had the aim of producing a culture compatible with ideological exigencies, with the will of the party-state and of the couple Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu

<sup>2</sup> Film adaptation of Ioan Slavici's novel with the same title, directed by Victor Iliu, 1956, of a rare plasticity that could be found only later in the film adaptation of Liviu Rebreanu's novel *Forest of the Hanged*, directed by Liviu Ciulei, 1965.

(Petcu 1999, 12-15; Fiiceac 1999, Nistor 2011).

The most severe form of censorship was directed toward the artistic films, given the fact that the couple Ceaușescu manifested a special attention for cinematographic productions considered forms of propaganda and communist pedagogy.

The institution that watched over the application of censorship in cinema was the Counsel of Socialist Culture and Education. Its activity was based on the Theses of July (1971) and its 17 proposals stated by the Romanian communist leader. This institution acted through the Houses of Film that coordinated the film production. The Counsel of Socialist Culture and Education was established in “Casa Scânteii” and in the cinematographic studios “Buftea”. After the film project was approved, the texts of the scripts were analyzed and at censors’ indications (in most cases) some parts of those texts had to be changed. The delegates of the Counsel supervised the filmed scenes on the sets; after analyzing them, the films were transmitted to the clerks of the state who gave their last approval over the public presentation of the films (Popescu 2011). *Secția de Propagandă și Agitație a Partidului Comunist [Section of Propaganda and Agitation of the Communist Party]* had censorship attributions, along with Ceaușescu couple who had a say in the broadcast of the films.

While during the period 1949–1963 in Romania the average of two feature films were filmed, we may talk about a consistent film production after 1970, when about eight to ten films per year were shot. The peak of the filmic production was the year 1985 when the houses of films made fifteen films that covered many genres: the political film, the historical (applications of the Ceaușist project of National epics) and entertainment films, including film adaptations (see the promotional presentations in journal *Cinema* (1963–1989) and *Almanahul Cinema*).

### **“The Beautiful Era” in the Romanian Kingdom. Several Considerations**

During the national-communist period (1971–1989) the cultural policies of the Romanian Communist Party conferred a significant importance to film adaptations inspired by literary writings on La Belle Époque (1881–1914 in the case of Romanian

Kingdom<sup>3</sup>). From the ideological perspective, Ceaușescu’s regime (1965–1989) favoured cultural products that offered arguments for supporting protochronist theories, exaggerating the dimensions of the “pioneering” phenomenon of the Romanian cultural creation, the theory of Romanian Europeanity and devotion of cultural elites toward the Romanian identity project. Meanwhile, this film genre became means to supporting the alleged inertia of La Belle Époque authorities and political, as well as cultural elites, as films like *Adela*, *Felix and Otilia*, *Between Parallel Mirrors*, *November, the Last Ball*<sup>4</sup> point out.

From the perspective of national-communist ideology, La Belle Époque was a period that offered arguments for supporting the protochronist theories regarding the Romanian contributions to axiology and technological progress of humankind in general and especially of Europe. In protochronism the dimension of the Romanian pioneering was overrated, along with elites’ devotion concerning the Romanian identity project. Among cultural and scientific events invoked were the following: Emil Racoviță’s expedition to the North Pole (within the Belgian expedition 1897-1899) and putting the basis of speleology as a science (the first institute of bio-speleology was opened in 1920), Traian Vuia’s (Pioneer of world aviation 1872-1950) and Aurel Vlaicu’s

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<sup>3</sup> 1881 is the year when the Constitution of the Romanian state was modified. From that moment the head of the state, the Prince Carol I of Hohenzollern was named King, and Romania an independent principality and a constitutional monarchy (Romanian Kingdom). We consider this event the debut of La Belle Époque in the history of the Romanian state, when Transylvania was a province within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, benefitting from a cultural and economic substantial advance compared to the Romanian Kingdom. The Great Unification of 1918 is a historical process of uniting Romanian Provinces – first Bessarabia with the Romanian Kingdom, and then Transylvania, forming thus Romania. The King Mihai I was forced to abdicate on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1947, event followed by the proclamation of the Romanian Popular Republic, a communist state.

<sup>4</sup> We haven’t analyzed the film *Ultima noapte de dragoste [The Last Night of Love]*, directed in 1980 by Sergiu Nicolaescu, as it is not a significant artistic film for the Romanian cinema and for the themes we explore, and it only uses motives from C. Petrescu’s novel.

inventions (pioneer of European aviation 1882–1913), Tristan Tzara's Dadaism (cultural and nonconformist movement constituted in Zürich 1916), and "Dacism" as the source of Romanian ethnical theories<sup>5</sup>. Nevertheless, it is true that the mentioned period (1878–1914) was a fruitful one for writers like Ioan Slavici, Ion Creangă, Mihai Eminescu, Ion L. Caragiale, Alexandru Vlahuță, George Coșbuc, Alexandru Macedonski, Ștefan Octavian Iosif, Dimitrie Anghel; it was also the period when other notable writers had their literary debut: Mihail Sadoveanu, Tudor Arghezi, Mateiu Caragiale, and avant-garde writers. The first feature film was made (1912) and some heroines of Romanian feminism appeared (Sofia Nădejde, Eliza Popescu, League of Romanian Women), as well as heroes of Romanian socialism (Zamfir Arbore, Constantin Mile, Ion and Sofia Nădejde, Vasile Morțun. Alexandru Ionescu, Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea). However, the film of Ceaușescu's period conceals the negative aspects of the era, such is the anti-Semitism in universities of the Romanian Kingdom, as well as cultural-institutional success and Western like urbanization achieved by King Carol I (1866–1914).

La Belle Époque justified the theory of Romanian Europeanity in the vision of communist ideologists although there are some other approaches on the specificity of that period, such is the case of the concept of "pseudo-hegemonic nationalism" (Copilaș 2015, 149sq). At the same time, the communist films on the idealized historical period projected a modern/European appearance due to lavish interiors, garments and social habits, attempting to underline the inertia, indifference and egotism of authorities, political and socio-economic elites of those times. According to the scripts, corruption was a specific phenomenon of capitalist society. The idea of double cultural periphery of that world was visible especially in the last communist film (*November, the Last*

*Ball*<sup>6</sup>). The action takes place in a town where nothing happens, and according to other film adaptations, that entire world is transfixed, mimetic and contemplative, incapable of authentic modernization, and indifferent toward the suffering of their neighbour.

The first decade and a half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was culturally speaking in Romania the closest for what La Belle Époque stands for. That period was an era of paradoxes, as the Romanian society had a retarded democracy, while the cultural pioneers of avant-garde found little space for their ideas. The capital of the Romanian Kingdom was a hectic city, but the centre of Parisian architectural inspiration was surrounded by periphery, slums as a gregarious universe. As Dan C. Mihăilescu noted: "And yet (...) we are talking about a Romania where leu was better than the French franc and where in the 1900s Bucharest were sending help to Paris flooded by the Seine, when on the Clemenței Street people were reading *Figaro* while having their coffee, and letters travelled for one day to any corner of Europe" (Mihăilescu 2003, 25–26). Hedonism of elites, leisure of the small bourgeoisie, and the "democratic hedonism" (Stephen Escritt) had its own social places, as the café and the summer garden. But beyond the appearances of the Romanian state, the mimed modernity in elites' habits was refrained by traditionalism. Orient was still present, while Occidentalism was yet an aspiration.

### Cultural Elites and Film Makers in the Romanian Communist System

In communist times some literary works were preferred to others in order to adapt them for the public, especially those of the "recovered" writers like Mihail Sadoveanu (1880–1961), George Călinescu (1899–1965) and Camil Petrescu (1894–1957) who made a pact with the regime due to their left political orientation before the Second World War. These writers had a critical attitude toward the capitalist system and were not involved in literary circles associated with the right extremism. Then, during the so-called proletariat dictatorship, they became the animators of the communist culture and responded to the political

<sup>5</sup> Cultural and political nationalist movement based on unrealistic theories of historian Nicolae Densușeanu published in his work *Dacia Preistorică* (edited posthumously in 1913), according to which Romanians were the followers of a primordial people. This work became the source of the protochronist movement during the communist regime – cultural and ideological basis for national-communism. See Grancea 2009, 197–222.

<sup>6</sup> Film adaptation of Mihail Sadoveanu's novel *The Place Where Nothing Happened*, script by Șerban Velescu and Dan Pița, directed by Dan Pița; image by Călin Ghibu; music by Aurelian Octav Popa, premiered in 1989.

commands. Thus, culture, and especially literature and film applied the communist ideology, starting with proletkultism and ending with “Ceaușist epic” (Negrici 2006, 31, 137, Macrea-Toma 2010, Vasile 2014).

Dutifulness of cultural elite was rewarded by the communist regime (during Gheorghiu Dej period 1948–1965) with a consistent system of financial gratification, social privileges (access to great “living space”, access to opportunities for creation and leisure), prestige due to awarded titles (which included financial aspects) as “artist of the people”, “artist emeritus”. During Ceaușescu’s regime, the cultural elites, especially those involved in the cinematographic production, were enjoying exceptional salaries compared to those of intellectuals from academic area.

Studying a production file explains the obedience of film makers toward the national-communist regime and the feeble character of resistance through culture. Thus, from the production file of the film *Between Parallel Mirrors*<sup>7</sup> (File 338, vol. I, II), in the section “Estimations”, we find out that the payment of the actors was raised compared to the previous general estimation (April 30, 1978) due to the “Protocol 223” from May 5, 1978. According to the latter, the film was expected to enter the production period on May 16, 1978 and the standard copy of the film would be September 30, 1978. In order to make the film, the house of film had to pay the Center of Cinematographic Production the sum of 4.640.640 lei (Ibidem, vol. I, 1). In another document it was settled that the payment of salaries for that period of filming was 529.500 lei (Ibidem, vol. I, annex 9). The payments for the leading role, the director and the script writer were equivalents for a car or even an apartment in those days<sup>8</sup>.

### Film Adaptation and “Social Criticism”

<sup>7</sup> Film adaptation of Camil Petrescu’s novel *The Last Night of Love, The First Night of War*, directed by Mircea Veroiu, 1978.

<sup>8</sup> In Romania of 1978 the average salary was 2.344 lei or 2.011 lei after the taxes <http://www.mmuncii.ro/pub/imagenanager/images/file/Statistica/Statistici%20lunare/s38-90.pdf>. (Accessed on 26 April 2017). In 1978 the exchange rate for leu-dollar was 4,56 lei/dollar see [www.bnr.ro/apage.aspx?pid=404&actId=22706](http://www.bnr.ro/apage.aspx?pid=404&actId=22706) (Accessed on 26 April 2017).

Under the Ceaușist regime only film adaptations passed the ideological barrier; and among them those that presented events about the First World War were the most favoured and those that described the modernization process of the Romanian state as late and contradictory. Besides, the generation of film makers of the ’70s had opportunities of being noticed due to international awards. These filmic productions were art films, a valve with no subliminal messages that would affect the discourse of the national-communist ideology.

Accepting the compromise for film makers supposed introducing some episodes and/or sequences of social history in the cinematographic productions. Sequences of social conflicts, images of rural and urban worlds, episodes that unveil the huge social difference and the cultural gap were usually required. For example, see the incident between a peasant and the bailiff where the peasant is deadly wounded in *Adela*<sup>9</sup> so that it slightly affects the leisure of small bourgeoisie. More scenes of socio-political protest are introduced in the film *Between Parallel Mirrors*. Actually the director used Camil Petrescu’s narration to presents two action plans: Gheorghidui’s personal drama, the main hero, the poor intellectual animated by socialist axiology and victim of the inherited fortune on one hand, and the evolution of a leftist intellectual who becomes an anarchist before Romania entered the war on another hand. While Gheorghidui prepares to join the army and separates from his wife, attracted by the Bucharest high-life, the other hero becomes a martyr of socialist faith. Due to such excesses and historical errors (anarchist attempts took place in Romania only during the first years of the inter-war period, while sabotages of the war machine were plotted only by communists during the Second World War) the film adaptation is a failure regarding the intended message, but it is saved by the atmosphere of a “jolly apocalypse”, specific to the pre-war period and elitist milieus.

Another level of social criticism supposed the subjective presentation and sometimes even caricature like and naturalistic image of the social structures of Romanian capitalism: an amoral middle class (bourgeoisie, small land owners and merchants, upstarts with uncertain social origins). Negative attitudes like

<sup>9</sup> Film adaptation of Garabet Ibrăileanu’s novel *Adela*, directed by Mircea Veroiu, 1985.

avarice, unscrupulous traits, absence of empathy, exploitation are illustrated by old tightwads of Honoré de Balzac's inspiration, people involved in illicit economic activities. We refer to octogenarians Costache Giurgiuveanu and Simion Tulea in the film *Felix and Otilia*<sup>10</sup>, the mayor's help Vasiliță Mazu in *November, The Last Ball* – characters that disinherit their own relatives. The list continues with parvenus like the lawyer Stănică Rațiu, who after robbing his father in law and provoking him a heart attack, divorces his wife, remarries a courtesan and enters politics; new upstarts subdue the national interest to the interest groups (see Lumânăraru, an illiterate opportunist and business partner with Gheorghidiu in *Between Parallel Mirrors*). These social groups that accumulate capital and profit by any means like Vilfredo Pareto's foxes are opposed to aristocracy (like in Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa' narration *Il Gattopardo*), an old social structure that seems to be unaware of social changes in these films. We mention some representatives of this social class: land owner Leonida Pascalopol from *Felix and Otilia* and Ion Cantacuzin in *November, the Last Ball*. Although rich and responsible for his peasants, Pascalopol is careless regarding their wellbeing; he is just a blasé aristocrat, eager to win Otilia's affection. Another aristocrat, Ion Cantacuzin is the renowned personality of a provincial town and tries to observe habits and traditions specific to his social background (an affair with an old general's wife, which can't cause any drama in a "place where nothing happens"). However, the aristocrat and his lover educate a young lady, Daria Mazu, transforming her into a Bovaric lady; after her tragic death, Cantacuzin leads an empty mechanical life.

The portrayal of characters is done in the mentioned films using combinations of close-up, flashback and *mise en scène* specific to silent adaptations of Balzac (Abel 1984, 98-100; Baron 2008, 35-42) with the descriptive role of camera movements (both for physiognomy and the background). The action takes place in claustrophobic spaces, in overcrowded rooms with useless things, signs of pathological avarice. The film *Felix and Otilia* maintains the traits of aesthetics from the novel: interest for deviant psychic processes that are based on background and heredity, such is alienation,

senility. Even the aristocrats Pascalopol and Cantacuzin are presented with their formal gestures, lack of authentic passion, rituals of habits.

In *Adela* the characters are presented in impressionist sequences; they oscillate between Proustian mechanisms of memory and leisure of the world of small land owners, a similar space to Chekhov's habits in Nikita Mikhalkov's films (see *An Unfinished Piece for Mechanical Piano*, 1977, *A Few Days from the Life of I.I. Oblomov*, 1979). Hedonisms are refined, intellectuals seem devoured by constant passions for books, cultural obsessions; they assume only the passion to reflect and meditate. Thus, the professor Emil Codrescu, a character of Victorian extraction, after hesitating to live a passion based on elective affinities, breaks up with Adela, the young woman in love with him. Despite introducing a short episode about the social difference and indifference, the director offered a film adaptation almost untouched by ideology in a decade of austerity and ideological control. The film abounds in rural landscapes and music of those times is used as soundtrack. Beautiful women are dressed like in paintings of French impressionists – images of delicacy and elegance<sup>11</sup>. While the platonic love between Adela and the professor remains impossible, the love of Adela's mother for professor's war comrade is mutual so that the older couple seems closer to the sensitivities of the new century than to the Victorian norms. These characters resemble another group of people in love crushed by personal and group principles of the Victorian system concerning social norms in rich milieu and middle class background in Edith Wharton's film adaptation *The Age of Innocence* about the high society of New York in 1870, directed by Martin Scorsese, 1993.

In another film adaptation of a book written before national-communism (1932) – *The Revolt*<sup>12</sup> – La Belle Époque is just a

<sup>10</sup> Film adaptation of Călinescu's novel *Otilia's Enigma* (1938), directed by Iulian Mihu, 1972.

<sup>11</sup> Similar poetical images we find in the British romantic drama *Howards End*, script based on E.M. Foster's novel published in 1910, directed by James Ivory; actors Emma Thompson and Anthony Hopkins, 1992.

<sup>12</sup> The film adaptation of Liviu Rebreanu's (1885-1944) novel (1932) who was recovered by communist regime so that the film presents a ridiculous portrait to the political class of that period.



background specific for indifferent elites regarding social suffering. The black and white film has several exceptional sequences like the traditional dancing of the peasants that predicts the violence of the revolt and the following retort of the authorities. The life style of great land owners is considered an effect of social exploitation, an unnatural cohabitation between the elites' Europeanity and the peasant's primitivism that rose against the system in 1907.

These feature films present love as destined to fade as if love was an unfulfilled feeling due to social backgrounds and socio-cultural differences; routine and lack of responsibility overcome elective affinities and love. Felix and Otilia can't be together due to their social precarious status, while professor Codrescu doesn't have the courage to be loved by young Adela and doesn't dare to fructify this last romantic offer of his life. The couple Gheorghidui in *Between Parallel Mirrors* is separated as the wife becomes the slave of the social success. Daria Mazu is abandoned to common life in a place where nothing happens after aristocrat Cantacuzin reconstructs her personality based on the standards of another social class in *November, the Last Ball*. This film was produced and launched just before the outburst of anticommunist revolution (December 1989) and it is a faithful film adaptation with the stylistic touch of a consecrated director. The irony of fate made that the original title of the film, exactly as the literary work that inspired it – *The Place Where Nothing Happens* – was changed by the censorship into *November, the Last Ball* because of the traditional ball in November that offers the solving of tragic tensions and hidden conflicts.

### The Transylvanian Town in La Belle Époque

Transylvanian specific life, a region integrated in the Austro-Hungarian space, was the subject of some film adaptations of the writer and Greek-Catholic priest Ion Agârbiceanu. We analyze *Stone Wedding* (1972)<sup>13</sup>, *Spirit of Gold* (1974)<sup>14</sup> and *Flames on Treasures* (1988)<sup>15</sup>, film

adaptations produced during the "cultural revolution" of national-communism. The films seem untouched by the cultural project of the era; concerning the specific condemnation of wealth in general and of illicit wealth in particular, we may state that the Christian ethics and the socialist converge.

In the mentioned films almost all events take place in the mining multicultural town Roșia Montană before 1900; the films present the architecture, habits, daily events and life standards of mining towns in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Although clothes and customs are specific to a multicultural world, the film appears to ignore the existence of other ethno-cultural communities. In Roșia Montană, in the centre of the town are two churches – the Roman-Catholic and the Unitarian, the other churches are situated in the periphery<sup>16</sup>. Only in *Flames on Treasures* we notice the ethno-cultural diversity of the small mining town.

*Stone Wedding* is a film made of two parts: *Fefelega* and *At a Wedding*. The first part is resumed to Maria's sad life (nicknamed Fefelega) and her struggle to keep alive her last daughter (after her other children died in pre-adolescence). Her daily work and aspects of passing rituals are presented in scenes of a special sobriety; Maria has to sell her horse, the source of the living, to bury her daughter in a bridal dress - a popular custom for young unmarried women. The image and the sound transmit everything in a film with few uttered words. The interior of the house plays an important role in accomplishing an essentialized cinematographic language: the objects are placed symmetrically; the order of her small household is aseptic where only the sound of a clock highlights the feeling of loneliness and premonition of death.

