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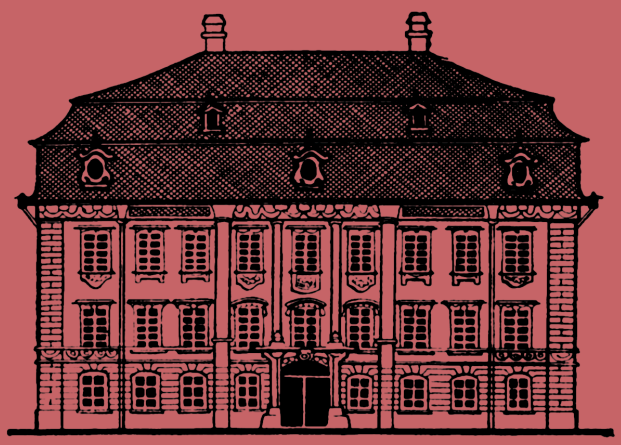

PUBLICAȚIILE MUZEULUI NAȚIONAL BRUKENTHAL

2020

BRVKENTHAL. ACTA MVSEI

XV. 2

MINISTERUL CULTURII

MUZEUL NAŢIONAL BRUKENTHAL

BRVKENTHAL.

ACTA MVSEI

XV. 2

Sibiu / Hermannstadt, 2020

ISSN: 1842-2691

MUZEUL NAȚIONAL BRUKENTHAL

Editura Muzeului Naţional Brukenthal

Începând cu anul 2009, revista a fost indexată în baze de date internaţionale astfel:
2009 − INDEX COPERNICUS http://www.journals.indexcopernicus.com/karta.php?action=masterlist&id=4759
2010 − EBSCOHOST http://www.ebscohost.com/titleLists/tnh-coverage.htm
2012 – SCOPUS http://www.elsevier.com/online-tools/scopus/content-overview
2015 − ERIH PLUS https://dbh.nsd.uib.no/publiseringskanaler/erihplus/periodical/info?id=484924
Începând din anul 2011, publicaţia este vizibilă şi pe platforma editorială **SCIPIO** (http://www.scipio.ro/web/brukenthal.acta-musei).

Starting with 2009, the publication is indexed in the following international date-bases:
2009 − INDEX COPERNICUS:http://www.journals.indexcopernicus.com/karta.php?action=masterlist&id=4759
2010 – EBSCOHOST http://www.ebscohost.com/titleLists/tnh-coverage.htm
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2015 − ERIH PLUS https://dbh.nsd.uib.no/publiseringskanaler/erihplus/periodical/info?id=484924
Starting with 2011, the publication is to be found on **SCIPIO** editorial platform (http://www.scipio.ro/web/brukenthal.acta-musei).

Orice corespondenţă referitoare la această publicaţie rugăm a se adresa la:
Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal, Piaţa Mare 4-5, 550163, Sibiu. **Tel:** +40/269/217691, **Fax:** +40/269/ 211545;
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VISUAL DOCUMENTS AS SOURCES IN MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE RESEARCH

Mihaela Sanda SALONTAI*

Abstact: *The article examines the documentary value of historical images in medieval architecture research, as a source of information on the transformations that monuments may have undergone over time or on structures that have been destroyed. From the historic townscapes that may provide a quite faithful picture of the built environment at some point in the past, where the religious buildings occur as architectural landmarks easy to spot in the topography of the contemporary city, up to the bird's-eye views that render idealized situations, historical images can provide useful information in reading the history of a building. The reviewed examples concern visual documents for three Transylvanian religious buildings, respectively the former Dominican convent in Cluj, along with the Lutheran city church and the Ursuline church in Sibiu, which are confronted with information provided by contemporaneous narrative sources and plan surveys. An important role in investigating historic structures is played by the documentation of the restorations carried in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, which, if available, may provide valuable information on authenticity and building phases.*

Keywords: *city view, city map, church, cloister, restoration.*

Rezumat: *În articol este analizată valoarea documentară a imaginilor istorice pentru monumentele de arhitectură medievale, care în bună parte au suferit transformări în decursul timpului sau unele chiar au dispărut. De la prospectele orașelor, care pot furniza o imagine relativ fidelă a cadrului construit într-un anumit moment din trecut, în care edificiile importante, în special cele ecleziastice, sunt ușor de reperat în topografia orașului contemporan, până la vedutele idealizate à vol d'oiseau care prezintă ansambluri lipsite de legătură cu realitatea, imaginile istorice pot oferi informații utile în descifrarea istoriei unui edificiu. Sunt prezentate documente vizuale pentru trei monumente de arhitectură religioasă din Transilvania, respectiv fostul convent dominican din Cluj împreună cu biserica parohială evanghelică și biserica Ursulinelor din Sibiu, care sunt confruntate cu informații furnizate de planuri și surse narative contemporane. Un rol important în investigarea istoriei monumentului îl au și documentațiile restaurărilor doctrinare din a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea și începutul celui următor, care pot furniza date privind autenticitatea unor componente arhitecturale și succesiunea fazelor de construcție.*

Keywords: *vedută, plan de oraș, biserică, claustru, restaurare.*

The ecclesiastical architecture of the Middle Ages bears the traces of a troubled past marked by political, social and religious events that caused functional and formal changes to many churches, and led to the loss of a significant portion of monastic architecture. Identifying the original medieval substance is a task that may often be rendered difficult by the successive interventions carried out since the sixteenth-century to the modern times. The nineteenth-century doctrinaire approach to building restoration contributed to the present look of a series of medieval monuments by trying to reinstate them "in a condition of completeness which may never have existed at any given time" (Jokilehto 1986, 279). Therefore, visual or graphic documents may provide valuable information for a better understanding and a more accurate and comprehensive description of medieval architecture. Some good cases in point involve three Transylvanian religious buildings, namely the Dominican convent in Cluj (Klausenburg/Kolozsvár) as well as the Lutheran city church and the Ursuline church in Sibiu (Hermannstadt/ Nagyszeben).

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I. The first example examined concerns the Dominican medieval convent of Cluj. The

building complex shaping the east front of Muzeum Square (Piața Muzeului) within the so-called Old Castle, counts among the very few monuments of medieval monastic architecture in Transylvania that preserves both the church and the cloister. The priory of Saint Mary and Saint Anthony was established in the fourteenth century by the Dominican friars on the north-east corner of the earliest fortified area of the medieval town. Its size and shape at that time remain unknown, the sole place bearing traces of older structures being the church sacristy, attested as early as 1397 in a written record mentioning *sacristia claustri beate Marie virginis predicatorum ordinis, Transsilvanensis diocesis* (Entz 1996, 342). In the fifteenth-century, the convent underwent an extensive reconstruction, resulting in a single-nave church adjoined by the cloister on its north side (Fig. 1). After the Reformation, the Dominican buildings have been seized by the city and between 1558 and 1693 they housed the Unitarian College, then, in 1724, the entire complex was conceded to the Franciscan Order. The present structures feature two main building phases, the earliest corresponding to the fifteenth-century Gothic edifice raised by the Dominican friars, followed by a thorough transformation carried out by the Observant Franciscans in the eighteenth-century, in Baroque style. At the beginning of the twentieth-century, the cloister was subject to a major renovation carried by the Hungarian architects Kálmán Lux and István Möller, both of them supporters of Viollet-Le-Duc's theory of restoration. All these post-medieval interventions brought considerable changes to the constructions left behind by the Dominicans in 1556, and what we see today is a mixture of Gothic and Baroque structures, braided here and there with stylistic imitations. In an endeavour to uncover the early sixteenth century situation of the Dominican buildings, beside written documents, a source of information is represented by old engravings and city maps, as well as by the architectural drawings worked out a century ago by Kálmán Lux for the restoration project.

The earliest visual document is a city view drawn by the Flemish artist Georg (Joris) Hoefnagel (1542−1600), based on a painting by Egidius van der Rye (†1604), and first published in 1617 by Antonius Hierat and Abrahamus Hoghenberg, in the sixth and final volume entitled *Theatri Praecipuarum Totius Mundi Urbium. Liber Sextus* of the monumental city-atlas *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* (Băldescu 2002, 76-77; Băldescu 2003, 51-53). Since nineteenth-century, the view has been largely reproduced in Hungarian and Romanian literature, usually without any reference as to the source. The engraving features a prospective view of the town from the northwest, seen from the hills across the Someș River; in the foreground, to the right, behind the city wall one can identify the larger roof of the Dominican church rising from among the surrounding houses (Fig. 2). This picture should render the situation at the turn of the sixteenth-century, view that Hoefnagel himself died at Vienna in 1600, and Egidius van der Rye four years later, at Graz. For an attempt to extract some constructional data about the Dominican convent, this is the earliest and most reliable visual document, which portrays the situation nearly four decades after the driving of the friars out of their buildings.

One might read in the chromatic diversity of the roofs an indication of distinct roofing materials like shingle, tile or straw. It seems, however, that given the chromatic differences between various facsimile editions, the paint colour was rather the editor's choice, as an instrument for artistic impression. The rendering of the roofs' colours emphasizes the cavalier fashion of the engraving, and the fact that it was edited in various chromatic samples. In this respect, the facsimile edition hold by the Department of Special Collections of the Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, slightly differs from some more colourful published samples (Băldescu 2008, 34; Sălăgean-Mihály 2007, 2-3) (Fig. 3). One can hardly tell, for instance, whether the roofs of the Dominican convent were covered with shingle or with tiles, as far as their colour is rendered either blue, red or grey. According to the city description drawn up around 1666 by Johannes Tröster in his work *Alt- und Neu-Teutsche Dacia*, the roofs inside the walls were largely covered with shingle (Tröster 1666, 451), but it is likely that brick tiles were used as well as roofing material, especially for public buildings like the town fortification. For the second half of the sixteenth century, the use of tiles is documented in the city accounts from which we learn that between 1565 and

1599 the city purchased as many as 18.400 tiles from various local brick manufacturers (Goldenberg 1958, 118).

At first glance, one can notice the common shape of the towerless Dominican church, having the nave covered with a gabled roof and the frontal wall pierced by an oculus. The church appears of modest size, being not particularly tall, and having a deep sanctuary sheltered by a distinct, lower roof, overlapped by a polygonal turret rising above the bay next to the apse. On its northern side are depicted a salient structure, which may portray the cloister portico joining the church's nave, and a group of three distinct buildings which should correspond to the cloister. These buildings surrounded a square court, and consisted of a taller, one storey construction perpendicularly attached to the choir, then a house parallel to the church, and a third, shorter wing disposed along the western side, seemingly without any physical connection to the nave. In the foreground, lining the western front outside the cloister precinct stands an edifice, which has an unclear relationship to the buildings nearby. View that the Dominican convent was bounded on the north by the city wall, it should mean that all the buildings rendered between the church and the wall belonged to the convent. It seems, however, difficult to read the topography of the convent with the precise location of the buildings, all the more so since a useful landmark like the north gate tower (also known as Bridge Tower or Mill Tower), which stood at the end of the street behind the church, appears to be slightly slipped to the west. At the same time, it cannot be ruled out the premise that the convent buildings were rendered in the mirror, as assumed by Irina Băldescu, in other words to the south of the church (Băldescu 2002, 82) (Fig. 4).

From among the three regular buildings now limiting the inner courtyard, it is certain that the eastern wing housed on the ground floor the sacristy and the chapter house, while the upper floor had probably sheltered the friars' library with a scriptorium. In the north wing, the ground floor housed the kitchen and the refectory nearby, with a large cellar beneath and the dormitory above, the latter being set either in a loft or in a lesser storey.

The corridor lining the west side of the inner courtyard may be dating back to the late sixteenth-century, possibly erected as a first stage in a series of transformations sustained by the Dominican convent in the following centuries and consisting in the walling up of the Gothic portico and the addition of a passage against the courtyard (Fig. 5). It is difficult to ascertain whether a fourth edifice, standing nearby in Hoefnagel's view, belonged to the Dominican convent as well, thus marking out a second courtyard towards the north, which is rendered in city maps from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that will be referred to below. Despite the cursory glance at the Dominican priory as represented in this late sixteenth-century city view, it allows the assumption that the complex essentially preserved its medieval architecture by that time, featuring a tower-less church perfectly inserted into the urban landscape.

Each image of the city-atlas is accompanied by a brief city description, added on a separate sheet. The description of *Clausenburg in Siebenbürgen*, contains historical and geographical information about the town, with little reference to the buildings themselves: "*Ein solchs ist dieser Statt auch wiederfahren, in welcher zwar eine gute Zeitlang allein die Sachsen gewohnet, seynd aber die Hungarn vor und nach so heuffig eingeschlichen, daß sie endlich eben dieselbigen Freyheiten und Praerogativen erlangt, der gestalt daß sie so wol als jene eigne Bürgermeister, Rath und Obrigkeit haben. Die Statt ligt zwar auf einem ebnen Feld, doch gegen Auffgang hat es Berg und Hügel. Das Land gibt nicht allein gut Korn und allerley Hülsenfrüchten sondern auch zimlichen Wein. Ist mit Mauren wol verwahret, darneben mit schönen Gebewen und Heusern auffs herzlichst geziert.*" (Hierat-Hoghenberg 1618, 41)

A quite similar view of Cluj is depicted in the late seventeenth-century townscape drawn by the Flemish artist Jan Peeters (1624−ca. 1680). The engraving appeared in the Jacobus Peeters' album published in Antwerp in 1686 and it features notable similarities with the Hoefnagel stamp, mainly the perspective from the same standpoint (Băcilă 1928−30, 175; Damadian 1978, 109) (Fig. 6). The Dominican church is rendered identically while the cloister has lost its eastern wing, and the house lining the west side appears smaller in width but

taller. The entire illustration seems less accurate and one may thus consider that image as an interpretation of the general view drawn some decades earlier by Egidius van der Rye, which seemingly served as a model, perhaps without the artist ever being on site.

Further town perspectives produced in the seventeenth-century concern a few general bird's-eye views, like the one delivered by the Nuremberg draughtsman, engraver and art publisher Johann Jakob Schollenberger (1646−1689) that was published in 1666 by Johannes Tröster, which unfortunately renders the urban topography in a too idealized manner to provide a reliable source for documenting any medieval building (Tröster 1666, 449; Reitinger-Schollenberger 2018, 79).

Historic maps do not bring much consistent additional information either. The earliest plan records of the former Dominican convent of Cluj are to be found in the city maps drawn in the last decade of the seventeenth-century by the Italian engineer Giovanni Morando Visconti (1652−1717) for the Habsburg administration (Sabău 2007, 51-80). Focusing on general features of urban topography, with particular emphasis on fortifications, these plan records provide just schematic and conventional representations of the monastic complex in slightly different layouts. Thus, the renditions displayed in the city maps of 1691 and 1699, respectively, give either a sketchy image of the Dominican convent (1691), or render symbolically the church without the cloister nearby (1699) (Fig. 7). A third pattern which seems to record more accurately the building complex is shown in an early eighteenth century city map, which depicts the cloister enlarged by a second courtyard to the north (Sabău 2007, 59; Jakab 1870, sheet 4) (Fig. 8). At that time, the buildings were occupied by the Jesuits and it seems highly unlikely that between 1691 and the beginning of the eighteenth century, a turbulent period of transition through the handing over of the buildings back to the Catholics, there have been any construction work carried to the cloister. Hence, the second courtyard must have been the result of an earlier phase that might go back to the early sixteenth-century, at least for the western front that seems to date from that period. In the meantime, this building was partly demolished and, so far, neither the shape nor the masonry of the remaining structure provide solid evidence for its medieval origin. It would match the small one-storey building facing the street, which has a mixed masonry structure, with basement and ground floor of stone (now covered with a later built barrel vault) and a storey in brick added in a further phase (Fig. 9). The lower structures could date back to the pre-Reformation period and might have sheltered some complementary spaces of the Dominican convent, such as the friar's infirmary attested in 1524. Yet, this assumption only based on visual examination needs to be confirmed by archaeological investigation.

Between 1725 and 1745 the church, which by then had fallen into disrepair, sustained an extensive renovation that consisted in the reshaping of its interior space in Baroque style and the construction of a massive belfry in front of the west facade. Subsequently, the cloister suffered gradual enlargements by the addition of new rooms over the western and eastern wings, including the construction of a staircase in the north-west corner. The 1759 general view of the walled town engraved by János Szakáll, which adorned a carpenter guild diploma, renders the early steps of these transformations, featuring the new Baroque bell tower added in front of the church, while the adjoining cloister apparently preserved its prior condition (Fig. 10). The drawing, carried out with certain clumsiness, gives a general view of the walled area, providing a cursory image of the town's fabric as well as of the monastic complex itself. On one hand, it may be noticed the rather conjectural manner in which the Dominican buildings are depicted and on the other, that some structures, such as the buttresses and the chapels attached to the nave's south side, or the wall that had surrounded the convent since the Middle Ages, are missing. In eighteenth century that wall was still on place, as we learn from a written source comprising a town description drawn up in 1734 by the city council, which is preserved at the department of Special Collections of the Central University Library in Cluj-Napoca and entitled "Descriptio Claudiopolis", and where the former Dominican buildings are depicted as follows: "*Ab intra autem in hac Arce Veteri prope moenia, juxta Portulam Orienti-Meridionalem extat Templum ante Reverendorum Patrum Dominicanorum pro nunc vero PP Franciscanorum strictoris*

observantiae, cuius lateri septemtrionali adjacet Residentia seu Claustrum satis itidem amplum, muro undique cinctum, ac hoc tempore a praedictis Reverendis Patribus Franciscanis tentum." (Cluj-Napoca Central University Library, Special collections, MS 603)

At the beginning of the twentieth-century, the cloister buildings underwent a restoration carried by the Hungarian architects Kálmán Lux and István Möller, whose main positive contribution was to uncover some hidden medieval structures like the Dominican chapter house and the Gothic arcade of the western portico. On the other hand, the interventions aimed not only to consolidate the buildings and to restore the decayed elements, but also to replace them, if necessary, or even to introduce new ones in order to reach architectural unity in the original Gothic style. On this occasion, some post-medieval structures received new window- and doorframes in Gothic style, especially those on the north and west sides. As it may be learnt from the various design solutions drawn up in 1902 by Kálmán Lux for the reconstruction of the refectory windows, the choice of the tracery patterns was rather an aesthetic question than reproducing the original stone frames (Fig. 11). Lux has published a brief report on the 1902 restoration works, unfortunately insisting on the building history more than on describing his interventions. He admits having used the large window of the western facade as a model for the design solutions drawn up for the refectory windows (Lux 1920-22, 129-139). Not just the beautiful, large Gothic windows adorning the northern facade, are the outcome of that early twentieth-century restoration, but most of the stone window frames of the western facade were probably introduced on that occasion.

II**.** The historic district of Sibiu (Hermannstadt/Nagyszeben) preserves a large portion of the medieval fabric along with its buildings. On the edge of the so-called upper town stands the second largest medieval church, built in the last quarter of the fifteenth century for the Holly Cross Dominican convent (Fig. 12). After the dissolution of the convent around 1541, up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, the complex was owned by the city and used by the Lutheran community. The cloister buildings joining the church's south side were completely transformed in eighteenth century, after the medieval monastic complex came into the possession of the Ursuline nuns, in 1733. It was thereafter that the church itself sustained certain transformations in Baroque style, especially on the inside, while the original Gothic structure was largely preserved. At first glance, one can notice the Baroque shaped windows of the nave, featuring round arches on the top, which lack any trace of Gothic frames and seem considerably shorter than the originals. Some remains of the windows' Gothic tracery can still be seen on the south side, from the roof space of the cloister.

The church was rendered on a general view of Sibiu painted by Franz Neuhauser the Younger in 1808 at the request of city mayor Martin Hochmeister (Popescu 2002, 220; Mesea 2006, 118). Along with Böbel Album (before 1887) it counts among the most comprehensive visual testimonies for the architecture of the old town. Rendered himself on the left side, at the bottom of the canvas, the painter captured with quite fair accuracy the urban setting, with its landmarks portrayed by churches and the city hall tower. On the left side of the picture, at the edge of the built area, is rendered the former Dominican church, seen from the north, with the walls reinforced by buttresses and the roof finished in a triangular masonry gable to the west. In terms of depiction accuracy, it may be noticed the small semicircular windows of the nave, which in fact correspond to the choir and vice versa. On the north side of the church, next to a chapel attached to the choir (vanished), stood an old defence tower, the so-called Salt Tower (Salzturm) that was located over the street nearby (actually at the meeting point of two streets, namely the Reispergasse/Str. General Magheru and Sporergasse/Str. Avram Iancu) and belonged to the fourteenth-century fortifications of the upper town. By the eighteenth century, both the tower and the chapel (which matched in length the two westernmost bays of the choir), were converted into two-storey dwellings. As we learn from Emil Sigerus' town chronicle, in 1553 the Salt Tower was sold to two citizens for 116 Florins, then, in 1772 the city conceded it to the Ursuline nuns and in 1890 the tower was eventually dismantled (Sigerus 1930, 16, 39, 59). The photos taken right before the demolition show that both structures formed a body of buildings which in the nineteenth

century were sheltered under the same roof, with the roof ridge reaching the cornice of the choir (Ivănuș 2007, 13, photo 5). On Neuhauser's painting, in the respective area is rendered a structure from which one can only see a massive red roof that stands out from the surrounding buildings and may be well identified as the Salt Tower (Fig. 13).

III. A further monument to be discussed is the Lutheran city church of Sibiu. Like many other medieval religious buildings of Transylvania, it is a result of several construction phases carried out for nearly two centuries. Built in the fourteenth-century as a basilican structure with transept and a bell tower on the west side, the Gothic church was in the next century successively enlarged in length, width and height, resulting in a distinctive architectural fabric. Its particular appearance has raised many questions as to the building history, giving rise to different theories about the chronology of construction.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the building sustained two important restoration campaigns, respectively between 1853 and 1855, and then from 1905 to 1911, both carried out according to Viollet-Le-Duc's restoration theory. The interventions reshaped to a certain degree the interior by eliminating some older structures and building new ones, resorting consistently to stylistic imitations for door frames and windows' layouts.

The mid nineteenth-century restoration played a major role in achieving the present interior arrangement by demolishing the remnants of a medieval rood screen and introducing new structures inside the western part of the church. The architectural records illustrating the situation before and after the interventions are of great help in understanding the extent of the interventions carried during these restoration works.

The earliest graphic record is the ground plan sketched by Georg Soterius in his town description dating back to the beginning of the eighteenth-century (Soterius 2006, 155). It renders the plan of a cross-shaped basilican church, structured by seven pairs of columnar piers, the last two of which are separated by a square bell tower set in the central vessel (Fig. 14). Inside the transept, two ranks of small columns, displayed by threes, were flanking the triumphal arch, featuring two galleries. Joining the south transept aisle is rendered the chamber that served in the Middle Ages as Corpus Christi chapel, reachable through a doorway from the transept, while on the opposite side lies the sacristy having a sole entrance from the choir. In his work, Soterius also gives a brief church description pointing to some details of the interior, including the two galleries lying in the transept as well as the westernmost section, today known as "Ferula", which he describes as "that part called the new church" (*Pars ea, quae novum Templum dicitur*) (Soterius 2006, 34).

This interior layout was rendered more accurately in the architectural record drawn up by Anton Staudacher, the architect who was in charge of the restoration works carried between 1853−1855. The plan record dating back to 1852 reveals that each of the two galleries placed in the transept consisted of three square bays with crossing vaults and stairs disposed sideways, while the western tower stood free inside the central vessel of the nave (Spek 1947, 34) (Fig. 15). That ground plan provides the most reliable evidence about the structure of the medieval rood screen that once crossed the entire transept in front of the choir. It renders the situation of the gallery in the post-Reformation period, after the demolition of its central bays facing the triumphal arch. The rood screen was a fourteenth-century construction first documented in 1372 as *lectorio* (DRH 2002, 256-257). The pair of stairs allowing the access for the lay assistance on the gallery seems to be a late fifteenth-century addition, as the choir screen was included in the processional walkway inside the church (Reissenberger 1884, 11; Soterius 2006, 153). Recent archaeological research, led by Daniela Marcu Istrate, has brought to light material evidence preserved both on the transept walls and underground.

The church exterior image, prior to the mid nineteenth-century restoration, emerges from two lithographs representing the building from the south and respectively from the northeast. The earliest of these representations was published in the 1839 edition of Samuel Möckesch's monographic work and shows the church seen from the southeast (Fig. 16). In that picture, it is to notice the fenestration of the south transept aisle, which illustrates in elevation the situation as rendered in the 1852

plan record. A contemporary image of the north-eastern facade is shown in a lithograph by Carl Danielis, depicting in the foreground the choir, the sacristy and the north aisle of the transept prior to the construction of the staircase and the outer entrance to the sacristy (1853−1855) (Fig. 17). Möckesch had an original theory about the construction of the parish church, according to which the building started from a chapel dedicated to Saint Mary, represented by the church choir itself, which was expanded by adding the nave "in a way similar to the western part of the church, so-called the new church or Ferula" (Möckesch 1839, 5).

In an attempt to assess the extent of the interventions carried out during the mid nineteenth-century restoration, the drawings and lithographs illustrating the 1884 monograph edition on the Lutheran church by Ludwig Reissenberger are extremely useful. By examining the ground plan, one can notice significant changes in the transept area – by the absence of the rood screen galleries − as well as in the westernmost bays of the nave, which had been separated from the church body by walls aligned to the east wall of the tower, thus creating a closed space to the west, the so called Ferula where the tombstones removed from the church were exhibited (Fig. 18). In the east section, the rooms above the sacristy and the chapel, which initially communicated with the gallery through doorways, were rendered inaccessible by the demolition of the remnant bays of the choir screen. The problem found solution in the construction of two concrete staircases, one inside the chapel and the other outside the sacristy, both having new exterior entries with stone frames imitating the late Gothic style. On this occasion, the south transept aisle received a new design for the fenestration, meant to reach a symmetrical correspondence to the opposite window lying in the northern aisle. In the end, a third staircase was built inside the south vessel of the Ferula, aiming to ease the access to the nave's south gallery, which originally was reachable only through the stair turret that was built at once with the gallery and raised in 1520 (Firea 2008, 69).