The second part of the film follows a conflicting situation ended with a tragic death. All the significances of the film are built around an arranged wedding, a couple of not matching grooms. The end is atypical for such films: while the bride is abducted by the singer, a deserter from the band of musicians is killed by

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Directed by Mircea Mureșan in 1965 presenting the riot from Amara, Romanian Kingdom.

<sup>13</sup> Script written and directed by Mircea Veroiu and Dan Pița, image by Iosif Demian, Music by Dorin Liviu Zaharia, Dan Andrei Aldea, montage by Dan Naum, main actress Leopoldina Bălănuță.

<sup>14</sup> The same team of film makers.

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<sup>15</sup> Script Ion Brad based on the story *Archangels* (1914), directed by Nicolae Mărgineanu, image Vlad Păunescu, main actor Mircea Albulescu.

<sup>16</sup> The town has not only an Orthodox and Roman-Catholic cemeteries, but also Unitarian, Greek-Catholic and Reformed cemeteries.

furious wedding guests. As in *Fefelega*, few words are actually uttered, the gestures becoming the dominant language. The music created a strange and mystical aura for the sudden death of the deserter, especially in the perspective of an annulled marriage due to an old love affair between the musician and the bride. Both films seem to surprise in documentary like images aspects of the background and customs, traditions of those times and the people both in times of sorrow and celebration (Căliman 2011, 290-1; Caranfil 2003, 75, 146; Corciovescu, Mihăilescu 2010, 111; Vijeu 2012, 48).

The films on the Transylvanian town recreate the historical atmosphere, with its social places (pub, shop), places where to meet damned people, people who live between tradition and modernity. A bicycle in the commercial area of the town is not a surprising event for inhabitants, a detail that explains their familiarity with modern habits. On the other hand, tragedies are consumed quietly, intimately; people are not solidary, and only ceremonies as passing rites attract curious people (see the wedding in *Stone Wedding*, burials in *Spirit of Gold*). In all these films, the white horse plays a significant role, as he is Maria's partner, while in other films he is considered a symbol of ill fortune so that the white horse becomes a psychopomp agent, the messenger of death.

The film *Spirit of Gold*<sup>17</sup> is a film adaptation of Agârbiceanu's two writings (*Stir of Baths*, 1909) and *The Chest* (1910), being a pedagogical exercise due to its subject – individual tragedies triggered by the “mirage and pathology of gaining gold that leads to cruelty, crime and madness” (Râpeanu 2005, 121). The film consists of two parts: the first one presents the thief of gold seduced, exploited and then killed by the inn keeper's wife, while the second part is focused on the tale of the sexagenarian Clemente who murdered his wives one after another in his thirst for their dowries. Clemente was a desirable bachelor in the community known for his chest with gold, but eager to discredit his younger wives' rapacity, he simulated sickness and death so that they would discover a chest full of stones and then,

surprised by his voice, would die of a heart attack. While in the first part the greed of the inn keeper's wife attracted and killed thieves of gold, in the second part voracity was used as a lure to attract the feminine gold diggers into a death list.

At the end of the “cultural revolution” of national-communism, the film adaptation *Flames on Treasures* was launched. The main hero of the film is Rodean, director of the richest mine in Roșia Montană, an egotistic Midas who spent money to demonstrate his wealth even in the new casino, but he was pitiless with those who tried to steal from his mine. A bad investment in galleries with no gold however brought him to ruin, everything being sold, all the symbols of his leisure and status, including the pompous carriage from Vienna and the walking stiff with a lion of massive gold.

Another hero, the thief of gold Mârza has a similar story with the one from *Spirit of Gold*. A relatively young sensual inn keeper's wife seduced him and offered him the maps to get the gold from places less known, creating the illusion of partnership, but the woman decided to kill him with the help of her servant after Mârza had cleaned up Rodean of money and goods at the casino. The local casino was the place where “jolly apocalypses” were taking place, together with similar private events of rich people from big cities, expressing the specific leisure of a “beautiful era” when the project of national identity didn't deny vehemently the federative one.

This last film also presents the other ethno-cultural communities only through the repressive element: police and representatives of local administration are only of Hungarian origins. However, the narrow streets of Roșia Montană and cemeteries are palpable realities for the ethno-cultural mix.

### Brief Conclusion

From 1971 to 1989 almost all Romanian films, regardless of their genre were affected by propaganda both in their message and artistic appearance. Nevertheless, film adaptations seem to have had a special status with the mentioning of the fact that the spirit of La Belle Époque was tainted in these filmic productions, given the communist approach on times, mores and character. In our opinion only two of the analyzed films eluded the ideological context of

<sup>17</sup> Script written and directed by Mircea Veroiu and Dan Pița; image: Iosif Demian; music: Dorin Liviu Zaharia, Dan Andrei Aldea; montage: Dan Naum; actors: Eliza Petrăchescu, Ernest Maftei.

the national-communist period – *Stone Wedding* and *Spirit of Gold* – probably due to the beginning of the small Ceaușist cultural revolution. As a result, not all details of the censorship mechanisms were put into practice, and not all party's indications concerning the politization of the artistic discourse reached the destination. However, the fact that the two directors – Dan Pița and Mircea Veroiu – made some compromises during the national-communist period is telling of the conformism and the need of safety.

Aesthetics of mentioned film adaptations is referential – some films like *Felix and Otilia*<sup>18</sup>, *Stone Wedding*<sup>19</sup>, *Spirit of Gold*, *Adela* are listed as art films, and this was possible due to the fact that film adaptation represented an oasis for film makers during national-communism. Moreover, the spectator could compare in a subliminal manner the standard of daily life of the town during La Belle Époque with the monotonous, gray and hopeless life in Ceaușescu's period. The objects, the historical colour had inevitably a nostalgic feeling for those times. The fact that these films satisfied the protochronist exigencies of the communist regime, as well as the need of evading of the Romanian spectators is surprising even nowadays.

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<sup>18</sup> The film was awarded "Premio de selezione" at the International Film Festival in Venice (1972) and the Prize of Excellence for the system "Graphis color" at the contest UNIATEC in Salerno (1974).

<sup>19</sup> The film was awarded the "Diploma of Honour" at the international film festival, Cannes, 1972.

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## GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE - SEARCHING FOR A NEW AUDIENCE FOR THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM

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**Abstract:** *Today's technological opportunities open new promotional gates for museums around the world, many of which are free of charge. This is the case with the Google Arts & Culture project, which offers museums the opportunity to be part of the largest and most solid online arts platform. In 2014, the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu was part of the first "wave" of such institutions in Romania, which decided to present some of its works on this platform and continue to enrich the visual experiences of users to this day.*

*The Google Cultural Institute has provided the museum with a number of patented technologies besides the platform itself: Art Camera technology, Street view technology, Museum View technology. These technologies enabled complete virtual tours for three of the administration buildings in the Brukenthal National Museum complex (The Brukenthal Palace, The History Museum: -Altemberger House-, Natural History Museum), as well as Art Camera photography of over 25 paintings from the European Art and Romanian Art Collections of the Brukenthal National Museum.*

**Key words:** *museum marketing, Art Camera technology, Street view technology, Google Museum View technology.*

**Rezumat:** *Posibilitățile tehnologice din ziua de azi deschid noi porți de promovare pentru muzeele din întreaga lume, multe dintre acestea fiind și gratuite. Așa se întâmplă și cu proiectul Google Arts & Culture, care oferă muzeelor posibilitatea de a face parte din cea mai mare și solidă platformă din lume dedicată artelor. În anul 2014 Muzeul Național Brukenthal din Sibiu a făcut parte din primul "val" de instituții de acest fel din România care a decis să își prezintă parte din opere pe această platformă și continuă să îmbogățească experiențele vizuale ale utilizatorilor până în ziua de azi.*

*Institutul Cultural Google a pus la dispoziție muzeului, pe lângă platforma propriu-zisă, o serie de tehnologii patentate dintre care amintim: tehnologia Art Camera, tehnologia Street view. Aceste tehnologii au permis realizarea unor tururi virtuale complete pentru 3 dintre clădirile de administrare (Palatul Brukenthal, Muzeul de Istorie: Casa Altemberger, Muzeul de Istorie Naturală), dar și fotografierea prin tehnologia Art Camera a peste 25 de tablouri din colecțiile de Artă Europeană și Artă Românească a Muzeului Național Brukenthal.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *marketing muzeal, tehnologia Google Art Camera, tehnologia Google Street view, tehnologia Google Museum View*

The original name of the project launched by Google was *Google Art Project*, released in 2011, with a pretty simple concept in the background. *Google Street View* technology was to be used to capture images inside museums to create virtual tours where people could go through museum galleries around the world, also known today as *Museum View* (The essential difference to *Google Street View* technology is the image capture

quality, which is achieved through more performance-efficient cameras in terms of image resolution and image noise, resulting in a much better image quality). In that period of time visitors could view the paintings and see a variety of information about different works. Initially Google made a partnership with 17 museums from 9 countries. On October 10, 2012 42 new exhibitions were launched in the Cultural Institute (Mark Yoshitake, *Bringing history to life*, Google Official Blog, published on October 10, 2012, available at <https://googleblog.blogspot.ro/2012/10/bringing->

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\*Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu,  
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history-to-life.html, accessed December 2, 2017), already having 150 partner museums in 40 countries. At that time the project was described as "an effort to make cultural material accessible to all and to keep it digitally to educate and inspire future generations" (Google Cultural Institute, Frequently Asked Questions, available at <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/about/>, accessed January 4, 2014). Nowadays the mission of this project didn't change too much and described as "to bring the world's cultural heritage online by building free tools and technologies for the cultural sector to showcase and share their gems, making them more widely accessible to a global audience" (Google Cultural Institute, available at <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/about/partners/>, accessed May 2, 2018). In June 2013 the project included over 6 million articles - photos, videos and documents (*From Sutton Hoo to the soccer pitch: culture with a click*, Google Official Blog, published on June 25, 2013, available at <https://googleblog.blogspot.ro/2013/06/from-sutton-hoo-to-soccer-pitch-culture.html>, accessed December 3, 2017). The Cultural Institute has collaborated with a number of institutions to make online the exhibition and archive content, including British Museum (*British Museum*, Google Cultural Institute, available at <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/partner/the-british-museum>, accessed December 3, 2017), Yad Vashem (*Yad Vashem: Remembering the Holocaust*, Google Cultural Institute, available at <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/about/yadvashem/>, accessed December 3, 2017), Galileo Museum in Florence (*The Museo Galileo*, Google Cultural Institute, available at <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/partner/museo-galileo>, accessed December 3, 2017), Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum (*Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum*, Google Cultural Institute, available at <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/partner/auschwitz-birkenau-state-museum>, accessed December 3, 2017) and the Polish History Museum from Warsaw (*Poland Joins Google Cultural Institute*, Culture.pl, published on October 11, 2012, available at <http://culture.pl/en/event/poland-joins-google-cultural-institute>, accessed December 8, 2017). The earliest important project was the publication of a search archive and a series of digital exhibitions that allowed people to access Nelson Mandela's personal journals and manuscript sketches belonging to them for the continuation of

his autobiography *Walk to Freedom*, partner with "Nelson Mandela Memory Centre" (Mark Yoshitake, *Explore Mandela's archives online*, Google Official Blog, published on March 27 2012, available at <https://googleblog.blogspot.ro/2012/03/explore-mandelas-archives-online.html>, accessed December 4, 2017).

In 2014, the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu was part of the first "wave" of Romanian institutions that showed its most important works on this platform and continues to enrich the visual experiences of users to this day (*Colecții de muzee și instituții de artă din România pot fi în premieră vizitate pe Google Cultural Institute*, published on November 25, 2014, available at <http://artindex.ro/2014/11/25/colectii-din-muzee-si-institutii-de-arta-din-romania-pot-fi-in-premiera-vizitate-pe-google-cultural-institute/>, accessed December 8, 2017). At the time, the visitors were able to explore the universe of the Romanian village through unique folk art items from the Romanian Peasant Museum collection or the houses exhibited in the ASTRA National Museum Complex on the *Google Cultural Institute* platform. Along with the exhibits of the 3 museums, exhibitions are available on various themes of associations and foundations: Violin with Horn, the Golescu Vila, the Enescu House, the Wooden Church from the Urși village, or the Steam Train from Vișeu. In the years since its inception, the project has expanded and evolved to include much more than art, at present Google has over 1,000 partners all over the world.

In addition to museums, historical buildings and objects associated to them, the *Google Arts & Culture* includes embellishments and various Street Art projects, Exhibitions, Celebrities that have marked the world we live in, Artists, and also the opportunity to create Virtual Exhibitions. In addition to all of these content visitors can enjoy the most remarkable tourist attractions of global importance from the most exotic corners of our planet. In this way, the Google platform is reaching its purpose of making culture accessible to anyone with an internet connection.

In the early stages of the project, a series of questions were raised about the need for such a platform for the Brukenthal National Museum, given that the museum had a virtual tour at that time and part of the works could already be viewed on the museum website. Thus, we identified a number of quality benefits that the *Google Arts & Culture* offered, firstly the presence on the platform is completely free and

does not imply any obligation on behalf of the museum regarding the number of pieces that must be present on the platform; secondly the Google platform is built very intuitive, modern and has a great visibility for the general public. Google has also made available to the museum a series of unique technologies in the world: *Google Street View*, *Google Museum View* and *Google Art Camera*. Last but not least, the implementation of the project did not involve a large number of employees of the museum and the implementation period was pretty short (around four months), while the content is continuously improved. In conclusion, we have identified a number of solid arguments that have led to the involvement of the Brukenthal National Museum in the project and the results appeared very soon.

We were discussing the technologies provided by the *Google Arts & Culture* to improve the visual experience of the platform users. Google has provided people with the opportunity to navigate through the museum art galleries interiors by the *Museum View* technology; select works of art and explore them in detail (where available) by the *Art Camera* technology; but also explore the courtyards of the museum buildings by the *Street view* technology. Even though the *Street view* is around for a long period of time now it is worth mentioning that this was available for public spaces only, so the partnership between the museum and Google created new opportunities for the virtual visitors to make a better impression of what they were about to see in the Brukenthal National Museum. The *Museum View* technology allows for a 360<sup>0</sup> virtual tour, with floor plans and information about the location. Visitors can jump from the virtual tour directly into the high resolution artwork image that contains additional information regarding that item. All of the technologies mentioned above enabled people to visit the courtyards and interiors of the Brukenthal Palace, the History Museum - the Altemberger House - and the Museum of Natural Sciences. This information can be accessed from the *Google Arts & Culture*, but also directly while visiting the city of Sibiu on the Google Maps Street View platform.

The ultra-high resolution technology, also used in the Brukenthal National Museum, allows for high resolution photographs of art works to be realised resulting in a photograph with a level of detail normally inaccessible to the human eye. The Google Art Camera itself is a state of the art system, focused on making the system easy to use that can allow the capture of one painting in less

than an hour. The technique involves a specialized camera that produces a large array of photographs of a single painting. After the capturing of the photographs, the resulting images are stacked into a single photo that contains about 7 million pixels (depending on the physical dimensions of the painting). Having such a high resolution image one can easily study the details of the brush stroke or the time patina of the painting captured. When this technology was made available to the museum, 40 paintings were photographed and can be viewed on the project website ([artsandculture.google.com](http://artsandculture.google.com)). The paintings captures by the *Art Camera* are all part of the European Art painting collection, but also the Romanian Art painting collection, including masterpieces of art; as *Ecce Homo* by Tiziano Vecellio da Cadore (Available at [artsandculture.google.com/asset/ecce-homo/\\_gHyAhSsFC6MdQ](http://artsandculture.google.com/asset/ecce-homo/_gHyAhSsFC6MdQ), accessed May 8, 2017).

The *Google Arts & Culture* makes available a number of statistical data to the museum that help us better understand the behaviour of the people visiting our exhibits on the Google platform. We can view the number of people that visited our museum in the past 7, 30, 90 days or since the very first post on Google. We can also see in what period of time we had more visitors, from what platform (phone, tablet or desktop), from which countries in the entire world we had more visitors, or what article from our page has the most views. This is an extremely useful tool to help collaborators better understand their virtual visitors. In 2017, the Brukenthal National Museum's page on the *Google Arts & Culture* was visited by more than 60,000 unique users, 5000 visited the main page, and the articles pages were visited by over 160,000 people. We also found out that 26247 views were from the United States, and the most viewed object in our collection is *Ecce Homo* - Tiziano with 15,148 views, followed by *Street work in Vitre* - Nicholas Grigorescu with 12654 views.

Following the implementation of the project, which is continually being improved, three offices of the Brukenthal National Museum can be visited by *Street View* and *Museum View* technologies; 40 paintings were captured by the *Art Camera* technology and another 40 were added at a high quality. All of these arguments make us continue to promote the Brukenthal National Museum on the *Google Arts & Culture* platform by adding new museum material and virtual exhibitions in the near future.

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**RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE ART COLLECTIONS  
OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM (JULY 2016 – AUGUST 2017)**

**Iulia MESEA\*, Alexandru Gh. SONOC\*\***

Administrators of the collections: Laura Arizancu, Adrian Luca,  
Iulia Mesea, Cristina Mihu, Daniela Moroşan,  
Alexandru Gh. Sonoc, Robert Strebeli

**Abstract:** *Showing permanent attention to the patrimony, its administration and to the development of the collections the Brukenthal National Museum has continued to enrich its collections. Since the last report, in July 2017, up to now (July 2018) more than 440 works of painting, graphic arts, decorative arts, sculpture, furniture etc. entered the collections of the museum. Following the tradition of the last years, many donations come from contemporary artists who exhibited their works in the museum in temporary exhibitions.*

*Some of the artists who donated their works are (in alphabetic order): Sieglinde Bottesch, Ioan Chişu, Rodica Chişu, Tiberiu Coşovan, Ilie Mitrea, Ioan Muntean, Andrei Popa, Cătălin Precup, Florica Prevenda, Constantin Severin, Alexandru Trifu etc.*

*The most important contribution not only of this year but also the most important of the last decades comes from Dr. Elisa Cantaragiu. This valuable collection comprises over 350 works of paintings, graphics, drawings, sculptures, decorative art (and a large documentation about the works and artists) signed by famous Romanian artists, most of them active in the Romanian diaspora: Nicolae Maniu, Ion Vlad, Corneliu Baba, Magdalena Rădulescu, Jana Cernătescu, Marcel Chirnoagă, Eugen Popă, Sorin Ilfoveanu. Other donors were George Şeban, who donated works by Casia Csehi and Ana Golici, Professor Sabin Adrian Luca, Deputy Director Dana Roxana Hrib Ph.D. etc.*

**Keywords:** *donations, Brukenthal National Museum, art collections, contemporary art, Magdalena Rădulescu, Nicolae Maniu, Ion Vlad, the donation of dr. Elisa Cantaragiu*

**Rezumat:** *În perioada iulie 2017 – iulie 2018, probând acelaşi interes în dezvoltarea patrimoniului pe care îl administrează, conservă, cercetează şi valorifică expoziţional, Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal şi-a îmbogăţit colecţiile de pictură, grafică, artă decorativă, mobilier, sculptură etc. cu peste 440 de piese. Urmând tradiţia ultimilor ani, o mare parte a pieselor intrate în colecţii au fost donaţii ale artiştilor contemporani care au organizat expoziţii în muzeu. O serie de piese provin din donaţii ale unor colecţionari, iar altele din partea unor particulari.*

*Artiştii care au donat lucrări sunt: Sieglinde Bottesch, Ioan Chişu, Rodica Chişu, Tiberiu Coşovan, Ilie Mitrea, Ioan Muntean, Andrei Popa, Cătălin Precup, Florica Prevenda, Constantin Severin, Alexandru Trifu etc.*

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*Cea mai importantă contribuție la îmbogățirea colecției nu doar a acestui an, ci a ultimelor decenii, o reprezintă donația Dr. Elisa Cantaragiu, care cuprinde peste 350 de lucrări de pictură, grafică, sculptură, artă decorative și o documentație amplă referitoare la aceste opere, cele mai multe semnate de artiști faimoși activi în diaspora: Nicolae Maniu, Ion Vlad, Corneliu Baba, Magdalena Rădulescu, Jana Cernătescu, Marcel Chirnoagă, Eugen Popă, Sorin Ilfoveanu etc. Alte donații au fost făcute de: George Șeban, care a donat piese semnate de Casia Csehi și Ana Golici, Prof.univ.dr. Sabin Adrian Luca, Dr. Dana Roxana Hrib etc.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** donații, colecții de artă, colecționari, Muzeul Național Brukenthal, artă contemporană, Magdalena Rădulescu, Nicolae Maniu, Ion Vlad, donația Dr. Elisa Cantaragiu

The Brukenthal National Museum continued all through 2017 and first half of 2018 to add to its collections. As it has happened in the last years, the main source of developing the collections has been the donations. The rhythm of the donation in the last years is the fastest in the entire history of the collections. The prestige of the museum attracts both collectors and artists who offer their works.