The visual separation of the nave's westernmost bays by transversal walls, thus dividing the space into two sections, had the greatest effect on the spatial perception of the church interior and seems to have strongly influenced the modern theories concerning its building history. Many scholars perceived the space in face of the bell tower, known as Ferula, as an appendix erected for uncertain purposes, like entrance hall (Reissenberger 1884, 9-10), funeral chapel (Niedermaier 2008, 281), room for penitents or just to provide structural support against the leaning of the tower (Roth 1905, 43-44). Certain authors justified the westernmost bays as the result of several building phases which started either with a small chapel (Rosemann 1934, 87-91; Vătășianu 1959, 227-228) or with an open atrium, only gaining its present shape after 1500 (Roth 1912, 3-18).

At the beginning of the twentieth-century, the lower part of the tower sustained a massive reinforcement with concrete, which altered once more the interior and rendered the tower's ground floor as well as the earlier Gothic west portal invisible. As a result, the west entrance of the church became useless, the intervention contributing to the complete isolation of the bell tower and of the westernmost bays, from the nave.

Another aspect related to the nineteenth-century internal subdivision is the confusion generated by the position chosen for the transversal walls, regardless of the constructive relationship between the basilica and the tower, the latter being initially incorporated into the nave's fabric. The two pairs of bays on either side of the tower belong to the earlier structures, while the extension comprises only the bays standing west of the tower's west wall. The vaulting design, the ribs' profile and the consoles belonging to the late fourteenth − early fifteenth century nave structure, provide evidence in what regards the extent of the enlargement carried out in the fifteenth century (Fig. 19). Architecturally, the plan layout as well as the elevation of the Ferula integrate perfectly into the nave's structure, and should be considered as nothing but a nave extension achieved by an increasingly wealthy community, in need of space for a rising number of altars and private offices (as many as 24 altars prior to the Reformation, according to the account of local notary Georg Reicherstorffer) (Holban 1968, 214). This assertion is supported, above all, by the late fifteenth-century construction of the south gallery that comprised the entire length of the

nave, including the bays west of the tower. Apparently, the city had likewise a plan for the construction of a larger choir, which, for an unknown reason had to be abandoned in its early stages and whose wall foundations have been recently uncovered in the Huet Square (Marcu Istrate 2007, 66-69).

Excepting for some sections marked *in situ* with the year of achievement, as that of the tower in 1431 and the sacristy extension in 1471, the chronology of the construction is still subject to interpretation due to the scarce documentary information and the material evidence provided by the building itself. Until recently, there was a large consensus concerning the link between the construction of the Ferula and a document issued in 1448, in favour of a chapel in work dedicated to Virgin Mary and other saints (Roth 1905, 43; Vătășianu 1959, 227-228; Dancu 1968, 10-11; Albu 2008, 83; Fabini 1997, 9), yet the latest findings around the choir are raising new questions in this respect. Whatever chronological sequence the enlargement works may have had, it seems obvious that the so-called Ferula illustrates a stage of an ample fifteenth-century building plan for upgrading the parish church of Sibiu. Its initial basilican structure and the gallery raised in the second half of the fifteenth-century over the entire southern aisle, point out its functional and spatial affiliation to the church's nave.

The scarcity of written records with regard to medieval constructions provides a good reason in searching for other sources of information like visual documents, which commonly date from a later period and may raise questions as to their level of accuracy. The townscapes from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries provide general views over the entire urban fabric, without particular interest for architectural detail, and therefore they should be considered with prudence. However, not only could they be the sole visual testimony on a vanished monument, but may provide some reliable information about a monument's physical state that has been lost or deeply transformed during the past centuries. In order to avoid misleading evaluations of the medieval fabric, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries restoration projects, if available, should be included in the framework of documentary sources not only for the management of cultural heritage but for the medieval architecture research as well.

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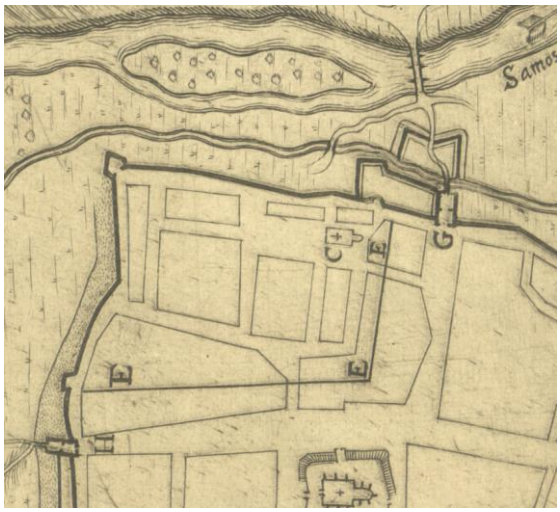

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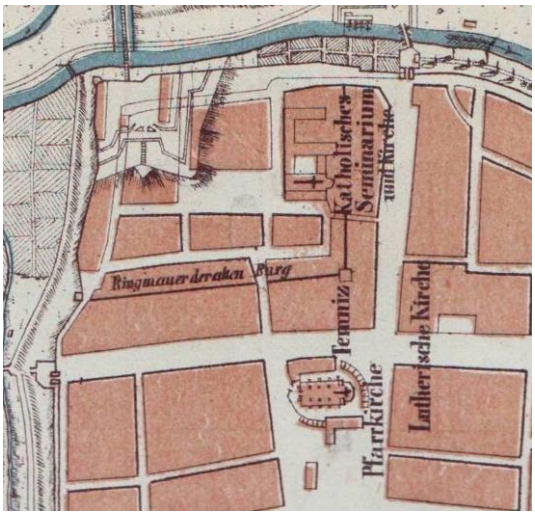

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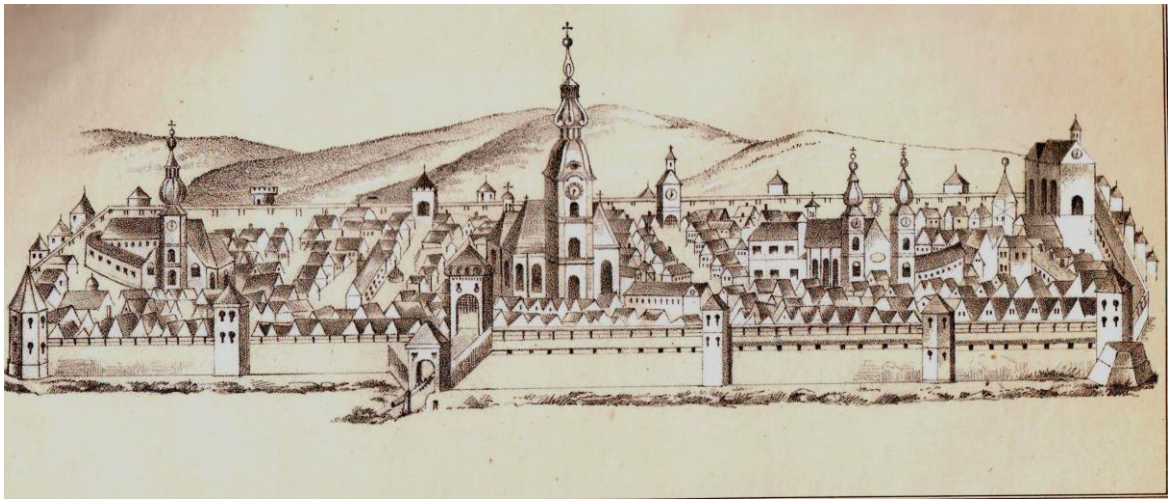

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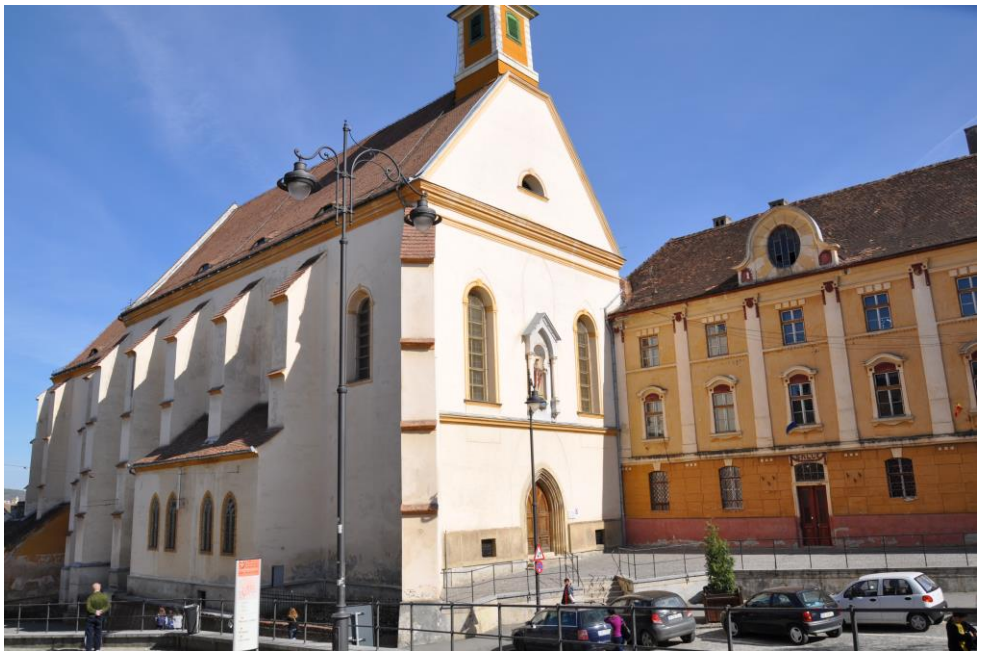

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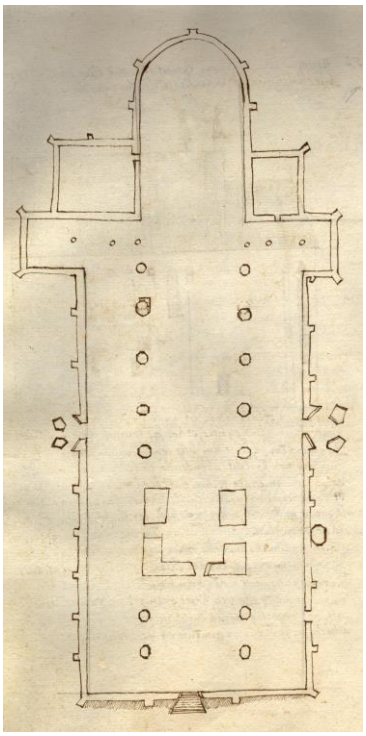

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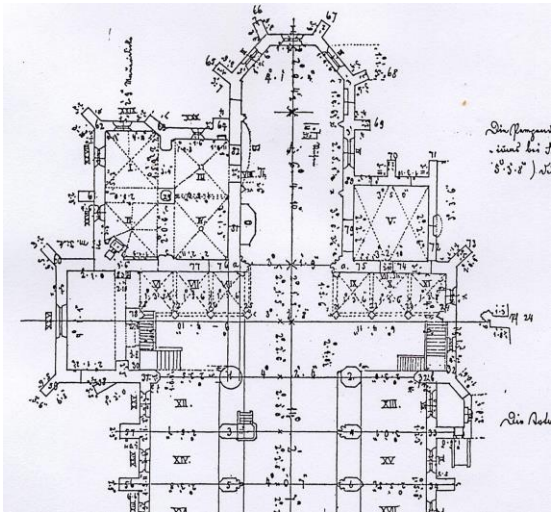

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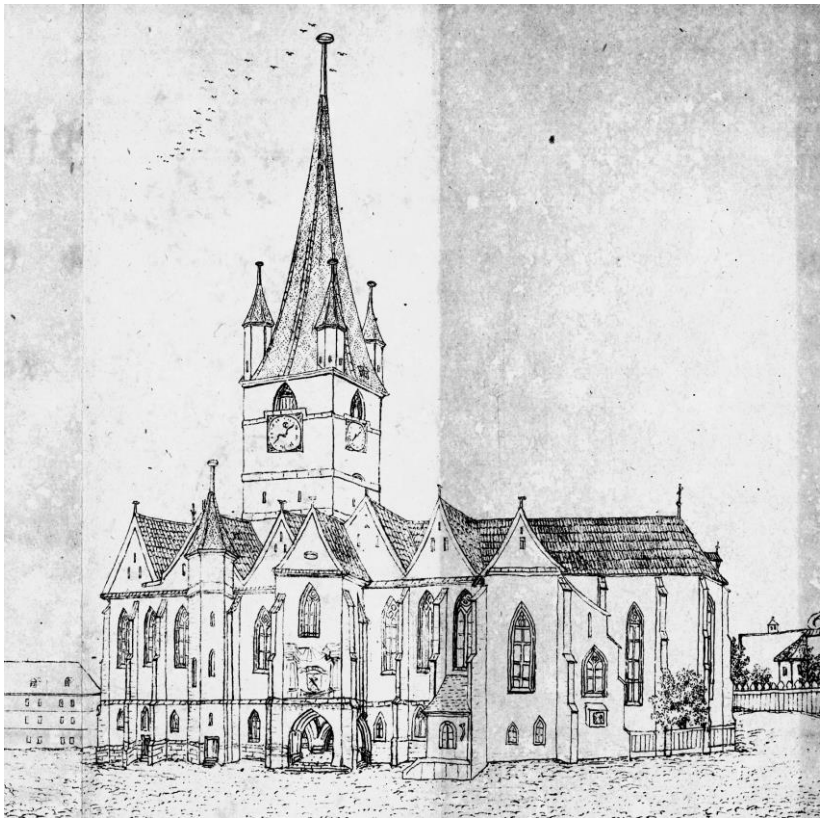

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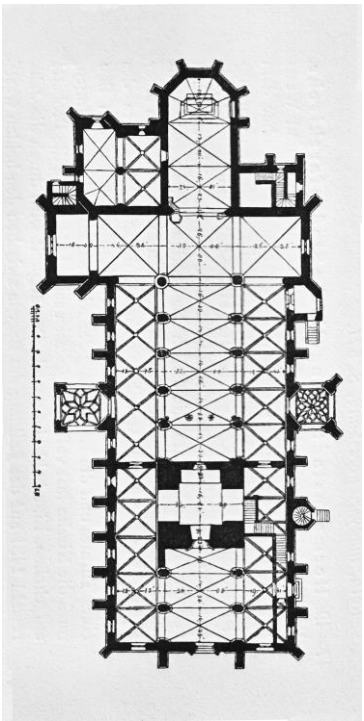

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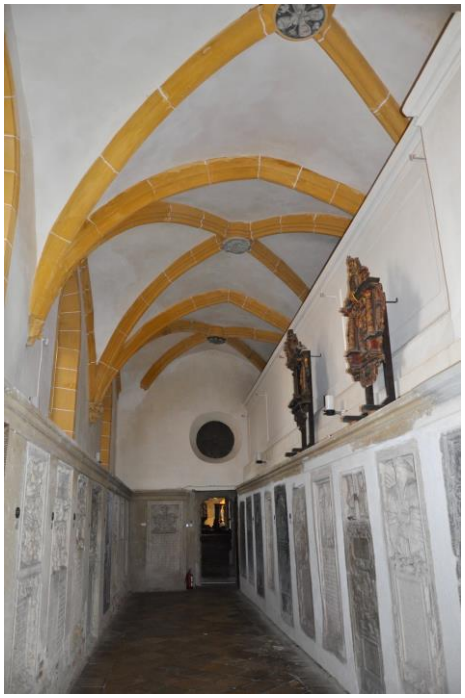

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LIGHT AND SHADOW. THE PEARL OF THE BRUKENTHAL COLLECTION: JAN VAN EYCK'S *MAN WITH A BLUE CHAPERON*

Iulia Mesea*

Abstract: *"The Portrait of a Man with Blue Chaperon" (also entitled "Man with a Ring") by Jan van Eyck is the most famous painting of the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu. It is considered the first secular portrait in the creation of the illustrious Netherlandish master. As it happens with the entire van Eyck's oeuvre, it comprises symbols and keys that need to be properly interpreted, so that the work would be understood. There are still mysteries related to the sitter and also to the itinerary of the painting till it was purchased for the Brukenthal collection. The essay presents the ups and downs, the lights and shadows in the history of this painting, and launches some new suppositions.*

Keywords: *Jan van Eyck, Portrait of a man with blue chaperon / Man with a ring, Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, Netherlandish painting*

Rezumat: *„Portretul de bărbat cu tichie albastră" (numit și „Bărbat cu inel") de Jan van Eyck este cel mai faimos tablou din colecția Muzeului Național Brukenthal. Este considerat cel mai vechi portret laic din creația maestrului flamand. Întreaga creație a pictorului Jan van Eyck, inclusiv portretul din colecția din Sibiu, conține simboluri, semne și chei care se cer corect interpretate pentru ca opera să fie corespunzător înțeleasă. Există încă multe necunoscute în privința acestui tablou, de la identitatea personajului pictat, la itinerariul pe care opera l-a parcurs din momentul în care a fost realizată, până când a ajuns să intre în colecția Baronului Brukenthal. Lucrarea prezintă istoria și traseul străbătut de tablou, atât cât sunt ele cunoscute până în acest moment, certitudinile și numeroasele zone încă tulburi, lansând și câteva noi posibile interpretări.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Jan van Eyck, Portret de bărbat cu tichie albastră / Bărbat cu inel, Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu, pictură flamandă*

February 8th 2020: a huge poster at the entrance of the famous Saint Bavo's Cathedral (former St. John the Baptist Church) in Ghent, reads "Oh, my God, Van Eyck was here!" The Museum of Fine Arts in Ghent (MSK) pays tribute to the Flemish Master Jan van Eyck with the exhibition "Van Eyck. An Optical Revolution" (planned for February 1st – April 30th 2020). The museum promises the visitor a once-in-a-lifetime experience that makes the world of Van Eyck more tangible than ever. Inside the Cathedral, noted for the Ghent Altarpiece, known as: *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb* by Hubert and Jan van Eyck, ten panels of the monumental altarpiece are on display, while eight other panels, restored between 2012 and 2016, are, for the first and last time, on display outside the Cathedral, and constitute the soul of the exhibition which comprises two hundred creations belonging to the artist, studio paintings, copies, replicas, paintings of some of his contemporaries and of some of his successors; works bearing the signatures of Gentile da Fabriano, Fra Angelico, Pisanello, Masaccio, Benozzo Gozzoli illustrate, in a remarkable correspondence with Van Eyck's innovations, how the geometrical perspective introduced by Italian painters brought renewal. Paintings, miniatures, drawings, sculpture, tapestry, documents, panels, in a discreet, yet impressive scenography, take the visitor into "van Eyck's world" and define the image of a visionary genius, whose exceptional talent and unique artistic vision change European art and place him above other artists. The forty surviving creations give us a comprehensive image of his time and, indeed, of himself. The exhibition concept is structured in fourteen sections: Van Eyck's artistic heritage, Original sin and salvation of the soul, Space, Saints in

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the landscape, Mother and child / Virgin and Child, Word of the Lord, Madonna in Church / Architecture, Painted sculpture, Religious portrait, The Individual.[1]

Among the works on display, *Portrait of a Man with a Blue Chaperon* (ca. 1429–1430) (also known as *Man with a Ring*) (Asperen, Ridderbos, Zeldenrust 1991, 3-38), famous painting belonging to the European Collection of the Brukenthal Museum, the only "van Eyck" in Romania, asserts its elegance and uniqueness among other creations of the genre, in the hall destined for portraiture. Next to it is the *Portrait of Bauduin de Lannoy* (ca. 1435), recently restored, the only portrait of a Burgundian statesman, depicted in a manner typical of the genre, the portrait *Leal Souvenir (Timotheus)* (dated: 1432), *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw* (dated: 1436) and *Portrait of Margaret van Eyck* (dated 1439).

Few facts concerning the life of the Flemish master reached us and they cover a period of less than two decades. The mystery began in his lifetime while he was living in the ambience of royal houses, dedicating his time to painting but also carrying out diplomatic missions, many of them shrouded in secrecy (Martens *et alii* 2020, 60-78). His apparition in the history of art was quite sudden. We are not certain about his date and place of birth (Martens *et alii* 2020, 85),[2] we do not know who his teachers were or where he studied and, in less than two decades, he disappeared just as abruptly as he appeared. Testimonies relating to the two decades of activity allowed only for a partial reconstruction. His presence is documented in 1422, when he was the "valet de chambre" of Jean of Bavaria; in 1425 we find him in the service of Philippe the Good, Duke of Burgundy and Earl of Flanders. In a document dated March 12th 1435, the Duke writes "our esteemed *valet de chambre* and painter Jehan van Eyck (…) whom we wish to entrust with the most important missions only he, with his abilities, can carry out" (Martens *et alii* 2020, 70), thus confirming the important position and the essential role the painter played. The registers of payment of 1435, 1436, 1439 mention the sums of money he was given and, following his death in 1441, his widow and children were granted a pension by the Duke of Burgundy (Martens *et alii* 2020, 30-47).

Although we know so little about his life, we are astonished by the complexity of information transmitted by his creation. His power of observation and the exactness with which he renders reality, as well as the attention for details and aspects considered insignificant by his predecessors, convey the feeling that he possessed an outstanding capacity to perceive and understand visual and non-visual information (theoretical, moral and religious) as well as the knowledge to transfer it like no one before him. Educated in the spirit of Humanism and endowed with exceptional curiosity, van Eyck was knowledgeable about Geometry, Physics, Alchemy, Literature, Theology, Anatomy and perspective (Martens *et alii* 2020, 141-142, 160-167), details which surprise and delight us. His outsight led to a technique which allowed him to render all details pertaining to the world around us and to master the methods of physics and optics and suggest what cannot be depicted bi-dimensionally, the illusion of space, the creation of the third dimension in a painting (Snyder 1987).[3] He was said to have invented the technique of oil painting and, although we now know that this was not the case, he brought innovation to the consistency of the oil paints which led to a shorter time of drying, which, in turn, gave special effects of depth and an unparalleled brightness (Borchert, Huvenne 2002, 221).

The attention he paid to a perfect reproduction of reality is also found in the manner in which

[1] The catalogue of the exhibition "Van Eyck. An Optical Revolution" (*Van Eyck. An Optical Revolution*, ed. Maximilian Martens; Jan Dumolyn; Johan De Smeet; Frederica Van Dam, Hannibal MSK Gent, 2020) is an impressive editorial achievement that has fulfilled the ambition to present Van Eyck's entire work from a new perspective, dispelling myths, constructing others, emphasizing the innovations the Flemish artist brought to European painting and the way he influenced its evolution.

[2] In the work published in 1604, entitled *Schilder-Boeck* (Book on Painting), an important documentary source for the history of art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the painter and writer Karel van Mander of Haarlem, proposes as the date of birth of Jan van Eyck about 1390, but some researchers go back to 1370.

[3] The meticulousness and accuracy of the details led some researchers to assume that the artist was using a very fine hairbrush and a magnifying glass.

he dated his works, mentioning not only the year, but also the day. His signature, too, was unique among the artists of the time: to it, he added observations, comments, some of them easy to understand, others enigmatic and pluri-semantic. This also proves that he wanted to certify his creations, aware of their value, of his place in the world, an attitude of unprecedented modernity.[4]

Revolutionising multiple aspects of the art of painting, Van Eyck also renews portraiture: the model is positioned in a three-quarter view, the most generous position which allows the artist to suggest volume and which is completed by the use of light and shadow. A special almost forensic attention is given to physiognomy. The series of nine portraits painted between 1430 and 1441 is considered to have triggered major changes in the evolution of the genre in European Renaissance (Borchert 2019, 141-143; Borchert 2002b, 15-17).

In the oldest catalogue of the Brukenthal collection, the portrait was registered with a title that enhanced the most obvious element of the painting: *Portrait of a Man with a Blue Cap*, also called "turban" or "chaperon": *Brustbild eines Unbekannten mit der blauen Sendelbinde* (Ältester Galeriekatalog cat. no. 9; Die Gemäldegalerie 1844, no. 9; Csaki 1901, cat. no. 342; Csaki 1909, cat. no. 354). Further researches also introduced the title: *Portrait of a Man with a Ring*, referring to the other attribute of the portrait. Dated in the catalogue of the Ghent Exhibition about 1430 (Martens *et alii* 2020, 439), it is the oldest laic portrait painted by the master,[5] the first among those which were kept till today, and contains all the elements of novelty he introduced: the three-quarters view, exactness in rendering the face of the model, the skin, the beard, the play of light and shadow, the dramatic contrast between the model and the background. The optical effects are completed by the *trompe l'oeil* technique employed to depict the left arm propped on an imaginary arm rest, on the lower part of the painting (overlapping the frame), and his right hand, which seems to come out of the painting towards the onlooker extending his presence out of the pictorial space, while the spectator is drawn towards the "interior" of the painting, into the story it tells; the artist will continue to improve this approach of the genre in other portraits (Borchert 2008, 42).[6] This painting is the "pearl" of the Brukenthal Collection and it asserts itself through noblesse and elegance, while still preserving the privilege of mysteries which will probably never be unveiled, of a dramatic history in which moments of calm alternated with periods of tension, and public indifference was replaced by noisy interest.

One of the mysteries is the identity of the man, probably lost some two or three generations after the portrait accomplished its mission or, perhaps, hidden in the successive sales in the 17th or 18th centuries. For in its destiny, from the moment it was finished and handed over to its commissioner, to the moment it came to be on display in the largest exhibition ever dedicated to Van Eyck, there are numerous unknown stages and the limelight appears to "obscure the secret" and deepen the mystery. Painted before *The Altar of The Mystic Lamb* (1432), it is another clue in the evolution of the Eykian portraiture and it is the first modern portrait in the history of art (Borchert 2002b, 17). In 1428 the artist painted the *Portrait of Isabel of Portugal*, today lost (Martens *et alii* 2020, 71),[7] in which the bust of the woman is

[4] The *Portrait of a Man* (in the National Gallery in London) is considered a possible self-portrait due to the inscription "*Aic Ixh Xan*" [As I can], larger than those on other works on which it appears. On the frame further is inscribed: "*JOHES DE EYCK ME FECIT ANO MCCCC.33. 21. OCTOBER*".