The means by which the Museum enriches its collections of contemporary art have become tradition, organizing contemporary art exhibitions being the most important source. Grateful for the opportunity to exhibit in such a prestigious museum, and also proud to have their names associated with those of renowned European and Romanian painters already represented in the collections, the artists donate some of their works at the end of such events organized in the Brukenthal National Museum. New works of a large diversity, painting, graphic, decorative art, furniture, and sculpture, old costumes, musical instruments, rugs etc., became part of the Brukenthal National Museum patrimony. Most of the works are valuable from the artistic point of view, and some have documentary value.

The most important contribution this year (and of the last decades) comes from dr. Elisa Cantaragiu, a collection comprising over 350 works of art and a large documentation about the creations and artists.

The donations are being presented according to the domain they belong to and in the alphabetical order of the donors.

## **CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PAINTING COLLECTION**

### **THE DONATION OF THE CONTEMPORARY ARTIST SIEGLINDE BOTTESCH**

Sieglinde Bottesch, *Haus der Kindheit / The House of Childhood*, oil on canvas, 82 x 65 cm, 1981, inv. 3416

The painting took part in the County of Sibiu Exhibition, at House of Arts, Sibiu, 1981 and in the Republican Exhibition Dalles Hall, Bucharest, 1981

According to the artist, a replica of the work was offered to the County Culture Committee, in 1981-1982.

Sieglinde Bottesch, *Sabine*, oil on canvas, 81 x 65.5 cm, 1981, inv. 3417

The painting took part in the County of Sibiu Exhibition, at House of Arts, Sibiu, 1981

Sieglinde Bottesch, *Sommersehnsucht / Longing for the Summer*, oil on canvas, 80 x 65 cm, 1982, inv. 3418

The painting took part in the County of Sibiu Exhibition, at House of Arts, Sibiu, 1982

According to the artist, a replica of the work was offered to the County Culture Committee, in 1981-1982.

### **THE DONATION OF BRUKENTHAL VON STUDIO ASSOCIATION, THROUGH ITS PRESIDENT, DR. ILIE MITREA**

Ioan Muntean, Ilie Mitrea, Andrei Popa, Cătălin Precup, *Sibiu 12.10*, oil and acryl on canvas, 125 x 500 cm, inv. 3423

The collective work was executed in 2017 for the exhibition “Sibiu 12.10” curated by Laura Coltofeanu, that took place in Atrium Hall of the Town Hall of Sibiu in august – September 2017, marking 210 years from the depiction of the large panorama *Sibiu in 1808*, painted by Franz Neuhauser. It represents a gift of the Association for the community of the town of Sibiu on the occasion of the celebration of 825 years from the first attestation of the town, and 200 years from the opening of the Brukenthal Museum to the public. (Coltofeanu 2017)

The painting is now exhibited on staircase on the first floor of the Brukenthal Palace, facing Neuhauser’s work.

## THE DONATION OF DR. ELIZA CANTARAGIU

Dr. Eliza Cantaragiu and. Ing. Vladimir Cantaragiu donated to the Brukenthal National Museum a large and very valuable collection of art: paintings, graphics, drawings, sculptures, decorative art and a large documentation about the works and artists in the collection. The collection numbers 351 works signed by famous Romanian artists, most of them active in the Romanian diaspora: Nicolae Maniu, Ion Vlad, Corneliu Baba, Magdalena Rădulescu, Jana Cernătescu, Marcel Chirnoagă, Eugen Popă, Sorin Ilfoveanu.

While still in the Cantaragiu residence in Salzgitte, the collection had been visited by personalities of the Romanian political and cultural life, among which there were president Klaus Iohannis, the ministry of culture Ion Caramitru, the art critic Pavel Chihaia and others.

The Evangelic Church in Sibiu supported the taking over of the collection along its entire development. After the arrival of the collection, between December 2014 and January 2015, the exhibition organized in the Contemporary Art Gallery on the occasion of the celebration of the Romanian National Day, offered the public the image of the impressive donation. Afterwards, the collection was exhibited in the exhibitional-storage rooms of the Contemporary Art Gallery, where it can be visited according to the specific schedule.

### Paintings by Magdalena Rădulescu – 33 works

<i>Natură 3ictur cu flori / Still-life with Flowers</i>	Oil on canvas	46 x 61 cm	Signed and dated 1959	3353
<i>Turmă de cai / Horse Heard</i>	Oil on canvas	73 x 54 cm	Signed illegible	3354
<i>Dansatoare / Dancer</i>	Oil, gouache on plywood	50 x 65 cm	Signed, undated	3355
<i>Jucători de polo / Polo Players</i>	Oil on canvas	73 x 60 cm	Signed and dated 1950	3356
<i>Figură 3ictur3 în arc de cerc / Woman in an Arch</i>	Oil on canvas	50 x 65 cm	Signed and dated illegible	3357
<i>Vapoare / Ships</i>	Oil on canvas	100 x 80 cm	Signed	3358
<i>Dobrogence / Women from Dobruja</i>	Oil on canvas	61 x 38 cm	Signed illegible, undated	3359
<i>Dans / Dance</i>	Oil on carton	59 x 43 cm	Signed and dated verso 1965	3360
<i>Cai și călăreți / Horses and Riders</i>	Oil on canvas	81 x 60 cm	Signed, undated	3361
<i>Dansatori / Dancers</i>	Oil on canvas	51 x 35 cm	Signed and dated 1967	3362
<i>Portret / Portrait</i>	Mixed Technique on plywood	50.5x65,5 cm	Signed and dated illegible	3363
<i>Isus / Jesus</i>	Oil on canvas, on plywood	39x50.5 cm	Signed and dated illegible	3364
<i>Femeie în magenta / Woman in Magenta</i>	Oil on plywood	51 x 66 cm	Signed and dated u. the passe-partout	3365
<i>Sf. Fecioară cu Pruncul / Virgin and Child</i>	Mixed Technique Oil on plywood	50 x 61 cm	Signed and dated 1957	3366

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Recent Additions to the Art Collections of the Brukenthal National Museum (July 2016 – August 2017)

<i>Cai în manej / Horses at the Riding School</i>	Oil on canvas	48 x 40 cm	Signed and dated illegible (195...)	3367
<i>Cai roșii / Red Horses</i>	Oil on canvas	46 x 38 cm	Signed, undated	3368
<i>Călăreți pe fundal roșu / Horses on a Red Background</i>	Oil on plywood	66 x 85 cm	Signed	3369
<i>Grup de dansatoare / Group of Dancers</i>	Oil on canvas	80 x 60 cm	Signed	3370
<i>Grup de dansatori / Group of Dancers</i>	Oil on canvas	65 x 54 cm	Signed	3371
<i>Grup de dansatori / Group of Dancers</i>	Oil on canvas	100 x 81 cm	Signed	3372
<i>Polo</i>	Oil on canvas	81 x 66 cm	Signed and dated 1961	3373
<i>Jucători de polo / Polo Players</i>	Oil on canvas	73 x 54 cm	Signed and dated 195...	3374
<i>Cai albi / White Horses</i>	Oil on canvas	65 x 50 cm	Signed	3375
<i>Cai negri / Black Horses</i>	Oil on canvas	41 x 49 cm	Signed and dated illegible	3376
<i>Cap de femeie cu ochi închiși / Woman with Shut Eyes</i>	Gouache on plywood	26 x 31 cm	Signed	3377
<i>Acrobați / Acrobats</i>	Oil on cardboard	65 x 50 cm	Signed and dated 1964	3378
<i>Grup de dansatoare / Group of Dancers</i>	Oil on plywood	65 x 50 cm	Signed	3379
<i>Dans / Dance</i>	Oil on plywood	65.5x50.5 cm	Signed	3380
<i>Sf. Fecioară cu Pruncul / Virgin and Child</i>	Oil on leather on plywood	17 x 20 cm	Unsigned, undated	3381
<i>Portretul unui Sfânt / Portrait of a Saint</i>	Oil on leather on plywood	22 x 30 cm	Unsigned, undated	3382
<i>Vas / Vase</i>	Oil on leather on plywood	28 x 37 cm	Signed	3383
<i>Grup de cai / Horses</i>	Oil on plywood	30.5 x 16.5 cm	Signed	3384
<i>Ipostaze. Cai / Hypostases. Horses</i>	Oil on plywood	24 x 44 cm	Signed	3385

**Works by Nicolae Maniu**

<i>Arhitectul / The Architect</i>	Oil on cardboard	38 x 48 cm	Signed	3389
<i>Dorința arhitectului / The Architect's Desire</i>	Oil on cardboard	38 x 48 cm	Signed and dated 84	3390
<i>Femeie nud cu leu / Woman with Lion</i>	Oil on cardboard	38 x 48 cm	Signed and dated 84	3391
<i>Visul unui călugăr / A Monk's Dream</i>	Oil on cardboard	38 x 48 cm	Signed and dated 84	3392
<i>Umbra lui van Eyck</i>	Oil on plywood	52 x 52 cm	Signed and dated 1982	3393

<i>Cămaşa lui Hristos / The Shirt of Christ</i>	Oil on cardboard	50 x 60 cm	Signed and dated 1984	3394	
<i>Chipul lui Iisus / Christ's Face</i>	Oil on cardboard	60 x 50 cm	Signed and dated 1984	3395	
<i>Personaje de epocă / Epoch Characters</i>	Oil on cardboard	45 x 60 cm	Signed and dated 1980	3396	
<i>Calul / The Horse</i>	Oil on cardboard	39 x 49 cm	Signed and dated 1984	3397	
<i>Armura – Hercules // Armour – Hercules</i>	Oil on cardboard	39 x 49 cm	Signed and dated 1984	3398	
<i>Cavalerul / The Knight</i>	Oil on cardboard	39 x 49 cm	Signed and dated 1984	3399	
<i>Portret / Portrait of Vladimir D. Cantaragiu</i>	Oil on canvas	50 x 60 cm	Signed and dated 1984	3400	
<i>Portret / Portrait of Dr. Eliza Cantaragiu</i>	Oil on canvas	50 x 60 cm	Signed and dated 1984	3401	
Dana Călcâi	<i>Vedere din Ploieşti/ View of Ploiesti</i>	Oil on canvas	70 x 50 cm	Signed	3387
Jeana Cernătescu	<i>Spălătoresele/ The Laundress</i>	Oil on canvas	41 x 33 cm	Signed	3348
Vasia Roşca	<i>Peisaj/ Landscape</i>	Oil on plywood	50 x 40 cm		3388

#### **Works by Sorin Ilfoveanu**

<i>Peisaj din Rădeşti / Landscape at Rădeşti</i>	Tempera, gouache on canvas	100 x 57 cm	Signed and dated 1990	3350
<i>Vânzătorul de flori I / Flower Seller I</i>	Tempera, gouache on canvas	73 x 85 cm	Signed and dated 1990	3351
<i>Vânzătorul de flori II / Flower Seller II</i>	Tempera, gouache on canvas	73 x 85 cm	Signed and dated 1990	3352

#### **THE DONATION OF THE CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS IOAN AND RODICA CHIŞU**

Rodica Chişu, *Iarba albastră / Blue Grass*, acrylic on canvas, 16.2 x 101.6 cm, 2016, inv. 3404  
 Rodica Chişu, *Bucuria dimineţii / Morning Joy*, acrylic on canvas, 76.2 x 101.6 cm, 2017, inv. 3405  
 Ioan Chişu, *Ora cinci / Five o'clock*, oil on canvas, 86.3 x 101.6 cm, 2012, inv. 3402  
 Ioan Chişu, *Porumbelul / The Dove*, oil on canvas, 91.5 x 91.5 cm, 2012, inv. 3403  
 Ioan Chişu, *Altar / Altar*, oil on canvas, 6.25 x 20 cm, 1997, inv. 3406  
 Ioan Chişu, *Peşte auriu / Golden Fish*, oil on canvas, 22.5 x 30.5 cm, 2011, inv. 3407  
 Ioan Chişu, *Zburător*, oil on 5icture5, 17 x 12 cm, 1998, inv. 3408  
 Ioan Chişu, *Unchiul (Autoportret) / Uncle (Self-portrait)*, oil on canvas, 20 x 25 cm, 2009, inv. 3409  
 Ioan Chişu, *Vreme nesigură / Changing Weather*, acryl on masonit, 20 x 25 cm, 2010, inv. 3410

Ioan Chişu was born in 1939, in Cluj-Napoca and studied at Ioan Andreescu Art Academy. He was a member of the Union of Plastic Artists in Romania, and the president of Sibiu branch of UPA. He took part in all the exhibitions organized by UPA Sibiu, in the Republican UPA Exhibitions in Bucharest etc. He immigrated in the USA in 1989 together with Rodica Chişu, his wife. He took part in exhibition at Arlington Gallery (*Symbols and Icons*), the international exhibition at McCormick, Chicago Contemporary Art Centre



Arlington Heights. In 2017, together with Rodica Chișu, his wife opened a retrospective exhibition named *Metaphors* in Chicago.

Rodica Chișu was born in 1938 at Sighetul Marmăției and studied at Ioan Andreescu Art Academy. She was a member of the Union of Plastic Artists in Romania, and took part in all the exhibitions organized by UPA Sibiu, in the Republican UPA Exhibitions in Bucharest etc. She immigrated in the USA in 1989 together with Ioan Chișu, her husband. In 2017, together with Ioan Chișu, her husband, opened a retrospective exhibition named *Metaphors* in Chicago. (Codiță 1966; Moșescu-Măciucă 1967).

#### **THE DONATION OF CONSTANTIN LAZAROVICI**

Constantin Lazarovici (Severin), *Istoria – lumină and sânge / History / Light and Blood*, oil on canvas, 60 x 75 cm, inv. 3320

A contemporary representative of the tendencies according to which art is a way of remembrance and contemplation of the Paradise Lost, Constantin Severin comes up with his creation as a potential solution, a returning to the essence, to the archaic, and to the possible springs of art. Proposing the concept of Archetypal Expressionism, the painter intends to clarify his terms, framework, inspirational sources, artistic message and techniques of expression, providing the spectator with ways and keys to the metabolism and process of his creation. Constantin Severin (n. 1952) organized the Exhibition The Signs of Time. Archetypal Energies, at the Contemporary Art Museum between October 12<sup>th</sup> and November 20<sup>th</sup> 2016, was curated by Robert Strebli, and had a presentation by Iulia Mesea (Mesea 2016).

#### **THE DONATION OF DANA ROXANA HRIB PH.D., DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM**

Constantin Lazarovici (Severin), *Text and Time 109*, oil on canvas, 40 x 50 cm; title on the chassis, with black ink; signed and dated on the chassis, with black ink: *March, 2015 / C. Severin 2012*; verso, on the canvas, dedication with black marker: *Doamnei Director / Dana Hrib - / Cu prețuire and / recunoștință, / 12.10.2016 / C. Severin*, inv. 3349.

Florica Prevenda, *Facebook (fragment)*, mixed technique on canvas, 40.5 x 40 cm, on the backside, with black pencil: *Of Don Dana Roxana Hrib, 30/05.01.2018*; on the canvas, near the chassis rectangular stamp with black ink: *FLORICA PREVENDA*, inv. 3421

#### **THE DONATION OF PROFESSOR SABIN ADRIAN LUCA, MANAGER OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM**

Constantin Lazarovici (Severin), *Text and Time 87*, oil on canvas, 70 x 100 cm; title on the chassis, with black ink; signed and dated on the chassis, with black ink: *C. Severin 2012*; verso, on the canvas, dedication with black marker: *Domnului Manager / Sabin Adrian Luca - / Cu prețuire and recunoștință, / 12.10.2016 C. Severin*, inv. 3386.

Csaba Zemlényi, *Studiu pentru portretul lui Mihai Viteazul / Study for the portrait of Michael the Brave*, oil on canvas, 19.8 x 20.2 cm; dated bottom left with ochre *2015*; signed bottom left with ochre: *zemlényi*; wood frame, inv. 3412

#### **THE DONATION OF THE ARTIST FLORICA PREVENDA**

Florica Prevenda, *Efemer / Ephemeral*, mixed technique on canvas, 120 x 120 cm, 2010, inv. 3411

#### **THE DONATION OF THE PAINTER GHEORGHE SUCIU:**

Gheorghe Suci, *Sibiu. Promenada orașului / The Promenade of the Town*, oil on canvas, 35 x 41; signed bottom right ocr; dated: *2015*), inv. 3323.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Monument, case, turle de biserici / Monument, Houses, Bellfries*, oil on canvas, 41 x 35 cm, signed bottom right ocr, dated: (20)15, inv. 3324.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Sf. Ioan Nepomuk*, oil on canvas, 41 x 35 cm, signed bottom right ocr, dated: (20)15, inv. 3325.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Muzeul de Istorie Naturală / The Natural History Museum*, oil on canvas, 35 x 41 cm, signed bottom right with green, dated: (20)15, inv. 3326.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Catedrala Mitropoliei Ardealului / The Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral*, oil on canvas, 35 x 41 cm, signed bottom right olive, dated: 2015, inv. 3327.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Școala Gimnazială / Secondary School*, oil on canvas, 27 x 33 cm, signed bottom right ochre, dated: 2016, inv. 3328.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Case lângă Hotelul "Împăratul Romanilor" / Houses near the Hotel The Roman Emperor*, oil on canvas, 27 x 33 cm, signed bottom right carmine, 2015, inv. 3329.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Casă 7ict / Sibiu. White House*, oil on canvas, 27 x 33 cm, signed bottom right with ochre, dated: 2015, inv. 3330.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Flori cu vas de Cucuteni / Cucuteni Flower Pot*, oil on canvas, 27 x 33 cm, signed bottom right with black, dated: (19)97, inv. 3331.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Stockholm. Biblioteca Centrală / Stockholm. Central Library*, oil on canvas, 37 x 60 cm, signed bottom right with dark sienna, dated: 1992, inv. 3332.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Vințu de Jos. Castelul Martinuzzi / Martinuzzi Castle*, oil on canvas, 39 x 29 cm, signed bottom right with ochre, dated: 1994, inv. 3333.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Alba Iulia. Sala Unirii / The Union Hall at Alba Iulia*, oil on canvas, 35 x 40 cm, signed bottom right with brown, dated: 2016, inv. 3334.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Alba Iulia. Catedrala catolică / The Catholic Cathedral. Alba Iulia*, oil on canvas, 44 x 33 cm; signed bottom right with yellow; dated: 1999, inv. 3335.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Flori în trei culori / Three Coloured Flowers*, oil on canvas, 48 x 38 cm, signed bottom right with brown, dated 1991, inv. 3336.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Muzeul Miles, Suedia / Miles Museum. Sweden*, oil on canvas, 30 x 45 cm, signed bottom right with olive, dated: (19)92, inv. 3337.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Suport de vas Cucuteni / Cucuteni Vase Support*, oil on canvas, 39 x 30 cm; signed bottom right with olive, dated: 2000, inv. 3338.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Hora de la Frumandca / Folk Dance at Frumusica*, oil on canvas, 39 x 39 cm, signed bottom right with olive; dated: 2000, inv. 3339.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Strada Ocnei / Ocna Street in Sibiu*, oil on canvas, 28 x 23 cm, signed bottom right with black; dated: (19)89, inv. 3340.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Piața Mare / The Big Square in Sibiu*, oil on canvas, 38 x 32 cm, signed bottom right with brown; dated: (19)99, inv. 3341.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Vedere de pe strada Ocnei / View of Ocna Street in Sibiu*, oil on canvas, 39 x 29 cm; signed bottom right with black; dated: 1991, inv. 3342.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Strada Nicolae Bălcescu*, oil on canvas, 39 x 29 cm, signed bottom right with grey; dated: (19)92, inv. 3343.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Turnul Sfatului / The Town Hall in Sibiu*, oil on canvas, 39 x 29 cm, signed bottom right with grey; dated: (19)92, inv. 3344.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Turnul Sfatului / The Town Hall in Sibiu*, oil on canvas, 39 x 29 cm, signed bottom right with yellow; dated: (19)92, inv. 3345.

Gheorghe Suciu, *Sibiu. Casa Luxemburg / Luxemburg House in Sibiu*, oil on canvas, 29 x 35 cm, signed bottom right with brown; dated: (199)98, inv. 3346.

Gheorghe Suci, *Sibiu. Case vechi din Sibiu / Old Houses in Sibiu*, oil on canvas, 42 x 32 cm, signed bottom right with brown; dated: (19)93, inv. 3347.

Gheorghe Suci dedicated his donation to the Centennial of the Great Union. Done in late 2017, it may be considered as the first donation dedicated to this event.

Gheorghe Suci was born in 1927, in Vințu de Jos, Alba County. He attended the School for Arts and Handicrafts (Textile branch) in Timișoara (1942-1946), then the Nikolaus Lenau High School in Timișoara and the Military School in Radna. After he was dismissed from the army, due to his political opinions, he settled in Timișoara, where he worked in the chemical industry and in the woodwork industry. In 1981 he settled in Alba Iulia, where he worked in the public network of cinemas. Gheorghe Suci debuted quite late, in 1987, as a self-taught painter influenced by the local painter Laurențiu Jianu. Soon after 1989, Gheorghe Suci's artistic production intended to take advantage of the increased need for souvenirs. He was particularly attracted by the cityscapes and by monuments, especially from Alba County, but also from Timișoara, Sibiu, Cluj-Napoca etc. which he depicted after illustrated post cards or photographs, in a modern manner, influenced by Impressionism, Expressionism and Post-Impressionism, sometimes with obvious inflections.

He also painted still lifes, often flowers in prehistorical vases, noted for the accurate depiction of the ornament on these ceramics and on the traditional Romanian cloths, due to his belief in the existence of a multimillennial cultural and artistic continuity.

The painter became a member of the Alba branch of the Visual Artists' Union in 2013. Unlike other artists of the same category, he saw his work widely popularized by several exhibition catalogues published with the support of the Alba County's Council and of the National Museum of the Union in Alba Iulia (Mircea 2005; Mircea, Fleșer 2009; Mircea, Cutean 2012a; Mircea, Cutean 2012b; Mircea *et al.* 2014), being comparable in this respect (according to the critic Gabriela Mircea) with the painter Paul Răzvan from Timișoara (Răzvan 2011). Closing to the end of his life, Gheorghe Suci donated several of his works to the art museums in Sebeș, Alba Iulia, Sibiu and Timișoara.

His work has a certain documentary value, as it reflects a patriotic popular view on the national history: besides encultured mythologizing clichés, specific to the educational and political speech as well as to the cultural production influenced by them in the interwar period and during the last decades of the Communist regime. At the same time, they mirror the artist's personal perception of the events witnessed for almost a century, and which he described in his memories, published in 2014 (Mircea *et al.* 2014, 30-74), and often quoted in the critical comments of his exhibitions catalogues.

## **THE DONATION OF THE ARTIST ALEXANDRU TRIFU**

Alexandru Trifu, *Portrait of a Peasant* (on the verso: *Self-portrait*), oil on cardboard, 50 x 70 cm, inv. 3422

According to the painter's information, the painting was executed after his period of studies with the painter Rudolf Schweitzer-Cumpăna, before studying at the Art Academy in Bucharest, where he was a colleague with Mirel Zamfirescu. Alexandru Trifu (b. 1942) worked as a researcher at the Folk and Ethnographic Institute in Bucharest and as a drawing teacher in several schools in Bucharest. He was a member of the UPAR. He left for Switzerland and settled there. His works can be found in several public and private collections among which the Collection of Contemporary Art of Credit Suisse, and the Canton Fund of Contemporary Art of Geneva. (Trifu 2016) His painting is placed at the border between figurative and abstraction, expressing the artist's inner world more than the reality around him.

## **WORKS DONATED BY THE SIBIU BAILIFF AFTER THE BANKRUPTCY OF STC INTERNATIONAL:**

Marius Barb, *Compoziție cu 8ictur / Composition with Figures*, 1115 x 90 cm, signed bottom middle with white: Barb, dated bottom right with white: (19)07, inv. 3413

Marius Barb, *Compoziție cu figure minoice / Composition with Minoan Figures*, oil on plywood, 80 x 56 cm, signed bottom left, with red: Barb, dated bottom right: 2006, inv. 3415

Carmen S. Frack, *Peisaj de iarnă / Winter Landscape*, oil on canvas, 100 x 70 cm, signed bottom right, with brown: Carmen S. Frack, inv. 3414

## **CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GRAPHIC COLLECTION**

### **THE DONATION OF THE ARTIST SIEGLINDE BOTTESCH**

Sieglinde Bottesch, *Dincolo de mine / Beyond me*, lithograph, 92.3 x 65 cm, signed and dated bottom right 1973; Inscriptions in pencil: bottom left: *Sieglinde Bottesch / E.A. 1/20 litografie*; bottom middle: „*DINCOLO DE MINE*”; bottom right: *Dedicat lui / A Caloenescu 73*’; the work is dedicated to the artist Adina Caloenescu, inv. 13279.

Sieglinde Bottesch, *Poem vegetal / Vegetal Poem*, lithography, 92x65 cm, signed and dated bottom right 1973; Inscriptions in pencil: bottom left: *Bottesch Sieglinde / 1/10 E.A. litografie*; bottom middle: „*POEM VEGETAL*”; bottom right: *Dedicat lui / Adina Caloenescu 73*’; the work is dedicated to the artist Adina Caloenescu; inv. 13280

Sieglinde Bottesch, *In Delta / In the Danube Delta*, aqua-forte, 49.4 x 49.7 cm, signed and dated bottom right 1973; Inscriptions in pencil: bottom left: *5/10 aquaforte* [illegible] / [illegible]; bottom middle „*DELTA III*” 19852; bottom right: *St. Iacobescu*, inv. 13281

The artists Adina Caloenescu (1934–2011) and Stefan Jacobescu (1937–2001) were Sieglinde Bottesch’s colleagues during their art studies at the Art Academy in Bucharest.

### **THE DONATION OF DR. ELIZA CANTARAGIU**

#### **Works by Corneliu Baba**

Muzicanții – realismul socialist / The Musicians of the Socialist Realism	Tempera and gouache on paper	29 x 35 cm	13261
Personaj în negru / Character in Black	Tempera and gouache on paper	38 x 50 cm	13262
Original letter “Rodica și Corneliu Baba se întorc victorioși de la o ședință cu scriitorii din provincie” /	Tempera and gouache on paper	26 x 20 cm	13263

#### **Works by Magdalena Rădulescu**

Autoportret/ Selfportrait	Gouache on paper /	51 x 65 cm	Signed, dated illegible	13244
Nice	Gouache bronz on paper	46.5 x 31.5 cm	Dated 1965	13245
Războinic / Warrior	Tuș on paper/	48.5 x 61.5 cm	signed, dated 1968	13246
Clovn / Clown	Gouache on cardboard	49 x 64.3 cm		13247
Isus / Jesus	Gouache on cardboard	48.7 x 61 cm	Signed, dated illegible	13248
8Woman sketches	Drawing, charcoal on paper	64x49.3 cm	Signed	13249
Nud de femeie/ Woman	Drawing, ink on red paper	21x27 cm	Signed and dated 1959	13250
Nude				
Cal preistoric / Prehistorical Horse	Gouache on paper	64x 49 cm	Signed	13251
Cai verzi / Green Horse	Gouache on paper	59.7 x 45 cm	Signed and dated 1976	13252
Portret / Portrait	Gouache on paper	48.5 x 63.5 cm	Signed and dated 1960	13253
Portret cu coif /Portrait with Helmet	Gouache on paper	49.5x 64.5 cm	Signed	13254
Portret / Portrait	Gouache on paper	40.5x 56.5 cm	Signed	13255
Portret de femeie/ Woman Portrait	Wood water on paper	49 x 64 cm	Signed and dated 1964	13256

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Massimo Campigli	Pastel on paper	49 x 64 cm	Signed, dated, located Nice 1971	13257
Femeie neagră / Black Woman	Gouache on paper	49 x 64 cm	Signed and dated illegible (1960?)	13258
Printesa bizantină /Byzantine Princess	Gouache on paper	41.5x59 cm	Signed	13259
Halteriști / Weightlifter	Gouache on paper	64.5 x 46.5 cm	Signed	13260

**Works by Ion Vlad**

Nud 1 / Nude 1	Drawing on paper	43x64 cm	Signed	13109
Nud 2 / Nude 2	Charcoal on paper	62.5x47.5 cm	Signed	13110
Nud 3 (nud cu cal) / Nude with Horse	Mixed technique	39.5x57 cm	Signed	13111
Nud 4 (nud roșcat) / Nude 4 (red Nude)	Drawing, pastel on paper	47x62.5 cm	Signed	13112
Nud 5 (nud citind, fond verde) / Nude 5 (Nude reading, green background)	Drawing, pastel on paper	63.5x45 cm	Signed and dated 1981	13113
Crochiu de bărbat / A Man	Drawing, gouache and pencil on paper	39x66 cm	Signed and dated 81	13114
Nud 6 / Nude 6	Mixed technique	39.5x58 cm	Signed and dated 1966	13115
Nud 7 / Nude 7	Drawing, and charcoal on paper	46x65 cm	Signed	13278
Nud 8 / Nude 8	Drawing, gouache and pencil on paper	53.5x38 cm	Signed and dated 1966	13116
Nud 9 / Nude 9	Drawing, gouache and pencil on paper	34.5x55.5 cm	Signed and dated 1966	13117
Nud 10 / Nude 10	Drawing, gouache and pencil on paper	34x52.6 cm	Signed and dated 1966	13118
Nud 11 / Nude 11	Drawing, pastel and ink on paper	32.5x48 cm	Signed	13119
Nud 12 / Nude 12	Drawing, pastel and ink on paper	34x49.5 cm	Signed	13120
Nud 13 / Nude 13	Mixed technique	29x48 cm	Signed	13121
Nud pe plajă / Nude on the Beach	Drawing, ink on greased paper	45.5x28.5 cm	Signed	13122
Tors 1 / Torso 1	Drawing, gouache and pencil on paper	36x52 cm	Signed	13123
Femeie cu rochie albă / Woman in White Dress	Drawing, pastel and ink on paper	19x24 cm	Signed	13124
Nud 14 A+B / Nude 14 A+B	Drawing, pencil on paper	34.5x49 cm	Signed	13125
Nud 15 A+B / Nude 15 A+B	Drawing, charcoal on paper	34.5x49 cm	Signed	13126
Nud 16 / Nude 16	Drawing, charcoal on paper	46.5x63.5 cm	Signed	13127
Nud 17 / Nude 17	Drawing, pastel on paper	47x63 cm	Signed	13128



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Diana England	Pencil on mate plexiglass	24.5x42 cm	Signed	13129
Nud 18 / Nude 18	Drawing, pastel on paper	19.5x29 cm	Signed and dated 1976	13130
Nud 19 / Nude 19	Drawing, ink and pastel on paper	18.5x41 cm	Signed	13131
Cap de dac / Devilhead	Mixed technique	22.5x33 cm	Signed and dated 1977	13132
Fetiță cu păpușă / Girl with a Doll	Drawing in ink	270x34 cm	Signed	13133
Autoportret I / Selfportrait	Drawing, ink and pastel	26x35 cm		13134
Jacques Chirac	Mixed technique	28x38 cm		13135
Profil de bărbat / Man Profile	Drawing, ink on paper	18.5x28.5 cm	Signed	13136
Profil de femeie 1 / Woman. Profile 1	Drawing, ink on paper	18.5x28 cm	Signed	13137
Portret de damă / Portrait of a Lady	Drawing, ink on paper	18x27.5 cm	Signed	13138
Cal / Horse	Drawing, pastel on paper	63.5x48.5 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13139
Zebra	Drawing, charcoal on paper	46.5x58.5 cm	Signed	13140
Tors roșu cu alb / Red Torso with White Horse	Collage	56x60 cm	Signed and dated 71	13141
Tors alb cu roșu / White and Red Torso	Collage	54x60 cm	Signed and dated 71	13142
Răstignirea / Crucifixion	Collage	545x69.5 cm	Signed	13143
Nud galben / Yellow Nude	Collage	55x69 cm	Signed and dated 71	13144
Vague	Collage	63x43 cm	Signed and dated 71	13145
Nunta / Wedding	Collage	56x14.5 cm	Signed cu inițiale I.V	13146
Autoportret II / Selfportrait II	Drawing, pastel on paper	49x63.5 cm	Signed and dated 81	13147
Fructul vieții / The Fruit of Life	Drawing, tempera and gouache on paper	41.5x57.5		13148
Nud 20 / Nude 20	Drawing, pastel on paper	45.1x68 cm	Signed	13149
Nud 21 / Nude 21	Drawing, charcoal on paper	45x68 cm	Signed	13150
Nud 22 / Nude 22	Drawing, charcoal on paper	49x64 cm	Signed	13151
Autoportret III / Self-portrait III	Drawing, pastel on paper	465x61cm		13152
Șah Mat L'Irak decapité/ Checkmate	Collage	46.5x63.5 cm	Signed	13153
Nud 23 / Nude 23	Drawing, pastel on paper	49x64 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13154
Pégase à vendre	Mixed technique	47.5x62.5 cm	Signed	13155

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Nud 24 / Nude 24	Drawing, pastel on paper	45.5x68.5 cm	Signed	13156
Mitologie / Mythology	Drawing charcoal on paper	48x62.5 cm	Signed	13157
Nud 25 / Nude 25	Drawing, pastel on paper	45x63 cm	Signed	13158
Crochiu de bărbat / Man sketch	Drawing, pencil on paper	43x64 cm	Signed	13159
Nud 26 / Nude 26	Drawing, wood stain and charcoal on paper	43x64 cm	Signed	13160
Nud 27 / Nude 27	Mixed technique	46x63.5 cm	Signed	13161
Nud 28 / Nude 28	Mixed technique	45.5x63.5 cm	Signed	13162
Nuntă / Wedding	Mixed technique	49x62.5 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13163
Nud 29 / Nude 29	Mixed technique	48.5x63.5 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13164
Studiu: Femeie / Study of a Woman	Drawing, pastel on paper	49x63.5 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13165
Nud citind / Reading Nude	Pastel, pencil	60x48.5 cm	Signed and dated 1981	13166
Nud 30 / Nude 30	Drawing, pastel on paper	49x64 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13167
Nud 31 / Nude 31	Drawing, pastel on paper	48x62.5 cm	Signed	13168
Nud 32 / Nude 32	Drawing, pastel on paper	49x63 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13169
Nud 33 / Nude 33	Drawing, pastel on paper	45x63.5 cm	Signed	13170
Nud 34 / Nude 34	Drawing, pastel and ink on paper	46x63.5 cm	Signed	13171
Nud 35 / Nude 35	Drawing, pastel and ink on paper	49x63.5 cm	Signed	13172
Nud 36 / Nude 36	Drawing, pastel on paper	45x63 cm	Signed	13173
Crochiu nud 12 / Woman Nude	Drawing charcoal on paper	473x63 cm	-----	13174
Pégase à vendre II	Mixed technique	49x63.5 cm	Signed	13175
Salvatorul / The Saviour	Mixed technique	18.4x29 cm		13176
Mihai Viteazul / Michael the Brave	Drawing, ink on paper	15x20 cm	Signed	13177
Portret de bărbat I / Man Portrait I	Drawing, ink on paper	13.5x20 cm	Signed	13178
Portret de bărbat II / Man Portrait II	Drawing, ink on paper	14x20 cm	Signed and dated 1987	13179
Cap de copil / Head of a Child	Drawing, ink on paper	13x13 cm		13180
Pégase à vendre III	Mixed technique	13.5x16 cm		13181