[5] There have been also preserved the portraits in oil: *Portrait of a Man* (*Leal Souvenir* / *Timotheus*, 1432), *Portrait of a Man (with Red Chaperon / Self-portrait?*, 1433), *Giovanni Arnolfini and his Wife* (1434), *Portrait of Boudoin de Lannoy* (ca. 1435), *Jan de Leeuw* (1436), *Cardinal Niccolo Albergati* (1438), Giovanni di Niccolao Arnolfini (ca. 1438), *Portrait of Margaretei van Eyck* (1439) and the drawings: *Cardinal Niccolo Albergati* (ca. 1435), *Portrait of a Man with Chaperon*.

[6] In the *Portrait of a Man* (with a red turban) at the National Gallery in London, the art historian Till Borchert remarks, in addition to the direct gaze that the model confronts us (for the first time in art history), the attitude "as if it were beginning to speak to us" of the model, in order to present itself, an aspect completed by the artist through the information noted on the frame of the painting.

[7] The portrait was made during the artist's mission from Philippe the Good, to the court of the King of Portugal, to ask for Isabella's hand, between 1428 and 1429. The work, an engagement portrait, was lost, but is known from a 17th century drawing.

placed in a window, her left arm resting on the windowsill, illusionistic element of composition also present in the painting from Sibiu.

In the last twenty years this delicate masterpiece travelled quite a lot and was a partaker of many exhibitions: 2002, Bruges (Exhibition "Le siècle de Van Eyck. Le monde méditerranéen et les primitifs flamands, 1430–1530", Groeninge-museum, *Bruges*, March 15th – June 30th 2002), 2006, Rome (Exhibition "Antonello da Messina. Lopera completa", at Scuderie del Quirinale, March 18th – June 25th 2006), 2009, Paris (Exhibition "Bruegel, Memling, Van Eyck", Jacquemart-André Museum, September 11th 2009 – January 2010), 2010, Gdansk (Exhibition "Van Eyck, Memling, Brueghel. Masterpiece Paintings from the Collection of the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu", National Museum in Gdansk, 2010), 2016, Den Bosch (Exhibition "Van Eyck, Brueghel, Jordaens. Masterpieces from Romania", Noord Brabants Museum, June 18th – October 9th 2016), only to rest now in Ghent. In the catalogue of the Paris exhibition, in 2006, it was dubbed "superb and mysterious" by art historians and considered to be the "key" of the event; it was described as the "portrait of a young man", while other texts wrote that it depicted a "middle aged man" "in his thirties or forties" (Antonello 2006, 296), or even "elderly man" (Van Eyck, Memling 2010, 112). To us it is obviously the portrait of a man in the prime of his life. It is a detail that, correlated to Van Eyck's possible models, could eventually bring more clarity to the identity of the character. He is undoubtedly a member of the nobility, his face is oval, the forehead slightly wrinkled, the arched eyebrows are well-executed; under the heavy eyelids the light coming from the right reflects through the retina giving the iris a honey-brown hue. No physical detail was left unexplored, and everything was depicted with a "microscopic" (Snyder 1987, 9) accuracy: the pigment, the delicate folds of the lids, the tiny red lines on the white of the eyes, the veins on the forehead, the light beard (of two or three days' growth). The nose, slightly arched, another elegant trait, and the mouth, express enough firmness to show masculinity. The stubble comes to complete the air of distinction as well as a trace of melancholy.

The unshaven beard is an element of physiognomy also employed by Van Eyck in other portraits to model the lower part of the figure: Jodocus de Vijdt (d. 1439) (Ridderbos *et alii* 2005, 58-59), trusted councillor of the Duke of Burgundy, Philippe the Good, cardinal Niccolo Albergati (ca. 1431) (Borchert 2002b, cat. no. 24, 235), canon Joris van der Paele (1434–1436), Nicolas Rolin (in the painting *The Madona of Chancellor Rolin*, 1435), goldsmith Jan de Leeuw (Martens *et alii* 2020, 54-117). Various mentions made by the artist on the back of the study (on paper) for the *Portrait of Cardinal Niccolo Albergti*, reveal his interest in the accurate depiction of this, as well as other details: „die stoppelen vanden barde wal grijsachtig" [unshaven, grey beard]; next, he describes, in detail, the pupil, with its brightness and with the shades of colours which he intends to use (Martens *et alii* 2020, 152-154). The special interest for such aspects which mark the individuality of the model could not have remained without consequence: when it comes to observing the proportion between head and bust, he favours the head which appears slightly oversized (Martens *et alii* 2020, 250), while the hands are sometimes introduced by a forced *raccourci*. In our painting, the left arm reduces the distance between the model and the onlooker, emerging from the space of the painting as it appears propped on an imaginary parapet, almost projecting out of the painting. With his right hand, the man presents, or appears to offer a ring. Although the ring seems to be the key element of the painting, the man allows the onlooker to admire the valuable object while he himself loses interest in his own gesture and appears to be deep in thoughts. Whatever its destination, the ring and the way the character holds it, between thumb, index finger and middle finger, brings an undisputed spiritual component (Antonello 2006, 296). As it often is the case no element is irrelevant, and the ring is not a detail to be slighted. For comparison, we resort to the *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw*, which typologically bears resemblance to the painting from Sibiu: in this case, the model holds the ring with only two fingers (thumb and index). Would the artist not have used the same manner of depicting the hand, the gesture, had it not been relevant? It is a

means by which the spiritual component is suggested and we do not reject the idea that the painting could be a commemorative portrait, or the image of a man who presents an engagement ring. Perhaps the man lost a wife and the artist piously reflects this feeling in the discreet complexity of the gesture or, simply invokes the divine protection for the future union. The unfocused, melancholy glance, the heavy eyelids and the drooping corners of the mouth give the character a pensive expression; the man appears aloof, deep in thought. Again, it is something we see in other of Van Eyck's portraits,[8] but such sadness is not so touching in any of the others. The attention the artist pays to the sadness of the character underlines the feelings triggered by life events. Also, the discrepancy between the realistic depiction of every detail of the physical world and the aloofness of the man induce that Eyckian mystery and strangeness. This attitude led to the hypothesis that it could be a commemorative portrait. The man contemplates what is left of the connection with his dead wife. He appears to connect with the world of spiritualness in the same way the donor van der Peele, depicted in the altar piece *Madonna and Child and Canon van der Paele*, 1434–1436, Groeninge Museum, Bruges, appears to be completely oblivious of the world around him and immersed in the spiritual space (Rothstein 2005, 50). Referring to this characteristic of Eyckian painting, Erwin Panofsky mentioned the mystery included in each and every element of his pictures, to that certain message which goes beyond the apparent, in facial expressions, gestures, attributes, considering that this is the means by which the painter manages to reconcile the symbolism of the Middle Ages with a system of pictorial representation based on empirical observation and, consequently, in direct connection with the modern notion of realism (Panofsky 1934, 138).

The man's apparel indicates that he is a member of the nobility. His jacket is made of fine, iridescent fabric and is lined with precious fur. The headdress, a chaperon / turban is an element borrowed by the nobility from the lower classes at the beginning of the 15th century which went out of fashion after a short time. It is a sophisticated accessory, of a bright and intense blue. One of the dating of the painting, at the latest 1430–1435, relates to the period when such a cap would have been fashionable (Thewes *et alii* 2012, 125).

The colour was not randomly chosen and we do not believe it has revealed all its significance. It brings an element of elegance and dramatic chromatic to the painting while emphasising the status of the sitter. The precious pigment, extracted from the lapis-lazuli gemstone, is used in religious painting and it is a symbol of purity, spirituality and nobleness, once again asserting the social status of the model. The man with blue chaperon is not the only character portrayed by van Eyck wearing a headdress. This sophisticated chaperon, of Oriental influence, which today appears extravagant, can be seen in van Eyck's 1433 *Portrait of a Man* (Self Portrait), and worn by an anonymous figure (which could be the artist himself) in his 1435 *Madonna of Chancellor Rolin*. Another self-portrait is, possibly, the mirror reflection of a man which appears in the *Arnolfini Portrait.*

With each detail meant to convince us of the reality of what is presented, the number of suggestions, symbols, metaphors and insinuations between painting and spectator seems to grow. Both the different perspectives on the world and the artist's intention to challenge the onlooker to an intense dialogue might just be the source of the mysteries hidden in van Eyck's paintings. The artist did not necessarily speculate. It is hard to believe that he could have ever imagined how many of the details pertaining to his paintings, especially the identity of his models, would be lost. The complexity of his messages is, however, not to be doubted and there is no element, in any of his paintings, that was randomly placed, from the slippers (apparently) abandoned in the room of the Arnolfinis, to the ring, the cane, and the reflections in mirrors, precious stones, metal, glass and even in the pupil, in which we identify the characters behind the painter

[8] The melancholic look thus obtained also appears in the portrait of Giovanni Arnolfini who, although with his wife whom he holds in his hand in a tender gesture, seems transported to a world of thought. Some researchers attribute this expression to an experience related to the loss of another wife.

and/or opposing the space of the composition, etc. (Hanley 2009).[9]

For the identification of the sitter potential sources of information were taken into consideration: the ring, the attire, especially the chaperon, and the physiognomy. Since in his capacity of court painter one of his duties was to paint the portraits of the high-ranking Burgundian officials, associations with people living in that milieu were sought. The manner in which the young man holds the ring convinced first Theodor von Frimmel (Frimmel 1894, 62) and then Erwin Panofsky (*apud* Borchert 2008, 35) that it could be an attribute of his profession and/or a symbol of its social status (the artist resorting to a manner of representation employed in other portraits as well, which combines the realism of depiction with the Medieval symbolism) and therefore what we have as a sitter is a jeweller, a goldsmith. Till-Holger Borchert, one of the most renowned experts in the creations of van Eyck believes that rather than being a painting commissioned for a betrothal (Martens *et alii* 2020, 219-221), it is (and in this he shares Ludwig Kammerer's 1898 interpretation) a portrait presenting a proposal of marriage genre in which the artist specialized (Borchert 2000, 35; Borchert 2012a, 221). And, indeed, the miniature dimensions (19,1x13,2 cm) of the panel make it unsuitable for a gallery of family portraits, but it can easily be packed and transported, sometimes in quite difficult conditions and over a long distance, to the intended. Giovanni C. F. Villa is of the opinion that she was, probably, portrayed in a pendant (Antonello 2006, 296).

Understanding the message is, however, a more sophisticated and surprising enterprise than it appears in an analysis which does not take into consideration the "riddles" and the hidden meanings resulting from correlating visual effects and the plurivalent complexity of the symbols which characterize the game in which the artist engages the onlooker and which he resorted to already in his first portraits (Ward 1994, 9-54).[10]

The remarkable precision (Ward 1994, 35) and the lack of any interest in idealizing the face, quite surprising in a "marriage proposal portrait", may be intended to convince, to give more credibility to the portrait. And the melancholy in his eyes could be an argument of the kind of man the intended husband would be, a mature man (the kind of quality much appreciated in a marriage) (Klibansky *et alii* 2002, 25), of power and wealth, a distinguishing trait, attributes of an exceptional man (Klibansky *et alii* 2002, 59). The feeling the sitter conveys is enhanced by his glance: he seems detached and this gives the portrait an official aspect (as is the case with other works of this kind); thus, this "visual letter" is more than a marriage proposal, it is a proposal of matrimonial alliance.[11]

Associated with the concept of melancholy is the representation of the shadow, of the "dark face". With his engraving, *Melancolia* (1514), Albrecht Dürer is considered to be the first artist north of the Alps, to understand that the "dark face" can express an emotion or to convey a mood, elevating the description of melancholy to the reality of a symbol which associates the abstract notion with the concrete/tangible/real image (Klibansky *et alii* 2002, 357).[50] But could not van Eyck have had a proto-understanding of this characteristic of the shadow since he was familiar with the texts of the ancient and medieval philosophers, albeit sometimes interpreted? And could not,

[9] Referring to the complex symbolism of every detail present in Van Eyck's works, Stephen Hanley makes a case study starting from the painting *The Virgin and Child and Canon van der Paele's*.

[10] The concept of disguised symbolism was presented by Panowsky in the work dedicated to the analysis of the Portrait of the Arnolfini Spouses, published in 1934, and later resumed by other researchers.

[11] We notice that in the subtle pleasure of the game of those shown and / or hidden, symbolized and / or suggested, Jan van Eyck comes with an innovation that he proposes to European painting, namely, the frontal gaze (as it appears in the *Portrait of a Man* with a red turban, the *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw*, the *Portrait of Margaret van Eyck* etc.), to mark a closer connection between model and spectator, but, above all, we believe, for a special relationship between painter and model, for whose understanding the artist also offered other "keys" (symbolism, inscriptions), which require to be placed in the correct place of the puzzle-message.

in his creation, physiognomy – the face darkened by a light beard and the effects of light –, be an expression of a state of mind in an unexpectedly modern approach hardly surprising for such a profound, talented and bright artist?