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Portret litografiat / Portrait. Lithograph	Lithograph	26x30 cm	Dated 91?	13182
3 schițe / 3 Sketches	Mixed technique	20x34 cm		13183
Cina / Supper	Mixed technique	13x16.5 cm	Signed	13184
Embrion / Embryo	Mixed technique	11.3x14.2 cm		13185
Portretul soților / Couple Portrait	Mixed technique	28x18 cm	Signed	13186
Pisica „Bruna“ / The Cat „Bruna“	Drawing collage on paper	28x18 cm	Signed	13187
Mircea Eliade	Lithography	29x39 cm	Signed and dated 1968	13188
Radiografie / Radiography	3 Drawings mixed technique	49x63.5 cm	Signed	13189
Nud alb pe fond negru / White Nude on black background	Collage	47x61 cm	Signed and dated 1984	13190
Nud alb pe fond negru și element vegetal / White Nude on black background	Collage	47.5x61.3 cm		13191
Statui albe pe fond negru / White Figures on black background	Collage	47.3x61.5 cm	Signed	13192
Nud cu mărgel / Nude with Perls	Drawing, pastel on paper	47.5x63.5 cm	Signed	13193
Ioan Rațiu	Drawing, ink on paper	19.2x32 cm	Signed and dated 1969	13194
Nud 37 / Nude 37	Drawing, pencil on paper	33.5x49 cm	Signed	13195
Nud 38 / Nude 38	Drawing, pencil on paper	34x48.8 cm	Signed	13196
Nud torsionat / Twisted Nude	Drawing charcoal on paper	34x49 cm	Signed	13197
Nud 39 / Nude 39	Drawing, pastel on paper	31.5x48.6 cm	Signed	13198
Portret de femeie / Woman Portrait	Lithography	83.3x40 cm	Signed	13199
Portretele unei femei și a unui barbat / Woman and Man Portraits	Drawing, peniță, ink on paper	28x40 cm	Signed	13200
Nika - soția artistului / „Nika“ – the artist's Wife	Litografie / Lithograph	29.4x39.5 cm	Signed, inscription: „Nika și I. Vlad 1991”	13201
Crochiu pentru o sculptură / Sketch for a Sculpture	Drawing, pencil on paper	29.6x45.8 cm	Signed	13202
Lascaux	Photograph	56.5x28 cm	Signed	13203
Cal 2 / Horse 2	Mixed technique on plywood	65.6x34.3 cm		13204
Personaje ale epocii / History Characters	Drawing, tempera and pastel	30x44.8 cm	Signed and dated 1991	13205

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Tors ghemuit / Squat Torso	Drawing, tempera on paper	53.5x33.5 cm	Signed	13206
Dolce France, mon cher Paris	Fotografie / Photograph	48x48 cm		13207
Crearea omului / The Creation of Man	Drawing, pastel on paper	49.4x64.1 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13208
Studiu / Study	Mixed technique	53.5x70 cm		13209
Răstignire / Crucifixion	Mixed technique	48.2x63 cm	Signed	13210
Nud 40 / Nude 40	Drawing, ink on paper	25.6x41.7 cm	Signed	13211
Nud în cerc / Nude in a Circle	Mixed technique	28.6x43.5 cm	Signed	13212
Nud dublu / Double Nude	Drawing, pencil on paper	34x49 cm		13213
Nud 41 / Nude 41	Drawing charcoal on paper	35.2x49.7 cm	Signed	13214
Nud 42 / Nude 42	Drawing charcoal on paper	43x64 cm	Signed	13215
Fotografie / Photograph	Photograph	43x56 cm		13216
Șotron / Hopscotch	Mixed Technique	49x60.5 cm	Signed, dated 1984	13217
Nud 43 / Nude 43	Drawing, pastel on paper	46x67.5 cm	Signed	13218
Nud 44 / Nude 44	Drawing, pastel on paper	46x68 cm	Signed	13219
Nud 45 / Nude 45	Drawing, pastel on paper	46x68 cm	Signed	13220
Nud 46 / Nude 46	Drawing, pastel on paper	33.2x48.5 cm	Signed	13221
Nud 47 / Nude 47	Drawing, ink on paper	28.7x49 cm	Signed	13222
Nocturnă / Nocturne	Mixed technique	53.1x39.4 cm		13223
Nud 48/ Nude 48	Drawing, gouache and pencil on paper	47x63 cm	Signed	13224
Personaje mitologice / Mythological Characters	Drawing, peniță, ink on paper	61.2x48.7 cm	Signed	13225
Cal III / Horse III	Mixed technique	49x64	Signed and dated 1980	13226
Nud 48 / Nude 48	Drawing, pastel on paper	47.4x62.9 cm		13227
Călăreț 14ictur alb / Rider on White Horse	Mixed technique	64x49 cm	Signed and dated 1988	13228
Torso	Drawing, pastel and ink on paper	42x58 cm	Signed	13229
Dublu colaj torso / Torso Double collage	Collage	10x36.2 cm	Signed	13230
Dumnezeul om-animat / God Human-Animal	Drawing, gouache and pencil on paper	18.5x23.5 cm	Signed	13231
Arhanghel/ Archangel	Mixed technique	80x19.7 cm	Signed	13232
Evoluții/ Evolutions	Mixed technique	19x38.5 cm		13233
Femeie în roșu / Woman in Red	Drawing, pastel on paper	27x39.8 cm	Signed	13234
Pasărea neagră – Comunism/ The Black Bird/Communism	Collage	41x45.5 cm		13235
Fruct / Obst	Collage	43x54 cm		13236
Tors tensionat / Squat Torso	Collage	49.4x64 cm	Signed and dated 71	13237

**Brukenthal. Acta Mvsei, XIII.2, 2018**  
Iulia MESEA, Alexandru Gh. SONOC

Nud cu draperie / Nude with Curtain	Drawing charcoal on paper	46.5x63.5 cm	Signed	13238
Les amants / Lovers	Collage	49.2x64 cm	Signed and dated 1975	13239
Prima întâlnire / First Date	Drawing, pastel on paper	46.3x62.5 cm	Signed and dated 1980	13240
Comunismul peste România/ Communism over Romania	Collage	40.5x49.2 cm	Signed and dated 1971	13241
Cal de Bronze Horse	Gouache and golden leaf	75,3x53 cm	Signed and dated 1981	13242

**Works by Nicolae Maniu**

De ziua ta /For your Birthday	Gouache on cardboard / Lithography?	28 x 33 cm	Signed and dated 1985		
Unde ești? Te caut mereu / Where are you? I am looking for you.	Gouache on cardboard / Lithography?	28 x 33 cm	Signed and dated 1985, verso		
Drama pictorului / The Painter's	Gouache on cardboard / Lithography?	30 x 40 cm			
Imagini de la Voroneț / Views of Voroneț	Gouache on cardboard / Lithography?	28 x 33 cm	Signed dated 1985, verso		
Durere neștiută / Unknown pain	Gouache on cardboard / Lithography?	30 x 40 cm			
Graiul penelului / The voice of the brush	Gouache on cardboard / Lithography?	30 x 40 cm			
Dor de ducă / Wish to leave	Gouache on cardboard / Lithography?	30 x 40 cm			
Măinile mamei / Mother's Hands	Gouache on cardboard / Lithography?	30 x 40 cm			
<i>Stejarul / Oaktree</i>	Gouache on cardboard/ Lithograph?	28 x 33 cm	Nesigned, nedated		
<i>Clipe in cimitir / Moments in the Cemetery</i>	Gouache on cardboard/ Lithograph?	27 x 33 cm	Signed and dated 1985		
<i>Pădurea în flăcări / Forest on Fire</i>	Gouache on cardboard/ Lithograph?	30 x 40 cm	Unsigned, undated		
<i>Cămașa sclavului / The Slave's Shirt</i>	Collage, gouache/ Lithograph?	54 x 58 cm	Signed and dated 1982		
Hans-Georg I	Schloss Pelesch, Sinaia / Peleş Castle, Sinaia	Watercolour	39.6x60 cm	Signed, dated "HGW 06"	13264
Hans-Georg I	Schloss Törzburg / Bran Castle	Watercolour	43.5x33.5 cm	Signed, dated "HGW 06"	13265
Pompilia Stoian-Lemperle	Sonnenblumen / Sunflower	Watercolour	26.5x33.5 cm	Signed, dated POMPILIA 85"	13266
Marcel Chirnoagă	Marine (Schiffe und Seemonster) / Marine (Boats and monster)	Aqua-forte	37x48.3 cm	Signed	13267
Marcel Chirnoagă	Mythologische Feministin /The Mythological Feminist	Aqua-forte	36.1x46.0 cm	Signed and dated 1988	13268



### Brukenthal. Acta Mvsei, XIII.2, 2018

Recent Additions to the Art Collections of the Brukenthal National Museum (July 2016 – August 2017)

Eugen Popa	Nud /Nude	Aqua-forte	43.9x66.7 cm	Signed, dated 72	13269
Eugen Popa	Nuduri /Nudes	Aqua-forte	49.3 x 68.7 cm	Signed, dated 70	13270
Eugen Popa	În grădină/In the Garden	Aqua-forte	67.9x49.2 cm	Signed, dated 72	13271
Eugen Popa	Nud 16icture16 /Woman Nude	Aqua-forte	51.8x46.8 cm	Signed, dated 69	13272
Eugen POPA	Ploaia /The Rain	Aqua-forte	60.6x43.7 cm	Signed, dated 70	13273
Stefan Orth	View of Sibiu with Luxemburg House and the Evangelic Church	Aqua-forte	21.9 x 26.9 cm	Signed	13274
Arh. Vasilescu	Three Riders	Drawing and ink on paper	30 x 42 cm	Signed and dated 1973	13275
	Peisaj cu turn cu ceas și trăsură /Landscape with Clocktower and carriage	Drawing and ink on paper	22 x 30 cm	Inscription “31 agosto 1979 Liliana e Luigi”	13276
Georges Tomaziu	Nud 16icture16, însoțit de câine /Nude and dog	Drawing and ink on paper	23 x 31 cm	Signed and dated “27 august 83”	13277
Jana Cernătescu	Promenade at Nice	Aqua-forte	40 x 30 cm	Signed, dated 984	13243

#### THE DONATION OF THE CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS IOAN AND RODICA CHIȘU

Rodica Chișu, *Femeie cu violoncel / Woman with a Cello*, gouache, 20.3 x 15.2 cm, 1993, inv. 13086

Rodica Chișu, *Freamăt / Rustling*, engraving in aluminium, 38.1 x 50.8 cm, 1983, inv. 13087

Rodica Chișu, *Apa / Water*, engraving in zinc plate, 7.6 x 10.2 cm, 1980, inv. 13088

Rodica Chișu, *Focul / Fire*, engraving in zinc plate, 7.6 x 10.2 cm, 1980, inv. 13089

#### THE DONATION OF IRMGART SEDLER PH.D., DIRECTOR OF KORNWESTHEIM MUSEUM, GERMANY

Gert Fabritius, sketch book, the agenda of BMW for 1992, with plastic dark blue cover with silver metal corner, 20.7 x 14.8 cm, inv. 12966.

#### THE DONATION OF MR. RUDOLF-HANS KENTSCH FROM CLUJ-NAPOCA

Unknown painter (signed monogram: EH), *Albert Huet Square in Sibiu*, watercolour, 60 x 40 cm, inv. 13090

Mr. Rudolf-Hans Kentsch is a music teacher. The work comes from the donor's grandfather Hans Kentsch who was a Lutheran priest in Miercurea Sibiului (Reussmark) from 1909, then in Pitești, then in Gießübel (Gusu) and then in Rätsch (Reciu) 1958-1959. He died in 1961.

#### THE DONATION OF MR. ADRIAN LUCA Ph.D., CURATOR AT THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM

Adrian Luca, *Răsărit din altă lume / Sunrise from another World*, photo print on canvas / serigraphy, 120 x 80 cm, black wood frame, inv. AD 648.

#### THE DONATION OF PROFESSOR SABIN ADRIAN LUCA, MANAGER OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM

Tiberiu Coșovan, *Suceava Strada Regele Ferdinand / King Ferdinand Street in Suceava*, lino, 2 x 3 cm, on a file of 29 x 39 cm; 5/15 entitled, signed and dated bottom right: Coșovan 2012, plastic frame, inv. 13102.

Tiberiu Coșovan (b. 1954) is a writer of Armenian origin. He studied sociology and works as a journalist. He lives and works in Suceava. He paints in a personalized post-impressionist manner, with interest for all the vibrations of the world around him, in fact a reflexion of his own personality.

Teodora Lișcu, *Sibiu*, watercolour, , 68.8 x 48.5 cm; title, signed and dated bottom right, with brown; Lișcu / "SIBIU" 1967; wood frame. Inv.13095

Teodora Lișcu (b. 1937) is a paintress, member of the UPA Sibiu and a founder of this association. She studied at the popular arts school in Sibiu, together with Rudi Schmückle, Simion Florea, Petre Dumbrăveanu, Constantin Ilea, Nicolae Barcan. She worked as a teacher. Since 1975 she took part in several group exhibitions in Sibiu, Timișoara, Târgu Mureș and abroad and organized personal shows in Sibiu, in cities in Germany, Italy, France.

Stefan Orth, *Germinație / Germination*, mixed technique: aqua-forte, aquatint; cuvette: 25,7 x 37,4 cm; signed bottom right with pencil: *ORTH*; the technique mentioned bottom left, with pencil: *Aquaforce aquatinta*; bottom right exterior to the cuvette: embossing; wood frame; inv. 13091

Eva Cerbu, *În port / In the Harbour*, mixed technique; cuvette: 28.5 x 38.8 cm; 2/10; signed and dated bottom right with pencil: *Eva Cerbu 1981*; title, technique and number of copies mentioned bottom left, with pencil; black plastic frame; inv. 13092

Onisim Colta, *Manuscrise / Manuscripts*, mixed technique: watercolour and collage on handmade paper; 26 x 36 cm; 2009; signed, dated, entitled, technique and dimensions upper left in black ink; biographic info printed and logo of the Brukenthal National Museum mid upper side, cfor the exhibition Good Geometry of the World organized between July 14<sup>th</sup> – August 14<sup>th</sup> 2011; underneath the photographic image of the author; upper right oleographic dedication in black ink: *Domnului Director general Adrian Sabin Luca / cu bucurie acest semn de prețuire stimă and recunoștință din partea lui Onisim / Colta, 17ictur / Sibiu, 13.08.2011*; left side: stamp of the frame in violet ink; on the chasses, label: *A figurat în expoziția Onisim Colta / Organizată de Galeria Dana în perioada 13 septembrie – 21 octombrie 2010*; ovale stamp of Dana Gallery in Iaand, in black ink; wood frame; inv. 13093

Kalena I. Keith, *La "Odihna" / At Rest*, mixed technique: aqua-forte, aquatint; cuvette: 22 x 16.1 cm; signed and dated bottom right with pencil: *Kalena I. Keith, 1988*; title and technique, bottom left, with pencil: *La "Odihna". Af. At*, black wood frame; inv. 13094

Alexandru Trifu, *Portret japonez / Japanese Portrait*, mixed technique on handmade paper, 52.5 x 38 cm, 56.5 x 51.5 cm, signed and dated bottom right: Trifu A. 2017, dedication, signature, localizatrion verso with black ink: *Cu toată dragostea și admirația Domnului Profesor Sabin Adrian Luca, Trifu A., Geneva 30.04.2018*, inv. 13103

## **DONATION OF ALEXANDRU GH. SONOC PHD., HEAD OF THE BRUKENTHAL ART GALLERY**

Alexandru Trifu, *Épreuve d'artiste / Probă de artist* (aqua-forte, aquatint on double strata pitch paper, cuvette: 34.2 x 28.2 cm / 59 x 45 cm; unique copy; wood frame; signed and dated bottom right with pencil: Trifu A. 92; dedication, dated, localized on the back: *Cu aleasă stimă / Dlui Sonoc Alexandru. / Aquaforce, aquatinta / Épreuve d'artiste / ex. Unique. Trifu A. Geneve 21-03-2018*; inv. 13101.

## **THE DONATION OF MR. GEORGE ȘEBAN**

Casia Csehi, *Călin măsurând cetatea / Călin Measuring the City*, ink on paper, 48 x 36 cm, 2016, inv. 13104.

Casia Csehi, *Amăgirea Evei, Eve's Deceiving*, ink on paper, 48 x 36 cm, 2016, inv. 13105.

Casia Csehi, *Spectrul lui Abel / Abel's Spectrum*, ink on paper, 48 x 36 cm, 2016, inv. 13106.

Casia Csehi, *Pagini de manuscris 5 / Manuscript pages 5*, tempera and gouache on paper, 50 x 35 cm, 2016, inv. 13107.

Casia Csehi, *Pagini de manuscris 6 / Manuscript pages 6*, tempera and gouache on paper, 50 x 35 cm, 2016, inv. 13108.

Ana Golici, *Angel Wings VII*, lithograph, 52 x 44 cm, 1998, inv. 13096

Ana Golici, *AP no title*, lithograph on silk, 40 x 20 cm, 2001, inv. 13097

Ana Golici, *DE LIRIS*, lithograph, 38.5 x 57 cm, 1997, inv. 13098

Ana Golici, *Structures II*, lithograph, 52 x 43 cm, 1998, inv. 13099

Ana Golici, *Memory of Leaf II*, lithograph, 64 x 43 cm, 2005, inv. 13100

George Șerban is a lawyer passionate for art. For more than 30 years he has been collecting art, mostly in graphic techniques. His collection, exhibited in the headquarters of his law company at Opera Business Centre in Bucharest, comprises works signed by Wanda Sachelarie, Alin Gheorghiu, Sorin Dumitrescu, Casia Csehi, Vasile Kazar, Sorin Dumitrescu, Florin Mitroi, Paul Gherasim, Ion Pacea, Horea Bernea, Marcel Iancu etc.

The donation was made on the occasion of the exhibition and conference *A Hundred years of Women Contributions to Romanian Art / Centenarul femeilor din arta românească*, organized at the Brukenthal National Museum by PostModernism Museum together with George Șerban and Nasui Collections. Curators of the exhibition and contributors: Cosmin Năsui, Robert Strebli, Iulia Mesea. The project was supported by the Ministry of Culture.

Ana Golici (b. 1955) studied at the Art University in Bucharest and at Hunter College. She lives in New York since 1987. She prefers mixed-media art, and is known for her digital prints inspired by art, science, nature and photography. Her digital prints combine 21<sup>st</sup> century techniques with fine art printmaking. She took part in many printmaking biennials and triennials in Europe, U.S., and Asia. She exhibited in New York Hall of Science, Hunter College Times Square Gallery, East-West Gallery in N.Y., and International Print Center New York. Her works can be found in the Library of Congress Collection and in private collections in Europe and the United States.

Casia Cseki (b. 1953) studied at the Art University in Bucharest with Professor Vasile Kazar. She worked as an illustrator for the most important Romanian Printing Houses. Her works are in the Contemporary Art National Museum Bucharest, and in the Art Museums in Galați, Tg. Jiu, Tulcea, Botoșani and in private and public collections in Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, France, Belgium, England, Germany, Italy, the USA, etc. She is a member of the Union of the Plastic Artists in Romania.

On the occasion of the event at the Brukenthal National Museum, Casia Csehi was awarded "The Prize for her entire activity".

## **CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COLLECTION OF DECORATIVE ARTS**

### **THE DONATION OF MIHAELA DANIELA DAN**

Altdeutsch Dinner waggon (Lengyel type), 2 pieces: 170x200x69 cm, walnut and sycamore maple veneer, engraved crystal, brass and copper handles. Date: 1930-1940, inv. AD 647

### **THE DONATION OF DR. RAIMAR KREMER AND BERND LINK, FROM BAD VILBEL, GERMANY**

Evening Dress, House of Worth, Paris, cca. 1898. Two pieces; silk; buttons decorated with pearls and strass; fabrics with metal thread; tulle for the sleeves; decorative application of strass. Dimensions: bust 85 cm, waist cca. 60 cm, front length cca. 150 cm, back length cca. 210 cm. Label cut in the waistband: „Worth \* Paris“ (Number 1044), inv. AD 644.