The composition and the presence of the ring caused the portrait of a *Man with a Blue Chaperon* to be frequently analysed in comparison with the *Portrait of Jan van Leeuw*, dated 1436. In the case of the second portrait, all aspects concerning the jewel appeared to be clear. Jan de Leeuw, a goldsmith from Bruges, was born on October 1st and died sometime in 1457; master of the guild, active at the middle of the 15th century, he was a good/logical choice with his allure, his attitude and, especially with the "attribute" of the man in the image, as well as with the information we learn from the inscription on the frame. The character is in strong contrast with the background, the light comes from the left, the head is oversized in relation to the torso but, unlike the sitter of the portrait from Sibiu, but much like the one in London (*Portrait of a man with red turban*), he does not just show the ring to indicate his profession, but establishes eye contact with the onlooker. Exploring the complexity of the messages hidden by the Flemish artist in symbols, Till Borchert, art historian, is of the opinion that there is a game of meanings and suggestions here, alluding both to the profession of the sitter and to a marriage proposal (Borchert 2008, 36-42). In favour of this double destination there is an anatomical element which has not been dwelt upon sufficiently by specialists, but appears clearly indicated in both portraits (from Sibiu and from Vienna): the ear. It is believed that it was meant to draw compelling attention to the fact that, having made the marriage proposal, the man now eagerly awaits an answer.[12] Other specialists reject both variants, including the fact that the sitter is the goldsmith from Bruges. They base their opinion on the fact that, being a court painter, Jan van Eyck could not have accepted commission from an artisan.[13] Opening a new line of interpretation, professor Henk van Os Ph.D, former director of Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, believes that the ring is a symbol of loyalty (not of marriage), an attribute also present in other portraits of the time, for instance the portrait of Francesco d'Este, by Rogier van der Weyden, where the sitter holds a ring and a hammer, as status symbols (Poele 2020).

The chaperon was also analysed in the hope that it might bring clues for the identification of the model. For the moment, all it indicates is that he is a member of the aristocracy and that the portrait was painted no later than the middle of the 15th century, when this type of headdress fell out of fashion (1435) (Borchert 2000, 31-33). An anonymous drawing dating from the second half of the 15th century (1450–1500), today in the collection of the Borijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam, copied after one of van Eyck's, today lost, drawings (Borchert 2000, 25), represents John IV of Brabant (standing) (Maere, Sainte Fare Garnot 2009, 62) and his physiognomy and clothes bear resemblance to those of the man with blue chaperon in van Eyck's painting. The same facial characteristics appear in the drawing the Dutch artist Anthonis de Succa (ca. 1567–1620) made on a page of his *Memoires*, in which duke John IV of Brabant appears together with countess Michelle of Valois and Philip of Saint Pol (Les Mémoriaux d'Antoine de Succa). In this second drawing, the duke is shown in three-quarters view wearing the same chaperon as the sitter in van Eyck's portrait (Hrib 2011, 35-37). There is, undoubtedly, a connection between the authors of the drawings, who all knew van Eyck's portrait. In his drawing, Antonis de Succa abandoned the gestures of the character which were no longer served their purpose, but the resemblance with the portrait from Sibiu hint to the artist having used it as a model. In this case, taking into consideration the duke's biographical data, the painting could be dated before 1427 when John

[12] We note that in the seventeenth-century drawing of Antoine de Succa, John of Brabant (supposed model of the Eyckian portrait) wears the same cap which, however, partially covers the earlobe whose presence goes unnoticed here.

[13] From 1425 Jan van Eyck was the court painter of the Duke of Burgundy, and his models came from the highest society of the time: the Chancellor of Burgundy and Brabant, Nicolas Rolin, the personal adviser of Philip the Good, Canon Joris van der Paele, Beaudouin de Lannoy, governor of the city of Lille, knight of the Order of the Golden Wool, or the rich Italian banker Giovanni Arnolfini.

IV died. And if so, why would van Eyck have painted a post-mortem portrait, with a ring, even if he did have a drawing to work from?

A recent hypothesis, based on the family tree published on the internet (Genealogia) indicates Philip de Saint Pol (1404–1430) (Philip of Burgundy and, after 1427, Philip Duke of Brabant), as van Eyck's model for the *Portrait of a Man with a Blue Chaperon* (Philippe de Saint Pol). There is a strong resemblance between the duke and his brother (and heir) as he is portrayed by Sousa and Frans Huys. The dating could be around 1430, especially since at the beginning of that year he was proposing matrimony to Yolande of Anjou, a matrimony which would have forged an alliance with her father, Louis of Anjou, meant to stop the ascent of his cousin, Philip the Good of Burgundy. In this case, the ring in question could be a betrothal ring. But, in August of that year (1430) the duke suddenly died, so not only did the marriage not take place, but the thing the late duke feared, did indeed happen: his cousin inherited the duchy and the title. Even the fiancée, Yolande, remained under the cousin's protection for another year when she married Francis I, Duke of Brittany. What happened with the delicate painting after that is unknown. Did Yolande take it, or did it remain in possession of the family of Duke of Burgundy? Did it, somehow, come to belong to Philip the Good, the protector of Jan van Eyck? It later belonged to the illegitimate children Philip had by Barbara de Fierens?

Expanding the research among the persons of rank for which Jan van Eyck worked, another model, albeit less probable, could be John III of Bavaria-Straubing (1374–1425), of the house of Wittelsbach, bishop of Liège 1389–1418 and later duke of Bavaria-Straubing and Earl of Holland and Hainaut 1418–1425. But the biographical data would move the date when the portrait was painted down to 1418, when the duke married Elisabeth, duchess of Luxemburg (mother of John IV of Brabant and of Philip of Saint Pol, both by her first husband, duke Antoine of Brabant). According to registers of payment, which mention sums of money payed to „Meyster Jan den malre", van Eyck was, between 1422–1425 an already well known and appreciated painter of the court who had two apprentices and who was also "valet de chambre". However there are no mentions earlier than that (Martens *et alii* 2020, 16). Although chronologically possible, the face of John III, as appears in the study dedicated to the Princes of Holland in 1578, takes us far from this variant (Vossmer 1578).

A daring theory was put forward in 1990 by Theodor Ionescu, former custodian of the Brukenthal Art Gallery, who believes that what we are, in fact, dealing with a self-portrait. Quoting Edgar Allen Poe, he also believes that the best place to hide is in plain sight. He argues that the certain modesty in the allure, in the clothes, and in attitude, the miniature dimensions of the painting, the impassive expression the age etc. are points in favour of his assertion. In this case, the melancholy and the ring would show that he was mourning the loss of his first wife (Ionesco 1990, 5-11).

The adversities of history deprived the painting of one of the elements which could have given us the answers we are seeking.[14] The absence of the frame (for most of the paintings, the frames had been made by the same carpenter from Bruges) (Campbell 1998, 216) is indeed a great loss (Martens *et alii* 2020, 221),[15] because in van Eyck's creation, the frame is part of the painting, the exterior element of the composition which completes it both visually and with important information (Borchert, Huvenne 2002, cat. 24, 235)[16] carried by the inscriptions which give details about the model, signature, date, either precise or suggested by wordplay and chronograms.[17] Its

[14] The existence of the signature would have been a sufficient reason for the forger who introduced Dürer's monogram in the upper left, to sell the painting better, to get rid of the frame. This is (the seventeenth century − the first half of the eighteenth century), we believe, the time of loss of this important element.

[15] T.H. Borchert thinks the frame could contain a message referring to the marriage proposal.

[16] The character in the *Portrait of a Man* (ca. 1431) was identified as Cardinal Niccolo Albergati based on the inscription on the lost frame today.

[17] The inscription on the frame of the Portrait of Jan de Leeuw: "IAN DE {LEEUW} OP SANT ORSELEN DACH / DAT CLAER EERST MET OGHEN SACH, 1401 / GHECONTERFEIT NV HEEFT MI IAN / VAN EYCK WEL BLIICT WANNEERT BEGA(N) 1436 *(Jan De [Leeuw]*, who opened his eyes on the occasion of St. Ursula

disappearance means the loss of the signature and the apparition of the false Dürer monogram which could have come from the forger's belief that the painting was indeed the creation of the great German painter of the Renaissance.

The attempts to identify the character, which could also have helped with the research concerning the itinerary of the painting, from its owner, or the person who commissioned it (the first owner) to the present, yielded only hypotheses but no definite results. In the catalogue of the Ghent exhibition, the painting is listed under its old name *(Portrait of a Man with Blue Chaperon)*, while the identity of the character is not even mentioned, which suggests that the studies carried out so far did not confirm the suppositions and that there are still many pieces missing from the puzzle (Martens *et alii* 2020, 493).

We have no way of knowing how the information regarding the identity of the author and that of the sitter were lost. As a result of the celebrity van Eyck enjoyed already in his lifetime, many of his creations became part of famous collections (the Medici collection and the collection of Margaret of Austria, for example) (Borchert, Huvenne 2002, 189-190),[18] everywhere in Europe, The Netherlands, Spain, France, England, Italy and the German Empire. The history of our painting and the movement from one exhibition to the other were well documented only after it became part of the Baron Brukenthal's collection. However, here, too, are some unknown elements, as the source of the painting and the sum of money paid for its purchase. But this is not unusual: in the Domestic Registers of the house of Brukenthal's, the only documents which record the expenses of the Baron's family, such information is scarce and does not give details (Schuller 1969, 83). It is known that the most important source of the collection was the Viennese art market of the time. There, while in the service of the Habsburg family (ca. 1765–1784), the passionate collector found most of his treasures (paintings, engravings, books, coins, etc.) (Mesea 2007, 12-14). This collection, appreciated to have been one of the most valuable in Vienna at the beginning of the 18th century, was gradually transferred to Sibiu (1774–1777). After he was appointed Governor of Transylvania, the Baron settled there, first in the house in the garden and then in the Palace situated in Piața Mare (ca. 1784) and continued to enrich his collection with the help of his agents and councillors (Johann Martin Stock (Mesea 2007, 8), a painter from Sibiu among them). In 1790, among other paintings recommended by Martin Hochmeister's Guide of Sibiu, was the *Portrait of a Man with Blue Cap* on display in the gallery situated on the second floor of the Palace built by Samuel von Brukenthal shortly after he became Governor of Transylvania (between 1778–1783 and extended between 1785–1788) to serve as his official residence (Schuller 1969, 257-262) with the possibility, for the public, to visit it (Hochmeister 1790, 99).

When Baron Brukenthal purchased it, the painting was considered to be the creation of Albrecht Dürer based on a signature and a date written on the upper left corner: "AD 1492" and mentioned as such in the Ältester Katalog (Ältester Galeriekatalog, cat. 9) (manuscript catalogue dating from the turn of the 19th century, began by Johann Martin Stock and finished, after his death, by the painter Franz Neuhauser) as well as in the catalogue printed in 1844 by Ludwig Neugeboren (Mesea 2007, 9).[19] It is believed that the signature can be attributed to an art dealer who, in the 17th or 18th century, believed that, attributed to the German artist, the painting would sell better (Frimmel 1894, 62-68). Another surprising variant is that Albrecht Dürer himself signed the painting while on visit in Ghent, but not to attribute it to himself, but as testimony, for

day [21 October], 1401. Now Jan Van Eyck painted me. You can see when he started. 1436".

[18] Margaret of Austria (Princess of Asturias and Duchess of Savoy, Governor of the Habsburg Netherlands, daughter of Maximilian I and Duchess Mary of Austria) had in her collection several works by Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden, who were official painters of Philip the Good, her great-grandfather.

[19] The painter Johann Martin Stock (1742–1800) and the Viennese painter, engraver and professor settled in Sibiu, Franz Neuhauser (1763–1836) worked in the service of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal as "caretakers" and restorers of the European painting collection, as painters, advisers and emissaries for the purchase of works of art.

future generations, that he had seen it (Vanherpe 2017).

In the last years of the 19th century, having thoroughly researched the Brukenthal Collection, the Viennese art historian Theodor von Frimmel, realized that Dürer's signature was not authentic and, in 1894, attributed the painting to van Eyck. Consequently, in his catalogues of 1891 and 1893 Michael Csaki questioned Dürer's paternity of the painting; in the 1894, 1901 and 1909 catalogues the painting is mentioned under the name of the Flemish master (Csaki 1909, cat. 354). Frimmel's discovery gave rise to notorious controversies. Celebrities of the time, Eduard Gerish, professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna (who had restored the painting in 1897 and kept the false signature), Abraham Bredius from The Hague, Cornelis Hofstäde de Groot from Amsterdam, Wilhelm von Bode (Ittu 1990, 50), Georges Hulin de Loo, Max Friedländer (Friedländer 1902, 41) shared his opinion, which was contested by dr. Karl Voll art historian from Munich, specialized in Dutch Renaissance and then by Erwin Panowsky (Csaki 1895–1927, nr. 1, 2, 3, 4). In attributing the painting, they fluctuated in opinion between Jan van Eyck, Hubertus van Eyck (while the painting was exhibited in London, in 1906), a painter from their circle or, even an anonymous imitator who painted at a later date. One thing they agreed on, however, was the exceptional quality of the painting, "an excellent, original work worth at least 100,000 florins" (Csaki 1901, 95)[20]. Contested and/or reasserted (Antonello 2006, 296), the paternity of the painting ceased to be a subject of controversy after 1991. Investigations (X-rays) performed during the restoration works carried out at Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam revealed that, under the layer of colour applied by the Flemish master there was a sketch; corroborated with the oil technique, this detail proved that van Eyck is the undisputed author of the portrait (Asperen, Ridderbos, Zeldenrust 1991, 3-38). The drawing discovered during the investigations was meant to sketch, contour and shape the face with the help of light and shadow, with areas of hatching intended to define volumes and enhance the optical illusion (Borchert 2012b, 243-245).[21] Modern research also helped date the painting: the dendrological analysis places it before 1430 (Maere, Sainte Fare Garnot 2009, 62).