Evening dress or ball dress for WORTH. Made and worn in the late 1890s. Label woven in waist: “Worth \* Paris” (Number 1044). The two-piece dress is very elegant. Short sleeves, decorative buttons with pearls and pearls in the waist and waist area, metal woven fabric as the dominant decorative element in the upper part of the train, sleeves, decorative applications on the back of the top. The dress is in relatively good

condition. The silk from the dress more is worn out functionally, but the silk from the outside has several tears. The silk has become fragile from long storage and should be stabilized from the inside. Undoubtedly, the dress is a testimony to the old age of luxury tailoring.

Charles Frederick Worth opened a fashion house in Paris, in the Rue de la Paix in Paris, in 1858 and was soon successful. Worth flattered his clientele with luxurious materials and a neat cut. Worth revolutionized fashion industry dresses. He was the first fashion designer considered more as an artist than as a craftsman.

Evening Dress, Henriette Tissier, Paris, cca. 1895. Two pieces; Moiré silk printed with polychrome roses; buttons decorated with strass; Silk fabrics are printed with polychrome roses. The upper part closes sharply in front, has short sleeves, lace. Small silk strips decorate the top, as well as buttonholes. The jupon ends with a train. The bowl is decorated with a lace. Twelve ribbons and a silk panel adorn him. The parts are folded. Dimensions: bust cca. 80 cm, waist cca. 65 cm, front length cca. 145 cm, back length cca. 160 cm. Label cut in the waistband: „Mon Henriette Tissier, Cauet Soeurs Succrs Co., Robes & Manteaux, 17. Rue de Rome, Paris”. Source: Museum of the City of New York, inv. AD 645.

Victorian Ball Gown, German firm after a model of the House of Worth, cca. 1899. Pink brocade silk; lace; tassels of lignite beads. Dimensions: bust cca. 82 cm, waist cca. 102 cm, front length cca. 140 cm, back length cca. 190 c, inv. AD 646.

The opulent dress is made of heavy brocade silk, delicate pink. In the top lace is added, partially covered by the straps of the dress. Lignite beads were added to the chest and waist as decorative elements. At the back the dress closes with hooks and mesh. Very expensive and high-cost transformation, both inside and outside. Unfortunately, the dress does not have a label, but it could come from a German fashion house inspired by a model of the House of Worth. Conservation state is from satisfactory to good. The silk has suffered due to long storage.

#### **THE DONATION OF MRS. KARLA MARIA FABIAN**

Wood Cupboard, walnut tree veneer, 196 x 179 x 59 cm, Art Deco, 20<sup>th</sup> century, inv. AD 651

#### **THE DONATION OF PROFESSOR SABIN ADRIAN LUCA, MANAGER OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM**

Dan Tamba, *Isus Christos / Jesus Christ*, high relief in varnished linden wood, 28.8 x 21 cm; signed bottom right, monogram: DT, inv. S 627.

Dan Tamba, *Isus Christos / Jesus Christ*, high relief in varnished linden wood, 35 x 23.4 cm; verso: dated and dedication with black: *Fratelui Sabin Adrian Luca / Zalău dec. 2017*; and signed indecipherable, inv. S 628.

Dan Tamba, *Sf. Fecioară Maria / Virgin Mary*, high relief in varnished linden wood; 35.3 x 31.6 cm; signed and dated bottom: *DT 2014*, inv. S 629.

Dan Tamba, *Triskelion cu capete de 19ictu / Triskelion with Zebra Heads*, high relief in varnished linden wood; signed and dated bottom right with black, on the edge: *D. T. 2014 FEB. 11 / LA MULTI ANI!*, inv. S 630.

Dan Tamba is an archaeologist. He was a politician of the National Peasant Party and a prefect of Sălaj County. He retired because of health situation and dedicated to wood sculpture, showing preference to religious subjects.

#### **THE BEQUEATH OF ANNELIESE THUDT**

Secrétaire, wood, 132 x 63 x 117 cm, intarsia by prof. Michael Acker in Sebes, iron keys, 19<sup>th</sup> century, unique piece, inv. AD 649

The piece of furniture is unique according to the donor. The donor's mother, Elise Schneider probably purchased it from Sebeș or inherited it from her parents. The intarsia medallions were probably designed and executed by the drawing teacher Michael Acker from the Gymnasium in Sebeș.

Table Mirror, 15 x 10 x 29 cm, Biedermeier style, rose wood, 19<sup>th</sup> century, inv. AD 650

Annelise Thudt (29.05.1927–24.01.2018) was a researcher of the Transylvanian Saxon dialect at the Romanian Academy, the Institute for Social and Humanistic Research in Sibiu.

## **DONATIONS TO THE SCULPTURE COLLECTION**

### **THE DONATION OF DR. ELIZA CANTARAGIU**

#### **The works of the sculptor Ion Vlad**

Arbore tânăr / Young Tree	Bronze	62 x 58 x 20 cm	1975	S 593
Fecioara 20ict / The White Virgin	Carrara marble	61,5 x 58 cm	1975	S 594
Mihai Eminescu	Bronze	75 x 90 x 10 cm	1988	S 595
Squat Torso	Bronze	28 x 15 x 18 cm	1980	S 596
The male fruit of conception	Bronze	29,5 x 80 cm	1971	S 597
The female fruit of conception	Bronze	50 x 70 cm	1971	S 598
Autoportret / Selfportrait	Bronze	30 x 72 cm		S 599
Herkules	Bronze	32 x 27 x 8 cm	1986	S 600
Oul / The Egg	Bronze	12,5 x 9 cm	1986	S 601
Alexander Schweizer	Bronze	25,5 x 22,5 x 6,5 cm		S 602
Eugen Ionesco	Bronze	8 x 25 cm	1971	S 603
Vântul – Eliberarea de 20icture20m decembrie 89 / The Wind/ December 89	Bronze	7 x 11 x 25 cm	1991	S 604
Dimitrie Stelaru /The Stray Poet	Bronze	23 x 25 x 20 cm	1975	S 605
Doina din Fântâna Fecioarelor / Doina of the Virgin Well	Terrakotta	19 x 46 x 16 cm	1965	S 606
Orfeu / Orpheus	Bronze	50 x 38 x 20 cm	1972	S 607
Femeia pasăre / The Woman Bird	Bronze	34 x 37 x 23 cm		S 608
Mircea Eliade	Bronze	16 x 10 cm	1972	S 609
Torso	Bronze	23,5 x 32 x 14 cm	1990	S 610
Dr. Eliza Cantaragiu	Bronze	40 x 44 cm	1990	S 611
Cap de dac / Devilhead	Bronze	22,5 x 19,5 x 19 cm	1972	S 612
1. Vladimir Cantaragiu	1. Bronze	1. 24 x 64 cm	1991	S 613
2. Vladimir Cantaragiu	2. Gypsum	2. 26 x 67 cm		S 614
Hermaphrodite	Bronze	25 x 9,5 x 10 cm	1972	S 615
America	Bronze	21,5 x 15 x 5,5 cm	1982	S 616
Susa, die verrückte / the Mad Lady	Bronze	20 x 12 cm	1977	S 617
Cap de copil / Childhead	Bas-relief	25 x 23 x 6 cm		S 618
Embrionul / The Embryo	Bronze	20 x 32 x 16 cm	1989	S 619
100 Mihai Eminescu / Bronze medall	Bronze	7 cm		S 620
Masca doamnei Eliza Cantaragiu / the Mask of Eliza Cantaragiu	Bronze	17 x 6 x 15 cm		S 621
The Fruit	Bronze	5 cm x 6 cm		S 622
Cele trei femei / The Three Women	Bronze	6,5 x 6,5 x 1 cm		S 623
Crucifix	Bronze	48 x 8,5 x 39 cm		S 624
Dr. Eliza Cantaragiu	Gypsum	30 x 40 x 28 cm		S 625

**The works by Aurel CONTRAȘ**

Maternitate / Motherhood      Bronze      25,5 x 11 x 10 cm      S 626

**THE DONATION OF DR. HELGA SIBYLLE SILVIA HEDWIG STEIN-VON SPIESS**

Hans Mauer (1879–1962), *Field Marshal Hermann Albin Josef baron Kövess von Kövessháza (1854-1924), The last body of troops commander of the Austro-Hungarian Army in Sibiu* (bronze, 37.5 x 22 x 22 cm; no socle; signed on the back side bottom: H. MAUER; cca. 1915). Version of the author after the original kept in Heeresgeschichtliches Museum din Vienna, inv. S 592.

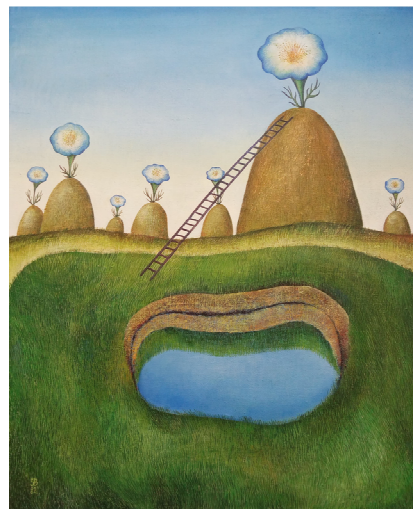
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| Mircea, Fleșer 2009  | Mircea, Gabriela; Fleșer, Gheorghe. <i>Reflexe istorice în creația lui Gheorghe Suci</i> . <i>Ipostaze citadine</i> , Alba Iulia (2012).  |
| Mircea, Cutean 2012a | Mircea, Gabriela; Cutean, Smaranda. <i>Din creația pictorului Gheorghe Suci</i> . <i>Flori și ulcele de altcândva (Candid elogi</i> . <i>Album-Catalog</i> , Alba Iulia (2012).   |
| Mircea, Cutean 2012b | Mircea, Gabriela ; Cutean, Smaranda. <i>Locuri predilecte în creația pictorului Gheorghe Suci : Timișoara și Sibiul (Candidă evadare din prezent)</i> . <i>Album-Catalog</i> . <i>La aniversarea a 85 de ani de viață a artistului</i> , Alba Iulia (2012). |
| Mircea et al. 2014   | Mircea, Gabriela ; Rustoiu, Ioana ; Cutean, Smaranda. <i>Vințu de Jos, evocat literar și pictural de Gheorghe Suci</i> . <i>Comentariu critic, ediția "Amintirilor" artistului și Catalog de 21cture</i> , Alba Iulia (2014).                               |
| Moșescu-Măciucă 1967 | Moșescu-Măciucă, Balcica, <i>Expoziția regională Brașov</i> . In: <i>Arta</i> , 3 (1967).   |
| Răzvan 2017          | Răzvan, Paul. <i>Nostalgii timișorene – album despre orașul de altă dată</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition, Timișoara (2011).   |
| Mesea 2016           | Mesea, Iulia, <i>Semnele Timpului. Energii arhetipale</i> . <i>Constantin Severin</i> , Sibiu (2016).   |
| Trifu 2016           | Trifu, Alexandru, Pictor, <i>A fost odată ca niciodată. Revolta 1942–2015</i> , București (2016).   |



# LISTA ILUSTRĂȚIILOR / LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Sieglinde Bottesch, *Casa copilăriei / The House of Childhood*, inv. 3416
2. Sieglinde Bottesch, *Dor de vară / Longing for the Summer*, inv. 3418
3. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Jucători de polo / Polo Players* inv. 3356
4. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Vapoare / Ships*, inv.3358
5. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Cai și călăreți / Horses and Riders*, inv. 3361
6. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Grup de dansatoare / Group of Dancers*, inv. 3370
7. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Grup de dansatori / Group of Dancers*, inv. 3371
8. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Jucători de polo / Polo Players*, inv. 3374
9. Ioan Muntean, Ilie Mitrea, Andrei Popa, Cătălin Precup, *Sibiu 12.10*, inv. 3423
10. Csaba Zsemleeny, *Studiu pentru portretul lui Mihai Viteazul*, 3412
11. Rodica Chișu, *Femeie cu violoncel / Woman with a Cello*, inv. 13086
12. Rodica Chișu, *Apa / Water*, inv. 13088
13. Gert Fabritius, *Calet de schițe / Sketch book*, inv. 12966.
14. Stefan Orth, *Germinație / Germination*, inv. 13091
15. Eva Cerbu, *În port / In the Harbour*, inv. 13092
16. Onisim Colta, *Manuscrise / Manuscripts*, inv. 13093
17. Tiberiu Coșovan, *Suceava Strada Regele Ferdinand / King Ferdinand Street in Suceava*, inv. 13102
18. Casia Csehi, *Călin măsurând cetatea / Călin Measuring the City*, ink on paper, 48 x 36 cm, 2016, inv. 13104.
19. Casia Csehi, *Amăgirea Evei, Eve's Deceiving*, ink on paper, 48 x 36 cm, 2016, inv. 13105.
20. Casia Csehi, *Spectrul lui Abel / Abel's Spectrum*, ink on paper, 48 x 36 cm, 2016, inv. 13106.
21. Casia Csehi, *Pagini de manuscris 5 / Manuscript pages 5*, tempera and gouache on paper, 50 x 35 cm, 2016, inv. 13107.
22. Casia Csehi, *Pagini de manuscris 6 / Manuscript pages 6*, tempera and gouache on paper, 50 x 35 cm, 2016, inv. 13108.
23. Ana Golici, *Angel Wings VII*, lithograph, 52 x 44 cm, 1998, inv. 13096
24. Ana Golici, *AP no title*, lithograph on silk, 40 x 20 cm, 2001, inv. 13097
25. Ana Golici, *DE LIRIS*, lithograph, 38.5 x 57 cm, 1997, inv. 13098
26. Ana Golici, *Structures II*, lithograph, 52 x 43 cm, 1998, inv. 13099
27. Ana Golici, *Memory of Leaf II*, lithograph, 64 x 43 cm, 2005, inv. 13100
28. Alexandru Trifu, *Épreuve d'artiste / Probă de artist*, inv. 13101
29. Alexandru Trifu, *Portret japonez / Japanese Portrait*, inv. 13103



1. Sieglinde Bottesch, *Casa copilăriei / The House of Childhood*, inv. 3416
2. Sieglinde Bottesch, *Dor de vară / Longing for the Summer*, inv. 3418



3. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Jucători de polo / Polo Players* inv. 3356
4. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Vapoare / Ships*, inv.3358



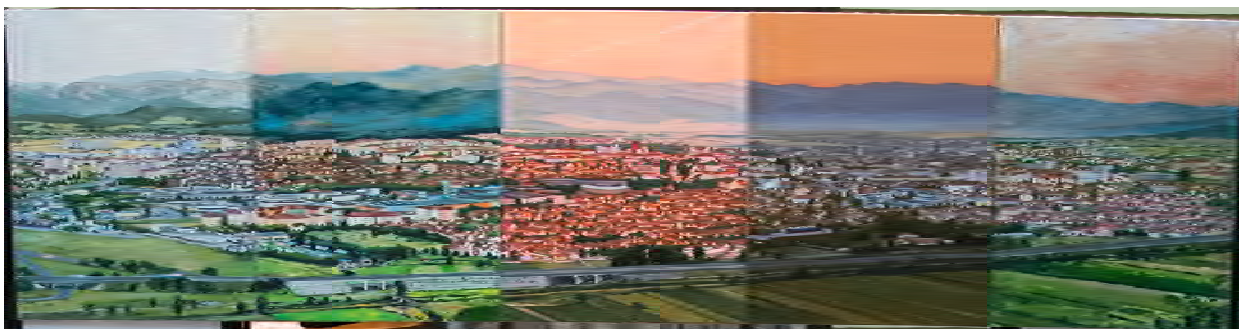
5. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Cai și călăreți / Horses and Riders*, inv. 3361
6. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Grup de dansatoare / Group of Dancers*, inv. 3370





7. Magdalena Rădulescu, *Grup de dansatori / Group of Dancers*, inv. 3371

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9. Ioan Muntean, Ilie Mitrea, Andrei Popa, Cătălin Precup, *Sibiu 12.10*, inv. 3423



10. Csaba Zsemleenyi, *Studiu pentru portretul lui Mihai Viteazul*, 3412

11. Rodica Chișu, *Femeie cu violoncel / Woman with a Cello*, inv. 13086



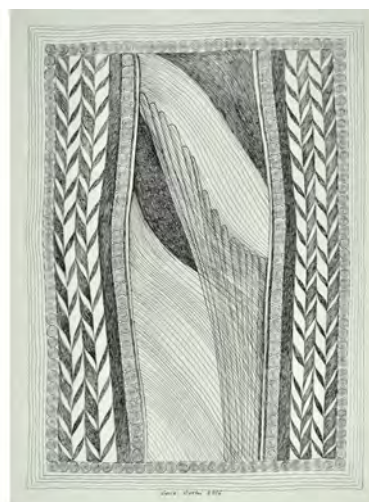
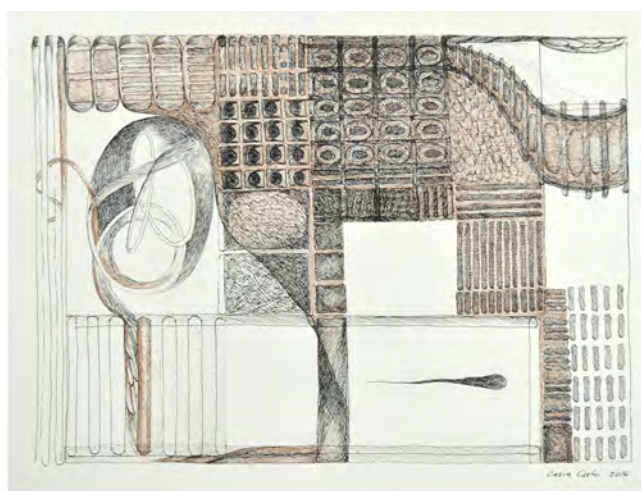




12. Rodica Chișu, *Apa / Water*, inv. 13088  
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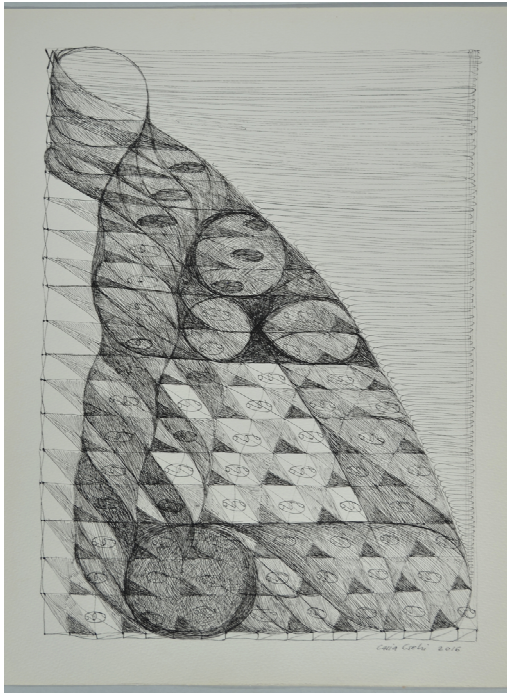


15. Eva Cerbu, *În port / In the Harbour*, inv. 13092  
 16. Onisim Colta, *Manuscrise / Manuscripts*, inv. 13093  
 17. Tiberiu Coșovan, *Suceava Strada Regele Ferdinand / King Ferdinand Street in Suceava*, inv. 13102

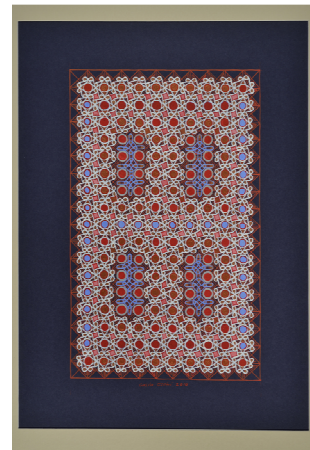
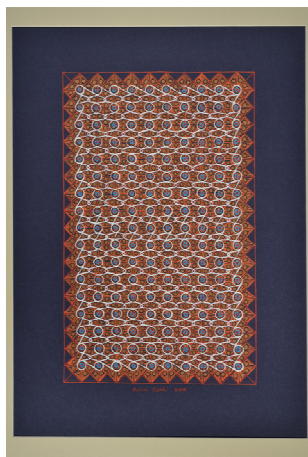


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 19. Casia Csehi, *Amăgirea Evei, Eve's Deceiving*, ink on paper, 48 x 36 cm, 2016, inv. 13105.