Brought to the attention of specialists and art lovers by catalogues and Frimmel's published studies,[22] at the turn of the century, the painting, together with other masterpieces of the collection (*Geschäftsprotokoll*, 60, May–September 1902, July–November 1903, April 1906, November 1912; Mesea 1998, 27), travelled the continent to be admired in numerous interesting exhibitions. At the 1902 Bruges (Weale 1902, cat. 15)[23] exhibition, Henri Huymans appreciated its "elegance of the style and greatness of expression. It is certainly one of the masterpieces of its creator." (Huymans 1902, 16) But the apparition of such exceptional paintings, belonging to an "obscure" collection, attracted not only the interest of specialists but also of private art collectors and of museums interested in buying them. The most wanted was *The Portrait of a Man with a Blue Chaperon*, but offers were also made for Hans Memling's works, *Man Reading* and *Woman in Traditional Saxon Costume*, for two of Max Joseph Schinnagel's landscapes and for Antonello Da Messina's *Crucifixion.* Among the buyers were the *Cassierer Gallerey* from

[20] The autograph note of Michael Csaki, referring to Bredius' statement, in the volume in the Brukenthal Library, copy no. 67287. Next, September 14, 1901, Csaki noted Karl Voll's statement: "It is an excellent work, but it is not a van Eyck."

[21] Till-Holger Borcher analyses the importance of the drawing executed as the basis of an oil portrait in Van Eyck's creation, revealed with the help of radiography. The author compares the complex and ample drawing from the *Portrait of Margaret van Eyck* with the drawings that were brought to light (following the X-ray analyzes) in most of the portraits of the Flemish artist, among which is also the painting in the Brukenthal collection.

[22] *Der Erste Galeriekatalog*, written in 1844 by Johann Ludwig Neugeboren, was sent to several European institutions in the hope of integrating the collection into the circuit of European artistic values. The same was done with the revised editions of Professor Karl Schellein, director of the Viennese School of Restoration, from 1884, 1889 and 1893, with Theodor von Frimmel's Kleine Galeriestudien, published in Vienna in 1894, and then with Michael Csaki's Guide, from 1893, 1901 and 1909.

[23] *Portrait of a Young Man*, work in the possession of the Evangelic School in Sibiu.

Berlin (Geschäftsprotokoll, 75, September 1920), *Altertummuseum* Burghausen (at the recommenddation of professor Gerisch) (Geschäftsprotokoll, 75, August, October 1907), the *National Gallery* in Berlin (through dr. Hugo von Tschudi) (Geschäftsprotokoll, 74, December 1897), Baron von Reitzstein, art dealer (Geschäftsprotokoll, March 1925). In 1911, the sum of one million florins was offered for Jan van Eyck's painting by a certain Schuster, German "nouveau riche" who owned mines in South America, through an art dealer from Budapest, Karl Löbl (Geschäftsprotokoll, 74, November 1911). This spectacular offer was the beginning of a crisis: the generation of young artists insisted the offer should be accepted and the painting sold. The million florins could, then, have been spent on modernizing the museum and on purchasing works of modern art. Not since the suit filed by the successors of Baron Brukenthal's was the Baron's will and testament brought into discussion (Mesea 2007, 14). The ambivalence of the ideological component of the cultural program at the turn of the century, modernity versus tradition, triggered one of the most interesting disputes on the (in)tangibility of the testament. The newspapers of the time – *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, *Die Karpathen*, *Kronstädter Zeitung* – the minutes of the *Sebastian Hann Association*, and the curatorial minutes all mentioned the fierce polemic. The Young Generation, whose spokesperson was Ernst Honigberger, advocated that the selling of this "small painting" would bring the money necessary for constituting a collection of European and local modern art (Honigberger 1911–1912, 12, 370) invoking the fact that the Baron "bequeathed capital for the support of young artists" (which was also the opinion, expressed in a letter sent from Rome, on February 19th 1901, to the curators of the Museum, by Robert Wellmann, painter from Sibiu) (Mesea 2001–2002, 271). This attitude was the result of the hundred years which had passed since the Baron's death: the Museum had accumulated the attributes of institutes which were either absent or poorly represented in the city, especially those of an academy of arts (Mesea 2007, 26). At the turn of the century, the Museum was actively involved in the life of the city, and it was thought that it should become a meeting place for old and new ideas, a place where young artists could find inspiration, a space where to work, to exhibit and to sell their creations. Consequently, it would help educate the citizens of Sibiu so that they would become knowledgeable about modern art and more dedicated to the life of their city: "A collection of modern art in Sibiu! Has anybody considered how many visitors such a collection would attract? The money it would bring would build a collection of modern art the likes of which does not exist anywhere in Austria-Hungary. What an incentive it would be for the progress, not only of painting, but of culture in the area! The duty of any man of culture is to do his utmost for the cultural progress of the people. All those who adhere to this idea must fight for the foundation of a collection of national modern art." (Gündisch 1911–1912, 312; Müller, Honigberger 1911–1912, 348) And, as the painting was thought to be a Dürer when it was bought, and not a van Eyck, the morality of selling one of the paintings of the collection could no longer be an argument. "Was the Baron's intention to build himself a monument or did he have a higher, more noble purpose in mind? We are certain that he thought not of himself, but of his people. His purpose was to support the development of art and culture. A great man leaves his mark on his creation. Would the character of the collection be hurt by the sale of the van Eyck?" (Müller, Honigberger 1911–1912, 350) The sale of this "insignificant little painting", whose value is given not only by its exceptional artistic quality but also by the rarity of the artist's creations "would not be a great loss to the Brukenthal Gallery (…) where there are many more important works." (Müller, Honigberger 1911–1912, 350) "With the sale of the van Eyck, the gallery and, indeed, the whole Museum, would cease to be a mausoleum, piously visited once a decade by connoisseurs (…), to become a fountain of beauty and creation for all young, alive artists." (Müller, Honigberger 1911–1912, 351) Michael Csaki (1858–1927), head of the Art Gallery, spokesperson for the conservatives, determined defender of the integrity of the collection and of the value of the van Eyck, who enlisted the support of renowned specialists of the time, Frimmel,

Bode (Bode 1901),[24] Friedländer, Bredius, Hoffsdtädte van Groot, Tschudi, Martin, Hymann believed that the painting was indeed a van Eyck and that the sale would be a great loss. "Personally, I am convinced that Brukenthal would have been deeply troubled by the idea of the sale," asserted the curator (Csaki 1911–1912, 269-270).[25]

This delicate matter in dispute triggered numerous reactions from local and foreign personalities. Artists and art historians from the country and from abroad supported the idea of the sale believing the gain to be more significant than the loss. The dilemma is clearly expressed by the position of professor Hans Thoma, director of the Karlsruhe Museum: as a painter, he would support the sale of the painting, but as the director of a museum he would firmly oppose it (Honigberger 1911–1912b, 373). In the end, the van Eyck was not sold, not because of its exceptional value, but because it was impossible to contradict the provisions of the Baron's will (Eine juristische Eingabe 1911–1912, 393).

This was not the last offer made for the purchase of the painting, but the 1912 conclusion remained firm. In the next years, the curators payed close attention to its preservation.

But the destiny of our painting continued to be troubled. Only two years later, in the winter of 1914, together with other exceptional works of the collection – paintings by Memling and Titian – and with valuable pieces of silver and gold as well as the Brukenthal Breviary was transported to Vienna and then to the National Museum in Budapest to be kept safe from the war. They will be returned to the Museum in 1919. Then, during World War II, between May 1944 and August 1945, it was taken to the Evangelical Church in Agnita for safe keeping.

And the great changes were far from over. After the communist nationalization in 1948, the Museum was transferred from the property of the Evangelical High School to the property of the state and the authorities decided to transfer nineteen masterpieces, the *Portrait of a Man with a Blue Chaperon* among them, to the Art Museum in Bucharest where they remained until 2006. Before they were brought back to the Brukenthal Museum, the paintings were victims of the bullets fired during the 1989 Revolution and had to undergo restoration works in the laboratories of the Rijskmuseum in Amsterdam. It was then and there, as we have previously stated, that van Eyck's paternity of the portrait was established without a doubt. "The restitution of the nineteen paintings, including the *Portrait of a Man with a Blue Chaperon* and the *Massacre of the Innocents* of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, was an all-important gesture in the process of restoring the memory of the city of Sibiu. Deprived of these fibres, the fabric of the future European Capital of Culture would have been frayed and incomplete" said Adrian Iorgulescu Minister of Culture when the paintings were, once again, in the Brukenthal Gallery (*Omul cu tichie albastră* 2006).

In 2012, the *Man with a Blue Cap*, together with all the other works signed or attributed to Jan van Eyck, took part in an ample project that analysed, with modern technological instruments, the entire creation of the Flemish master. The famous VERONA project – which won the European Heritage Award "Europa Nostra" in the category Research in 2019 – has broken new ground by creating ultra-high-resolution scientific imagery with state-of-the-art equipment and by adopting a single, standardised protocol for all van Eyck's paintings (Verona 2012). During the examination of the works of art, the project attempted to understand the construction of the wooden supports and to learn as much as

[24] "Through the seriousness and breadth of the conception, through the sobriety and certainty in the rendering of the personality, through the finesse of the design and the beauty of the colour, *The Man with the Blue Cap* can be accurately recognized as the work of Jan van Eyck."

[25] "Brukenthal left us this museum in the form of a foundation whose capital must be maintained and multiplied. That is why my opinion is that the painting should not be sold, because the purpose of the foundation is to preserve the collections as they were formed and cared for. They have been kept until now in the spirit of the one who bought them. (…) If we sell van Eyck, who can guarantee that the spirit, flavour, and value of the collection will remain the same, as intended by the founder. Only the founder could decide what is most important for our cultural development: a collection with van Eyck, Memling, Titian or one with Böcklin, Lenbach, Stuck."

possible about the ground and paint layer structure. The results of this documentation were published on the website "Closer to Van Eyck", an online application meant to be a reference for comparative research on the work of Van Eyck. Researchers are now able to study the differences and similarities in the artist's technique on the basis of the same comparative material (Verona 2012). For the painting of the Brukenthal collection, this was an extraordinary opportunity to stay together, be compared to all the other works, and be confirmed as painted by the Netherlandish master. Between October 9th to 11th 2016 at the Noordbrabants Museum in Hertogenbosch, where was temporarily on loan, the painting in Sibiu was studied and documented following the Verona protocol with macrophotography (normal light, infrared light, raking light, UV fluorescence), infrared reflectography and X-radiography. In addition, an X-radiograph of the panel made by the KIK/IRPA in Luxembourg in 2012 was scanned and registered.

The Ghent exhibition, envisaged as a success of the restitution of Jan van Eyck's artistic legacy, was to be subject of yet another trying circumstance. Only three weeks after I visited it, in the early days of February, the Art Museum was closed due to the coronavirus pandemic which has caused havoc in the entire world. I added to this text, which I had started to write at the end of the last year, a few impressions on the exhibition in the hope that the organizers of this grand event will find a way to prolong it, thus giving the visitors the opportunity to immerse into the world of van Eyck and understand the complexity of the means by which the Flemish master taught his peers to regard art changing the way the visual message was conveyed and underlining the difference between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. By placing it in the context of its time van Eyck's creation will assert the merit which surprised his contemporaries and continues to fascinate.

Note: This essay was published in Romanian language in the volume In Honorem Academician Răzvan Theodorescu in the revue of the Romanian Academy, "George Oprescu" Institute for Art History, 2020. It is published here in English version due to its importance for the research in the collections of Brukenthal National Museum, and to make it more accessible to foreign specialists interested in early Netherlandish painting.

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Fig. 8. Placart of the exhibition "Van Eyck. An Optical Revolution," Ghent, 2020

Fig. 9. Image in the promotion movie of the exhibition "Van Eyck. An Optical Revolution," The Art Museum (Museum voor Schone Kunsten), Ghent, 2020

Fig. 10. Installation of the painting *Man with Blue Chaperon* by Jan van Eyck, in the exhibition "Van Eyck. An Optical Revolution," The Art Museum (Museum voor Schone Kunsten), Ghent, 2020

CONSIDERATIONS ON A *SACRA CONVERSAZIONE* BY THE WORKSHOP OF PALMA IL VECCHIO IN THE BRUKENTHAL EUROPEAN ART GALLERY

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Abstract: *The "Sacred Conversation" pictures were private devotional paintings that corresponded to both clerical and secular tastes, and aroused the interest of the new generation of Venetian artists, who began to develop their individual styles in the early 16th century. Palma il Vecchio was the one who excelled in the "Sacre Conversazioni" pictorial genre.*

The present article draws attention to a painting from the European Art Gallery of the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu, which is configured to be a contemporary duplicative work, executed in the workshop of Palma il Vecchio, after an autograph "Sacra Conversazione" by Palma il Vecchio from ca. 1525 − purchased for a private collection in Switzerland; another version of Palma's Swiss painting is to be found in the Galleria Estense in Modena, Italy.