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 29. Alexandru Trifu, *Portrait japonais / Japanese Portrait*, inv. 13103





## BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM IN 2017: A CHRONICLE OF ART EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Dana Roxana HRIB\*

**Abstract:** *The present study is a synthetic presentation of Brukenthal National Museum's cultural offer in the field of visual arts during the Bicentennial year 2017.*

**Keywords:** *Brukenthal National Museum, visual arts, 2017.*

**Rezumat:** *Articolul de față constituie o prezentare sintetică a ofertei culturale a Muzeului Național Brukenthal în domeniul artelor vizuale, pe parcursul Anului Bicentenar 2017.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Muzeul Național Brukenthal, arte vizuale, 2017.*

In 2017, Brukenthal Museum celebrated 200 years of public activity.

The Bicentennial provided a moment in time to acknowledge the importance of the Museum as the first to be established in Romania. The goal assumed was to coordinate a year-long celebration comprising museum projects and activities along additional events staged by local and national partners.

2017 was dedicated to the long mission in promoting the heritage that the museum carried on up to our days but, it addressed to people, to the general public.

In organizing 2017 Bicentennial Year, the Museum emphasized on the special experience binding museum employees, cultural partners and visitors to the Brukenthal identity – as all of us are beneficiaries of a two hundred years project meant to facilitating access to culture.

### 1. Permanent exhibitions: new permanent exhibitions on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor in Brukenthal Palace<sup>1</sup>

Project inside the 2017 Brukenthal Bicentennial program, the works at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor in Brukenthal Palace continued the concept developed during previous years, focusing on the interior atmosphere in the late 18<sup>th</sup> c. and the early 19<sup>th</sup> c. along with thematic rooms.

During 2017, were completed the works for the *Library* sector (Fig.1), presenting books from von Brukenthal's original collection (personalized by the von Brukenthal family coat of arms on the cover) as well as books from the collections added to the library in the late 19<sup>th</sup> c.

The project involved the participation of the specialists<sup>2</sup> from *Altemberger House* Museum of History in respect to collection items supporting the exhibition concept: writing sets (ink stand, sand shaker, nib-pen, letter rack, letter opener, paper weight etc.) made of silver, metal or porcelain (19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> c.), eyeglasses, magnifier glass (19<sup>th</sup> c.), the pipe bowl of Prince Karl von Schwarzenberg (Governor of Transylvania between 1851-1858), a woodcut block (18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> c.), silver candlesticks (19<sup>th</sup> c.), cold weapons (19<sup>th</sup> c.) and walking sticks (18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> c.). Also to be noted is the activity of restoration laboratories inside Brukenthal National Museum for the new additions of furniture items to the permanent display.

Other refurbishment works addressed to the *Masterpieces of Brukenthal Collection* permanent exhibition (Fig. 2); according to the visitor's observations and requirements, the illumination was improved in this sector for a better visibility of the works. The number of exhibits was increased from 23 to 34 as the result of a selection based on the newest research in the European painting collection and the efforts of Museum's restoration laboratories.

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<sup>1</sup> The short descriptions of permanent exhibitions are selected from the texts given by the curators (Dorin Barbu, Dana Hrib, Adrian Luca, Alexandru Sonoc and Robert Strebli) for public information.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Raluca Frâncu collections research.

## 2. Temporary exhibitions at the Museum locations<sup>3</sup>

37 temporary exhibitions were organized at the Museum's premises during 2017, of which 23 exhibitions presented cultural heritage through collections or photo-documentary presentation; 9 exhibitions featured contemporary art, 1 exhibition was the result of educational projects; 4 exhibitions consisted of media and marketing projects. Also, of the 37 exhibitions, 16 were exclusive projects of Brukenthal National Museum, 18 were projects developed in collaboration with local and national partners and 3 projects were carried out in collaboration with international partners.

Here are the exhibitions that displayed selections of works in various fields of visual arts along exhibitions dedicated to library, cartography collection and the history of museums in Romania:

### a. Exhibitions presenting Brukenthal National Museum's heritage:

*Zooming Franz Neuhauser* (Brukenthal Palace, Cabinet of Engravings and Drawings, 25.02 – 4.06): the exhibition presented the personal and artistic life of Franz Neuhauser the Younger (1763 – 1836), painter and engraver. On display were to be found lithography works, watercolours and drawings made by the artist and now in the Brukenthal National Museum collections. The selected exhibits have a special documentary value and are suggestive for different aspects and stages in Neuhauser's activity from painter and engraver to teacher and restorer. Thus, the works depict landscapes, portraits, studies, sketches but also reproductions after paintings in the collection of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal.

*Heroes, saints and common people* (Brukenthal Palace, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 25.02 – 30.07): the exhibition presented a selection of European paintings, 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> c., while its narrative comprised mythological, biblical, literary, historical and everyday life characters. On display were to be seen joined illustrations of the Olympian legends, sequences of church history, allegories and scenes from the daily life of common people. The latter are those who continually reopen the cycles through which humanity seeks and assumes the trans-human models, thus acquiring the right to transcendence.

*Sequences from the 18<sup>th</sup> c. Transylvania* (Multimedia Room, Casa Albastră / Blue House, 22.03 – 11.06): works of heritage from the Museum's collections of painting, engravings, old books and decorative art along artistic, cultural and historical testimonies, were all presented inside the exhibition with an emphasis on the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> c. in the southern Transylvania, a province governed for a decade by Baron Samuel von Brukenthal whose cultural legacy materialized as the first public museum in Romania and one of the oldest museum in Europe.

*Cartographia imperialis: Johann Baptist Homann* (Brukenthal Palace, Cartography Cabinet, 17.05 – 31.08): the exhibition brought together works by German geographer and cartographer Johann Baptist Homann (1664-1724) and works edited during 18<sup>th</sup> c., inspired by his creation as Homann acquired renown as creator of numerous maps and atlases but also for being his own editor and publisher. The exhibition presented three atlases: the exceptional *Spherarum Artificialum* of more than 180 maps and depictions of cities all over the world (Samul von Brukenthal collection), *Atlas novus terrarium* of 50 maps (Baron's collection) and *Atlas methodicus* for youth (printed in Nuremberg, in 1777) along various maps of Africa, the two Americas and other, made by Homann or reproduced by Homanniani Heredes after his death.

*Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum: Samuel von Brukenthal's Bibles* (Multimedia Room, Casa Albastră/Blue House, 21.06 – 31.08): the exhibition brought into the public attention the bible collection of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal. In *Brukenthalisches Bibliothekskatalog*, a library inventory drawn up after the death of the Baron, are mentioned over 30 Bibles in languages like Latin, German, French, English and Hebrew etc. The oldest Bible displayed in the exhibition is an incunabulum from 1478 printed in Nuremberg by Anton Koberger, while the latest is a Bible printed in Berlin in 1786. Among the exhibits there were also: six Bibles dated in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (from printers such as Froben or Robert Estienne), over ten editions of the 18<sup>th</sup> c. Bible (including the *Bible Polyglotta Londinensia* printed since 1657), two editions of the *Biblia Latina* (published in Tübingen in 1606 and 1609 respectively), a Bible in Welsh / Cymraeg (1718), a *Biblia Hebraica* (printed in Amsterdam in 1753) and, not in the least, editions of the Bible after Martin Luther, printed in Ulm, Halle etc.

<sup>3</sup> The short descriptions of temporary exhibitions are selected from the texts given by the curators for public information.

*Heritage of the future: the contemporary art collection of Brukenthal National Museum* (Museum of Contemporary, 5.07 – 2.09): Museums are set up and live through the means of their collections. The objects in each and every collection convey the historical information of the past and document the present in the benefit of future researches. Baron Samuel von Brukenthal collected, in addition to old valuables of arts and sciences, the contemporary creation of his time. According to this tradition, Brukenthal National Museum continues the work in relating the collections with the artistic actuality, the exhibition presenting items from the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art that is establishing the heritage of the following centuries.

For Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu, year 2017 holds many significances: the 10 years celebration since Romania became a full member of the European Union, the 10 years celebration since Sibiu became Cultural Capital of Europe and, especially, 200 years since its public opening. In accordance to these significant numbers, the exhibition concept presents two groups of artists: “the 20” and “the 17”, illustrating the evolution of the contemporary art in Romania, as documented in the Museum’s collection. “The 20” (Petre Achițenie, Virgil Almășanu, Gheorghe I. Anghel, Horia Bernea, Ștefan Bertalan, Maria Bodor, Marcel Bunea, Rodica Chișu, Peter Connerth, Sorin Dumitrescu, Teodor Hrib, Sorin Ilfoveanu, Tudor Lorman, Ion Pacea, Ion Sălișteanu, Gheorghe Spiridon, Dorian Szasz, Lia Szasz, Ion Vlad and Grigore Zincovschi) represent a generation mostly active in the 80s. Although dealing with the communist ideology and restrictions, their work is reflecting the high education received at fine art institutes in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca and Iași under the masters of Romanian art that evinced brilliantly the European trends especially during interwar period. Some of the artist in the first group acquired renown in diaspora, some of them teach in nowadays Romanian art universities and some of them received national recognition through important decorations or academy affiliation. “The 17” (Zsolt Berszan, István Betuker, Zamfira Bîrzu, Cristian Diaconescu, Gabriela Drinceanu, Adrian Luca, Ilie Mitrea, Ioan Muntean, Mihai Pamfil, Mihai Pâslariu, Andrei Popa, Cătălin Precup, Florica Prevenda, Robert Strebeli, Albert Sofian, Veres Szabolcs and Sorina Țibacov) represent the young generation, in full process of acquiring artistic identity. They are the update factor of the Romanian contemporary art scene not only in terms of trends and innovation but also in respect to accessing European and international educational systems by scholarships, M.A. and PhD. studies. More inclined towards interdisciplinary, they benefit in the re-opening of the *homo europaeus* experience for the Romanian artists. The selection of 37 works on display covered painting, drawing, tapestry, engraving, sculpture, kinetic composition, collage, photography, installation and mixed techniques.

*Connections. Transylvanian painting and the international artistic centers 1817-1947* (Multimedia Room, Casa Albastră / Blue House, 06.09 – 19.11): organized in partnership with the “Artistic Center of Baia Mare” Fine Arts Museum, the exhibition proved the capacity of Brukenthal National Museum’s collection to harmonize and resonate with other public museum collections. In this context, the conceptual and aesthetic “meeting” with pieces from the art museum in Baia Mare supported the congruence of the Transylvanian regional art with the international artistic experiments and often the surprising movement of the “models”. Among the pieces on display worth to be mentioned here were, from the Brukenthal collection “Aesculap and Hygiea” by Th. B. Sockl, “Landscape with Mill” by H. Bulhardt, “The Dance of the Fairies” by C. Dörschlag, “Woman with Samovar” by A. Coulin and “Bacchante” by Epaminonda Bucevschi, “Portrait of a Girl” by Al. Popp, “Landscape at Teceu” by Al. N. Tihomirov from the collections of Baia Mare Museum.

*Masterpieces from the prints collection of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal* (Brukenthal Palace, Prints and Drawings Cabinet, 28.09 - 26.11): the exhibition presented a selection of the most valuable and interesting works from Baron Samuel von Brukenthal’s prints collection. It comprised a few original engravings and especially reproductive and interpretative engravings after great artists of the Renaissance and Baroque, such as Raphael, Tintoretto, Correggio, Titian, Caravaggio, Annibale Carracci, Guido Reni, Peter Paul Rubens, Antoon van Dyck and Jacob Jordaens. The exhibited prints were made between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries by Flemish and Dutch, Italian, French, German and Austrian, as well as English master engravers. Thus, the exhibition included the names of renowned printmakers, such as Albrecht Dürer, Hendrick Goltzius, Aegidius Sadeler, Nicolaes de Bruyn, Schelte à Bolswert, Marcantonio Raimondi, Agostino Carracci, Claude Mellan, Gérard Edelinck, Andreas and Joseph Schmutzer, Robert Strange, and others.

*Mappa della Transilvania* (Brukenthal Palace, Cartography Cabinet, 18.10 – 31.12): Giovanni Morando Visconti, born probably in Curio (Switzerland), in 1652, was an important engineer corps officer in the Habsburg military, architect and cartographer. His career began in the 1680s, during the Habsburg – Ottoman wars. One of his major works, “Mappa della Transilvania” printed in Sibiu, in 1699, can be found

today as part of the collections hosted by Brukenthal National Museum. General public was offered the opportunity to see all 13 original maps that are part of the “Mappa” on the occasion of the exhibition.

**b. Exhibition presenting Romanian national heritage, hosted by the Museum:**

*Heavenly tears. The sorrowful Virgins of Transylvania* (Brukenthal Palace, Temporary Exhibition Hall, 12.04 – 14.05): organized in collaboration with Bistrița-Năsăud Museum, East-Orthodox Deanery Bistrița, Metropolitan Church of Cluj, Maramureș and Sălaj and Cultural Association Painter Octavian Smigelschi, the exhibition presented icons painted on wood and glass, representing the Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Dated in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the icons on display illustrate not only the traditional artistic patterns to be found in all Eastern-Orthodox Churches but also the influences received from Renaissance and Baroque cultural backgrounds, due to the multiculturalism of Transylvanian province.

*Centennial of the Women in Romanian Art* (Museum of Contemporary Art, 8.11.2017 - 28.02): the exhibition was part of the project “Guests to the Museum of Contemporary Art” comprised in the 2017 Brukenthal Bicentennial cultural agenda, also marking the launch of the Great Union Centennial. It comprised original artworks, artefacts, memorabilia, catalogs, digital archive, a series of infographics presenting the sub-themes of the research, and two video projections.

**c. Exhibition presenting international heritage, hosted by the Museum:**

*Theatre, film and opera Polish posters from Krzysztof Dydo Collection* (Museum of Contemporary Art, 7-30.06): Sixty years ago, the economy of forms, innovative lettering, fantasy, irony and the amazing skill of synthetically conceptualized reality were all characteristics which have made the Polish poster famous all around the world. For years, the “Polish Poster School” has been a world benchmark of artistic design. The most interesting examples of this art that are dedicated to theatre, film and opera were to be seen in the exhibition organized by the Polish Institute in Bucharest in collaboration with the National Brukenthal Museum and the Sibiu International Theatre Festival. Especially planned for the theatre festival (with the support of the largest Polish private collection of posters, counting more than 20 thousand works, belonging to Krzysztof Dydo, a good connoisseur of poster art and owner of a gallery in Cracow), the exhibition comprised eighty works, created by 50 artists. Among them, forerunners of the „Polish poster school” such as Henryk Tomaszewski, Jan Lenica, Waldemar Świerzy, Jan Młodożeniec or Franciszek Starowieyski are to be seen. There will also be on display posters by illustrators from the young generation, worthily continuing the art of their predecessors, such as Lech Majewski, Andrzej Pałowski, Tomasz Bogusławski or Sebastian Kubica.

*Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528). Apocalypse cum figuris - the most remarkable graphic series in Europe* (Brukenthal Palace, Engravings and Drawings Cabinet, 14.12.2017 - 28.02.2018): organized in partnership with the National Museum in Gdansk, the exhibition related to the first project that brought Albrecht Dürer to his fame was a series of Biblical themes inspired by the *Revelation to John*, published in 1498 and again in 1511. From the perspective of posterity, this series issued in his youth, made in the wood engraving technique, is one of the most important and revolutionary works of art history; for the first time in the history of art images, the graphics were placed on the equal level with drawing and painting, but with greater impact due to the possibility of multiple and low cost reproduction of the image. Another series of religious themes, *The Great Passion of Christ*, of 1511, also serves to relive the Bible, in a human language, legible, in a real, convincing artistic form. Due to the popular features of the message transmitted through the means of woodcut, the artist gained a wide audience in all social categories. For both series of works, Dürer's vision of Scripture was influenced by apocalyptic fears and millennial hopes. The exhibition featured 14 engravings from the series of Revelation to John and 7 engravings from the series Great Passion of Christ. The engravings came from a collection of the City Museum in Gdańsk (Stadtmuseum Danzig), being in the museum propriety before the Second World War. Such graphic series of great value are held by the world's most important museums and libraries while the originals are rarely presented abroad, as is the case of the present exhibition, which is an event of great importance for the Brukenthal National Museum and for the visitor audience.

**d. Exhibition presenting the history of museums in Romania and contemporary projects on museum subject:**

*The National Museum of the History of Transylvania* (Brukenthal Palace, Cartography Cabinet, 13.01 – 3.02): organized in partnership with National Museum of the History of Transylvania, the exhibition was part

of the project “Private collections and museums from Romania”. The exhibition presented, through the means of photo-documentary materials, the historical evolution of the collections administrated by the museum from the 19th c. to the present. It also described the museum activity in Cluj and the most important pieces comprised in the collections.

*The National Museum of Banat. 145 years of history* (Brukenthal Palace, Cartography Cabinet, 13.01 – 3.02): organized in partnership with the National Museum of Banat, the exhibition was part of project “Private collections and museums from Romania” and presented, through the means of 29 photo-documentary materials, the most representative cultural assets in the Banat Museum heritage along aspects from the institution’s activity: exhibitions, scientific research, publications and their emergence in time.

*Brukenthal National Museum: two centuries of heritage culture* (Brukenthal Palace, Cartography Cabinet, 30.03 – 14.05): the exhibition was part of project “Private collections and museums from Romania”. The 44 photo-documentary panels comprised an essential chronicle of the Museum history, back to the Baron Samuel von Brukenthal’s passion for collecting and his testament to the historical evolution of the institution whose complexity has increased over time through the addition of new premises for exhibitions and new departments of activity. The entire series of exhibitions included in the exhibition was part of project “Private collections and museums from Romania” is an endeavor for awareness-raising and popularization of the importance of Romanian heritage; its formation, conservation and the acknowledgment of its value being a well-defined segment in the sphere of national culture – the Heritage Culture.

*Romanian Pantries Museum at the Brukenthal National Museum* (Brukenthal Palace, 26-29.10): organized by Lidl, the exhibition presented the first pop-up culinary museum that is archiving and describing the evolution of Romanian cuisine. The exhibition was structured in two modules: the presentation area and the tasting area. In the first area, visitors were invited to see the illustrated stories of the preparations from each region of Romania, in a decor that includes a series of oversized thematic exhibits. There, visitors also discovered reproductions describing how food arrangement on the dish has evolved over time. The tour also included a visit to the Gallery of Flavors. In the second area, visitors were invited to taste a special menu created by Lidl, with products from Our Pantry range.

**e. Exhibitions of contemporary art:**

*The Gift* (Artist: Ilie Mitrea, Museum of Contemporary Art, 3.03 – 30.04): Holder of the “Lorenzo il Magnifico” prize at the Contemporary Art Biennale in Florence 2015, Ilie Mitrea returns for the third time in Brukenthal Museum’s exhibition halls with a project suggestively entitled *The Gift*. The artist’s gift offered to Baron Samuel von Brukenthal – seven paintings (oil on canvas) and installation – was not only a cultural reverence occasioned by the 2017 Brukenthal Bicentennial but also a novelty project, a historical update and an invitation to the imagination. The exhibition opened a dialogue between the dynamic in which collection of paintings are set and the today’s visitor in exhibitions. The visitors had an unique chance to see how Samuel von Brukenthal would have looked like if portrayed by Francis Bacon, Salvador Dali, Andy Warhol, Vincent Van Gogh or Alfons Mucha.

*The little icon painters* (Brukenthal Palace, Temporary Exhibition Hall, 12.04 – 14.05): the educational project entitled “The little icon painters” was organized by the Museum of History – *Altemberger House* inside Brukenthal National Museum in partnership with Kinder-garden No. 15 in Sibiu and aimed at approaching the Romanian cultural and religious heritage through the means of painting on glass, a traditional way of creating. The exhibition in Brukenthal Palace presented 68 works done by the children on the duration of the project. They worked in the traditional style using a model drawn on paper, copied on the glass and colored. Each work displayed the personal touch and imagination of the little “artist” who painted it.

*DOI 5 [TWO 5]* (Artists: Dana Constantin and Marcel Bunea, Museum of Contemporary Art, 3 – 30.05): for the second time on display in Brukenthal National Museum, visual artists Dana Constantin and Marcel Bunea were opening the fifth exhibition of the series “DOI” [TWO]. Sharing the same preoccupations in contemporary painting, life and artistic pedagogy, Dana Constantin and Marcel Bunea are professors at the Faculty of Arts and Design of the West University of Timișoara and, respectively, at the National Art University of Bucharest. The ten large works (oil on canvas, 250x45 cm), made by Dana Constantin, brought lyricism and sensitivity into a discourse of linear expression, fused and juxtaposed in colored greys. Marcel Bunea exhibited a number of 40 small works (acrylic on canvas, 30x30 cm), presenting a world of construction, determined by the horizontal – vertical relationship as well as the flat tint.



*Same palace in a different light* (Brukenthal Palace, inner courtyard, 18.05 – 31.12): fine-art photography is created in accordance with the photographer's vision, unlike the representational photography practiced in photo-journalism (whose objective is a specific topic or event) or the commercial photography (whose objective is to promote a product or a service). Museum photographer, Alexandru Olănescu assumed all of the above objectives in documenting the heritage and the events from Brukenthal National Museum or in promoting its activities. On the occasion of the exhibition, however, he proposed a series of images showing a personal perspective on Brukenthal Palace. Because among the current trends on photography, the light plays the most important role, the pictures by Alexandru Olănescu displayed not the discovering of new aspects but unrepeatable moments in the life of the palace and of the people attending its spaces. Different seasons and moments of the day, interior aspects or exterior views, details or overall images were highlighted in warm colors and unique luminosities with the emotional approach felt by a person who observes life in a familiar space.

*Barock Kolloquium. Paintings by Michael Lassel* (Brukenthal Palace, Cartography Cabinet, 4.08 - 27.09): organized in partnership with Transylvanian German-Saxons' Association in Germany, the exhibition comprised 34 works in *trompe l'oeil* by Michael Lassel, considered one of the masters of this technique on the fine arts scene of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. (alongside Jacques Poirier, Henri Cadiou and Pierre Gillou). The detail and accuracy of the drawing in the paintings are a statement vs. digital art, describing an arc in time between the contemporary art and the one created 200 years ago, looking for similarities and differences in the perception of the world from a realistic, idealistic or surrealistic perspective in, often misleading, sensory boundaries (*trompe l'oeil* being an artistic technique used in painting to create the illusion of three-dimensionality). The compositions express erudition, an opulent pleasure to live and an interest in knowing the perishability of everything that is alive and material. Michael Lassel, an artist from Logig / Ludwigsdorf (Mureș County), lives and works in Fürth, Germany. Part of the 2017 Brukenthal Bicentennial cultural program, the exhibition is organized on the occasion of the 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the German-Saxons in Transylvania.

*Ephemeral* (Artist: Florica Prevenda, Contemporary Art Museum, 4.10 – 5.11): Florica Prevenda is one of the most innovative artists in contemporary Romanian artistic space. Beginning with "Faces without a Face", through "Net People", "Shadows of the Present", "Time Regained", "Facebook Obsession" and "Serenity", the artist puts face to face ideological identities that generate questions and answers about the contemporary man and human socio-cultural dimension in the context of the unprecedented development of the informational era. The "Ephemeral" exhibition, occasioned by the celebration of Brukenthal Museum's Bicentennial, was an annotation on relativity. The deposit of facts, thoughts and aspirations of modern man is cyclically impacted by the speed to which information is perceived. In the absence of stable benchmarks, where excessive information consumption escapes from a minimal value control, our relationship to the context tends to become a set of reactions generated by a perishable and ephemeral accumulation of information.

*The "Image Art" Photography Show, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* (Multimedia Room, Casa Albastră / Blue House, 3.11 – 31.12): organized by Image Art Photography School in Sibiu, the exhibition's main purpose was to provide an incentive for those who are discovering now the secrets of photography and have proven themselves to master a special talent, the one of looking at the world through the lens of the camera.

### 3. Online exhibitions:

*2017 Brukenthal Bicentennial – A Chronicle of the Events*

[http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/evenimente/index\\_en.html](http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/evenimente/index_en.html)

*2017 Brukenthal Bicentennial – A Chronicle of the Exhibitions*

[http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/expozitii/index\\_en.html](http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/expozitii/index_en.html)

*2017 Brukenthal Bicentennial – A Chronicle of the Symposiums*

[http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/simpozioane/index\\_en.html](http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/simpozioane/index_en.html)

### 4. Exhibitions Brukenthal Museum exclusive, opened at other premises than the Museum locations:

*Brukenthal National Museum 2007 – 2017* (Grand Square, Sibiu, 1-31.11): Brukenthal Museum is not only a two centuries old witness of history but also one of its survivors and, not in the least, one of its winners.

Thought by his founder, Baron Samuel von Brukenthal, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> c., it managed to preserve its cultural identity after two world wars, the communist period and the historical uncertainties that followed. For the museum, the 21<sup>st</sup> century began with two essential events: Sibiu European Capital of Culture in 2007 and the Order of "Cultural Merit" in the rank of Commander, Category E "National Cultural Heritage", conferred in 2017 to Brukenthal National Museum by the President of Romania, Mister Klaus Iohannis, on the occasion of celebrating 200 years since the public inauguration. Opened in the Grand Square of Sibiu, the exhibition presents synthetically the evolution of the institution during the period delineated by the two events mentioned above, through the means of documentary images. The 28 panels focus on the milestones in the recent history of the museum but also of the communities in which the museum is organically comprised – the city, the people and the country.

## 5. Participating in temporary exhibitions

### a. In Romania

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow (Organized by Brukenthal von Studio Association, Partner Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu Town Hall, 13 – 24.04)

Short Circuit (Organized by Brukenthal von Studio Association, Partner Brukenthal National Museum, Bistrița Năsăud Museum, 29.04 – 30.05)

Sibiu | 2.10. (Organized by Brukenthal von Studio Association, Partner Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu Town Hall, 24.08-8.09)

Who's Who (Organized by Brukenthal von Studio Association, Partner Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu Town Hall, 2.09-17.09)

Teleport (Organized by Brukenthal von Studio Association, Partner Brukenthal National Museum, YellowBoot Aparthotel, 6-29.10)

### b. Abroad

Passion. Albrecht Bouts and the Faces of Christ (Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen, 8.03-11.06)

## 6. Events

The opening ceremony of the 2017 Brukenthal Bicentennial (Brukenthal Palace, 25.02) was held on the same day of February 25, as the inauguration of the Museum back in 1817. The festivities (Fig. 3) were attended by distinguished guests, cultural partners and friends of the Museum; speeches have been delivered by His Excellency Mr. Klaus Werner Iohannis, President of Romania, Mr. Ioan Vulpescu, Minister of Culture and National Identity, Mrs. Astrid Fodor, Mayor of Sibiu, Mrs. Daniela Cîmpean, President of Sibiu County Council, Mr. Friederich Philippi, curator of Superior Consistory of Evangelical Church, His Eminence Laurențiu, Metropolitan of Transylvania, His Excellency Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendia, the Apostolic Nuncio, His Excellency Christian Biever, Ambassador in Romania of Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Acad. Victor Spinei, Vice President of the Romanian Academy. Messages have been received from His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church and His Excellency Reinhart Guib, Bishop of the Evangelical Church C.A. in Romania.

Stradivarius International Tour in Brukenthal Palace! (Brukenthal Palace inner courtyard, 1.06): violinists Alexandru Tomescu together with Omar Massa and Sînziana Mircea performed a concert comprised in the Stradivarius Tour to which over 10,000 music lovers participated up to the Brukenthal event.

Round table inside the exhibition "Centennial of the Women in Romanian Art" (Museum of Contemporary Art, 26.11): experts, art critics and historians were invited to a round table hosted by the exhibition-research project "Centennial of the Women in Romanian Art" at the Museum of Contemporary Art inside Brukenthal National Museum. The following topics of research have been presented: "Feminine artistic presences in Sibiu and Brașov up to the first half of the 20th century" (Iulia Mesea), "The women artists and the militant graphics: a quantitative analysis of the presence and activity within the humoristic and caricature magazine *Urzica* during 1949-1965" (Victor Sămărtinean), "Women artists during communism: quantitative and qualitative emergence and their role" (Cosmin Nasui), "The concept of visiting storage and women artist in the collection of Brukenthal National Museum" (Robert Strebeli). General public was invited to address questions and to participate in the open discussions during the second part of the event.

*Discover the new taste of culture in Brukenthal Palace, together with Boromir!*

Starting in December 1, Brukenthal Palace became the place where brands met for a complete experience.

A well-known brand, Boromir joins the Brukenthal cultural brand on the occasion of the bicentennial by offering its free products to the visitors. The initiative to complete the visit in exhibitions with a taste experience was appreciated to be an unprecedented initiative and a national premiere.

*Brukenthal the Show* – Gala Concert on the occasion of Brukenthal Bicentennial (Thalia Hall in Sibiu, 5.12): co-financed by the Sibiu County Council, the concert brought together artist of national importance as Monica Anghel, Radu Nechifor along Teatrul Vostru Association & Doriana Tăut, Raluca Valeria Cișmaru, the Choir of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Sibiu and other guests.

## 7. Scientific Symposiums

– “Libraries, books and readers in modern times Transylvania” (Brukenthal Palace, 2.06)

The main topics proposed by the symposium are: formation practices, confiscation or secularization of the private or public libraries: acquisitions, purchasers, donations, donors, etc.; libraries and individual cultural profiles: the confessional reader, *homo europæus*, books from different European regions, domains, folk books, etc.; books and confessional identity: central confessional policies and local patrons of printing, books and conflicts: censorship, microhistory of a conflict, theological disputes, heretic instigations (Eastern-Orthodox and other "heretics" in Transylvania, 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c.).

– “Cultural History and Heritage” (Brukenthal Palace, 29.06-1.07)

Organized by Brukenthal National Museum and “Lucian Blaga” University in Sibiu, the symposium aimed at exploring the relation between history, memory, oblivion and the “spaces” of remembrance, placing the museum at the heart of the investigation. Among the topics of discussion were the journeys of museums or museum collections in different historical epochs, but also the approach to concepts and projects that have the purpose of building museum collections or aiming at capitalizing on popular sensibilities. A special place is given, from the perspective of cultural history, to the relationship between the different categories of works of patrimonial value and micro-history. Specifically, these are: architectural monuments, popular literary creations or cults, press publications, films, works of fine art, etc. 28 specialists attended the symposium, coming from universities and research institutions, museums or cultural associations from Bucharest, Chișinău, Cluj-Napoca, Timișoara, Târgu Mureș and Sibiu.

– “Scientific conference dedicated to the Bicentennial of Brukenthal Museum in Sibiu” (Casa Albastră/Blue House, 16-18.06)

Organized by Transylvanian Studies Society (Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde), the scientific conference held at Brukenthal National Museum reunited experts from Romania and abroad who analyzed the importance of Brukenthal Museum, opened 200 years ago, as well as the personality of its founder, Samuel von Brukenthal (1721-1803).

– International Symposium “Museum, an Institution between Universal and National” (Casa Albastră/Blue House, 5-8.10)

Organized by Brukenthal National Museum and Gundelsheim Transylvanian Museum, the scientific event marked the two hundred years since the founding of Brukenthal Museum in Sibiu, the oldest and one of the most important and representative museums in south-eastern Europe. In the context of this important anniversary, Brukenthal National Museum and Gundelsheim Transylvanian Museum organize a joint symposium, aiming to debate, having Brukenthal Museum as base for discussion, the development of European museums in conjugating the concepts of universal and national. Specialists in the cultural field participated, among them Dr. Irmgard Sedler (President of the Gundelsheim Transylvanian Museum Association and Director of Kleihues Stuttgart Art Museum), Dr. Virgil Nițulescu (representative of the Ministry of Culture and National Identity), Dr. Holger Jacob-Friesen (Director of Scientific Department with the Karlsruhe Art Museum), Prof. Sergiu Nistor (Presidential Counselor, Romanian Presidency), Prof. Erika Schneider (Institute of Geography and Geo-Ecology at Karlsruhe University), Dr. Markus Lörz (Scientific Leader, Gundelsheim Transylvanian Museum), Prof. Ioan Opris, Dr. Reinhard Jöhler (Director of the Institute of Cultural Empirical Sciences Ludwig Uhland Tübingen), Prof. Konrad Vanja (Director of the European Culture Museum in Berlin), Dr. Matthias Henkel (Embassy of Culture, Institute for Cultural and

Media Management, Free University, Berlin) and Monica Vlaicu (curator at Friedrich Teutsch Dialogue and Culture Center Sibiu).

## **8. Published materials related to art exhibitions and events**

### **a. Books**

\_Sabin Adrian Luca (coord), Dorin Barbu, Rodica Ciobanu, Raluca Maria Frîncu, Adrian Georgescu, Dana Roxana Hrib, Sabin Adrian Luca, Ioan Muntean, Radu Obadă, Alexandru Sonoc, Robert Strebli, Raluca Teodorescu, Ion Vasile, *MUZEUL NAȚIONAL BRUKENTHAL 2007 – 2017* (Sibiu, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2017) 117 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-17-6.

\_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Andrei Șaguna, de la portret la icoană* (Sibiu, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2017) 77 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-20-6.

\_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Chipuri de ierarhi orădeni în colecția Muzeului Național Brukenthal* (Sibiu, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2017) 60 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-21-3

### **b. Exhibition catalogues**

\_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* (Sibiu, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2017) 40 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-14-5.

\_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Scurt Circuit* (Sibiu, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2017) 40 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-11-4.

\_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, Marius Matei, Corneliu Gaiu, *Lacrimile Cerului, Fecioarele înlăcrimate ale Transilvaniei* (Sibiu, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2017) 70 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-15-2.

\_Laura Coltofean (ed.), *SIBIU | 2.10* (Sibiu, Editura Global Media, 2017) 48 pages, ISBN 978-606-8809-18-2.

\_Iulia Mesea (cu contribuții de Raluca Maria Frîncu), *Secvențe din Transilvania secolului al XVIII-lea / Snapshots of 18th Century Transylvania* (Sibiu, 2017) 100 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-22-0,

\_Iulia Mesea, Gudrun-Liane Ittu (cu contribuții de Raluca Maria Frîncu), *Secvențe din Transilvania secolului al XVIII-lea / Siebenbürgen im 18. Jahrhundert. Ausschnitte* (Sibiu, 2017), 120 pages, ISBN 978-606-857382-3

\_Iulia Mesea, Tiberiu Alexa, *Conexiuni: Pictura transilvăneană și centrele artistice internaționale (1817-1947) / Connections: Transylvanian Painting and the International Art Centres (1817-1947)* (Sibiu – Baia Mare, 2017), 100 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-19-0, ISBN 978-606-617-307-0

\_Liviu Răzvan Pripon, Gabriela Cuzepan-Bebeșelea, *Palatul Brukenthal: grădina secretă din tapetul oriental* (Sibiu, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2017), 66 pages, ISBN 978-606-8815-12-1

## **9. Projects**

\_”RO-BRUKENTHAL” (24.11.2017 – 31.12.2018)

Launched in November 2017, RO-BRUKENTHAL (Fig.4) is a frame project announcing the 2018 celebration of both the Romanian Great Union Centennial and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Museum’s Romanian Art Gallery opening. The image used for the informative materials posted online and at the Museum’s venues represents a flag from the collections of the *Altemberger House* Museum of History, made by Berta Dengjel.

## **10. Distinctions**

\_The Order of “Cultural Merit” in the rank of Commander, Category E “National Cultural Heritage”, conferred to Brukenthal National Museum by His Excellency, Mister Klaus Werner Iohannis, the President of Romania (Fig. 5).

\_Anniversary plaque granted to Brukenthal National Museum by the Sibiu County Council (Fig. 6).

## REFERENCES

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[http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/despre\\_noi/rapoarte.html](http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/despre_noi/rapoarte.html)
- \_Dana Roxana Hrib, *Brukenthal 2017 Agenda* <http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/evenimente/>
- \_online source on events:  
<http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/index2.php/en/news/>
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<http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/index2.php/en/expo>
- \_online exhibitions:  
[http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/index2.php/virtuale/index\\_en](http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/index2.php/virtuale/index_en)





Fig. 1. Brukenthal Palace, the *Library*, new exhibition on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.



Fig. 2. Brukenthal Palace, *Masterpieces of Brukenthal Collection* permanent exhibition before the refurbishment of 2017 (left) and after (right).





Fig. 3. Brukenthal Palace, the opening ceremony of the 2017 *Brukenthal Bicentennial*



Fig. 4. Brukenthal Palace, RO-BRUKENTHAL project





Fig. 5. His Excellency Mister Klaus Werner Iohannis, the President of Romania, conferring the Order of “Cultural Merit” to Prof. Sabin Adrian Luca, Director-General of Brukenthal National Museum



Fig. 6. Mrs. Daniela Cîmpean, President of Sibiu County Council, conferring an anniversary plaque to Prof. Sabin Adrian Luca, Director-General of Brukenthal National Museum