Keywords*: Palma il Vecchio, Sacra Conversazione, Brukenthal National Museum, Swiss private collection, Galleria Estense di Modena, duplicative work*

Rezumat: *Picturile cu tema „Conversației sacre" erau destinate devoțiunii private, fiind preferate în acest scop atât de clerici, cât și de laici, și au trezit interesul noii generații de artiști venețieni, care au început să își dezvolte stilurile individuale la începutul secolului al XVI-lea. Palma il Vecchio a fost artistul care a excelat în acest gen pictural al „Conversațiilor Sacre".*

Prezentul articol supune atenției un tablou din Galeria de Artă Europeană a Muzeului Național Brukenthal din Sibiu, care se configurează a fi un tablou duplicat, de atelier, realizat după o „Sacra Conversazione" autografă a lui Palma il Vecchio din cca. 1525 − achiziționat pentru o colecție privată din Elveția; o altă versiune a tabloului din Elveția se află în Italia, în colecțiile Galleriei Estense din Modena.

Cuvinte cheie: *Palma il Vecchio, Sacra Conversazione, Muzeul Național Brukenthal, colecție privată elvețiană, Galleria Estense di Modena, replică*

The present research focuses on a painting in the Brukenthal European Art Gallery, which needs further clarifications on its author's identification and some explanations for the proper understanding of its iconographic theme.

The painting − in oil on canvas of 69 x 98 cm, with inventory number 665 − was registered in the old catalogue of the Brukenthal Collection as "Calydoro Lanzani, Maria mit dem Kinde" (*Ältester Katalog* ca. 1800, cat. 11, exhibited in the 2nd room of the Italian School of painting) (Fig. 1). The catalogue of the Brukenthal Gallery printed in 1844, in Sibiu / *Hermannstadt*, indicates the painting as "a work by Polydor Lanzani, alias Polydoro di Venezia, (...) pupil of Titian" (*Gemälde-Galerie* 1844, 21, cat. 109).[1]

The same attribution and interpretation were repeated in the catalogue of the collection printed in 1893 (*Die Gemäldegalerie* 1893, 4, cat. 35, the painting being on display in the

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[1] "Von Polydor Lanzani, genannt Polydoro di Venezia. Lebte um die Mitte des 16.Jahrhubdert. Schüller des Tizian. Maria mit dem Christuskinde unter dem Schutze eines Baumes in Gesellschaft der heil. Katharina, und einer andern Heiligen, welche in einem Buche liest, nebenher kniet der heil. Joachim mit gefalteten Händen. Ganze Figuren, viel unter Lebensgröße, auf Leinwand."

first room of the Italian School). The catalogues published at the beginning of the 19th century by the custodian of the museum, Michael Csaki, attributed the work to an anonymous painter, "after Polidoro Lanzani, alias Polidore Veneziano or to Jacopo Palma the Elder" (Csaki 1901, cat. 648, and Csaki 1909, cat. 665).[2] The art curator Maria Olimpia Tudoran opined – in her catalogue dedicated to the Brukenthal National Museum's collection of the Italian paintings, published in 2002 – that the respective painting was "a work of a pupil of Lanciano, under his influence", suggesting close resemblances to Polidor Lanciano's painting *Engagement of Saint Catherine* from the Marchi Collection, in Arrezo (Tudoran 2002, 30). As a result, the painting is currently registered under the title *Holy Family*, after Polidoro da Renzi alias Polidoro da Lanciano (ca. 1515−1565), inv. 665.[3]

A recently restored and thorough analysed painting from a private collection turned out to be an autograph work of Palma il Vecchio (Fig. 2).[4] The painting entitled *Sacred Conversation with Saints and Donor* – in oil on panel, dating to ca. 1520–1525 – reflects a composition identical to that of the painting in Sibiu and has almost the same dimensions.

The painting was bought at the Art Auction House Koller in Zürich, in 2011,[5] as: "Workshop of Palma, Jacopo called Il Vecchio (Serinalta, 1479 – Venice, 1528), *Sacra Conversazione with the Madonna and Child, also patrons as Saint Joseph and Saint Catherine of Alexandria* (oil on panel / 68.5 x 99 cm / provenance: Dr. Schwegler Collection, Zürich / Schneeberger art dealer, Bern / private collection, Switzerland). This painting, which is largely based on compositions by Titian and Raphael, was created in the workshop of Palma il Vecchio and can be dated around 1525. A second version is in the Galleria Estense in Modena (oil on wood, 62 x 95 cm, inv. 203) and differs in some points from the painting offered here. A major difference lies in the figure of Joseph on the left of the Madonna, who is shown in our painting with the facial features of the client, while in the Modena version, Saint Joseph is shown in a conventional way, as an old man with a long grey beard. Furthermore, the free landscape in the background of our painting, painted with bright colours, has been replaced by an urban view with two wrapped trees on the left edge in the Modena variant."[6] (Fig. 3)

In the 1930s, the eminent Austrian art historian and art collector Wilhelm Suida appreciated the painting in the Swiss collection as a work of Palma il Vecchio (Suida 1934/1935, 89-90, fig. 3); the photos in reflectography done during the last restoration of the painting support its' attribution to Palma. The fact that the painting in the Swiss private collection is a variant of a painting in the Galleria Estense in Modena ("una derivazione dalla tavola dell' Estense") was reported by the Italian art historian Rodolfo Pallucchini in 1945 (Pallucchini 1945, 168, cat. 378); Pallucchini's opinion was agreed a few decades later by Philip Rylands – eminent researcher on Palma – in his catalogue raisonné of the works of Palma il Vecchio, who conveys the idea that the painting in the Schwegler collection in Zürich (sold in 2011 for a Swiss private collection) is a "Variant Formerly (?)" of the painting in Modena (Rylands 1992, 288, cat. A46).

Since our painting in Sibiu requires a thorough technical examination and cleaning of the blackened varnish layer, we will perform our analytical approach on the similar painting in the Swiss private collection which, being restored and authenticated, offers us the possibility of interpretation and analysis of its composition. We are also interested in the possible identification of the models used by the painter or his sources of inspiration, as well

[2] "Nach Polidoro Lanzani, genannt Polidoro Veneziano oder Jacopo Palma d. Ä. / 665. (XV. v.) **Die heilige Familie.** Maria in rotem Gewand sitzt vorn halb nach l[inks]. mit Jesus unter einem Baum. R[echts] die heilige Katharina und eine in einem Buch lesende Frau, l[inks]. Der heilige Joachim mit gefalteten Händen. Hinten Berglandschaft. Halbe L. Gr. Lwd. Br. 0.98, H. 0.69. ReSaint 1898. N. Lwd."

[3] The painting was restored in 1898 and 1922.

[4] https://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/p/palma/vecchio/sacra_co.html.

[5] I thank my colleague Alexandru Sonoc for the information – he came across in a catalogue – about the auction house where the painting was sold.

[6] https://www.kollerauktionen.ch/en/308466-0001-----1158-PALMA_-JACOPO-genannt-IL-VECC-1158_47812.html

as of the client / commissioner of the painting. The final conclusions of the research could help us to attribute the painting from Sibiu and appreciate its artistic value.

The "Sacred Conversation" pictures were devotional paintings, related to the traditional iconographic theme of the *Holy Family* and its narrative pictorial variants, the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* or the *Adoration of the Shepherds*; they represent the Virgin Mary and Child, accompanied by a few saints, and occasionally by donors. The term, in its Latin equivalents "santa conversation" and "pia conversation", was used in the Christian Sacred Texts to indicate pious behaviour or spiritual community (Goffen 1979, 198-200). Referring to the subject of a picture the term appears at the earliest in the 18th century, in the inventories of the Palazzo Pucci in Florence from 1763 and 1797 (Goffen 1979, 198, and note 4).[7] Throughout the 19th century, art historians rarely used this term to describe a painting. Franz Kugler refers to "heilige Conversazionen", mentioning that in this way paintings such as Titian's *Pesaro Altarpiece* were called in Italy (Kugler 1837, 309). A few decades later, in 1871, Crowe and Cavalcaselle popularized this elusive phrase in their work *A History of Painting in North Italy* (...), and stated that Palma Vecchio "was the inventor of the large *Sacra Conversazione* in which full-lengths of saints hold court in the presence of the Virgin (...)." (Crowe-Cavalcaselle 1871, *apud* Goffen 1979, 198-199)

The images with this iconographic theme corresponded to the taste for private devotion of the wealthy families in the Republic of Venice or abroad, and aroused the interest of the new generation of Venetian artists, who started to develop their individual styles in the early 16th century, drawing inspiration from the masters of the previous generation – Giovanni Bellini in particular. Giorgione, Titian, Palma il Vecchio, Lorenzo Lotto or Sebastiano del Piombo – who were to represent the High Renaissance style in Venetian art – developed the setting of religious scenes in an open landscape. Their paintings were distinguished by the exploration and refinement of the oil medium, the preference for classically proportioned, statuesque figures, immersed in an atmosphere of natural light. It seems that their generation became acquainted with this type of representation, known to the Nordic art, by observing and becoming familiar with Albrecht Dürer's work and style during his journey and stay in Venice from the autumn of 1505 to the winter of 1507; the influences were undoubtedly mutual.

In the Venetian *Sacre Conversazioni* of the early 16th century, the older architectural setting of the figures, in a vertical format, was competed by a new type of iconographic representation of the scene, in an axial layout of the figures against a landscape background, in horizontal format; the countenance of the figures was serene, with tender gestures and glances, engaged in a spiritual, meditative, non-verbal conversation. From the extraordinary generation of the Venetian artists at the beginning of the 16th century, Jacopo Negretti alias Palma il Vecchio (b. Serina, near Bergamo, 1479/1480 – d. Venice, 1528) was the one who excelled in the genre of *Sacra Conversazione*.

In 1510, Palma (Fig. 11) was already settled in Venice, being attested as "Jacopo de Antonio de Negreti depentor" (Bernardi 2009, 7; Villa R. 2015b, 41); *depentor* meant that he was by then a master of the painter's guild, *Arte dei Depentori* (Dunkerton-Spring 2013, 122, note 14). By 1513 he was also a member of the *Scuola di San Marco*, the powerful and wealthy lay religious society dedicated to the city's patron saint. Since 1513, the painter assumed in an official way his nickname "Palma" (Savy 2013); the appellation "Vecchio" was used for the first time by Raffaello Borghini in 1584, to distinguish the artist by his great-grandson of the same name, who also became a successful painter in Venice, Jacopo Negretti alias Palma il Giovane (1548/50–1628) (Borghini 1584, p. 559, *apud* Savy 2013). The artist lived and worked in Venice until his premature death in 1528, at the age of 48 (Villa R., 2015a, 31, *apud* Vasari 1550). His iconographic repertoire included both religious and secular themes, depending

[7] "In a Pucci inventory dated March 20, 1797, a painting by Santi di Tito is described as 'Un quadro reppresentative una *Sacra Conversazione* con cinque figure'. (…) Two other paintings are identified as *sacre conversazioni* in the inventory of the Pucci villa at Careggi (…) on July 16, 1763."

on the commissions he received: altars, *Sacre Conversazioni*, bucolic scenes, and portraits.

Within his oeuvre, the *Sacra Conversazione* was one of the most frequent subjects, and despite the repetition of the theme, Palma managed to create a succession of masterpieces. In his paintings on this topic, the artist revealed the development of a cycle of idealized human physiognomies, in a relatively constant framework of compositions. He used to resume the physiognomy of some characters, which were sometimes repositioned or captured with different gestures and facial expressions, so that their movements and Sacred Conversation seem to continue in several paintings between the saints gathered in veneration around the Virgin Mary and Child.

The recently restored Palma's *Sacra Conversazione* from the Swiss private collection has a very harmonious composition (Fig. 2). It shows Madonna and Child seated on the ground, in the middle of the painting, under the shade of few trees; a new tree branch extends above Virgin Mary's head, as a symbol of revival. The figure of the Virgin Mary dominates the group of characters around her through a pyramid-shaped representation. A man praying is depicted on her right side, and on the left are Saint Catherine of Alexandria – with her attributes, the "breaking wheel" and a palm – and another female saint, reading; their figures are positioned symmetrically to the vertical middle axis of the frame, and that axis seems to pass in the traditional way through Mary's left eye.

Rendered in the triangular space formed by the inclined position of the figures, Madonna gently supports Jesus Child on her lap; she expresses deep feelings of melancholy, of humble acceptance of her Son's fate and "keeps every thought in her heart, temple of silence" (Cottrell 1998, 241). Her free, relaxed left leg creates a diagonal line – accentuated by the same direction of the Child Jesus' body position –, which leads to Madonna's face, and conduct all eyes there. Madonna's figure leans on her right leg with most of the weight, a position that causes the body to rotate so that the levels of her right shoulder and hip are lower than those of the left. With a slight twist of the body, the Child Jesus turns his head towards the man's figure on His right, which looks at Him in veneration. The Child does not gaze at him directly, but He seems to feel the male's presence and listen to his prayers, which He will consider. This dynamic way of depicting the figures shows Palma's mastery of "del contrapposto", characteristic for his mature Renaissance style in the 1520s.

Palma also used the "counterpoise" style to render the position of the other characters in the composition (the portrait of the man on the left of the composition versus the group of the two female saints on the right, as well as the face-to-face stance of the two holy women), thus expressing different movement effects, and surprisingly, at the same time, a more relaxed atmosphere and psychological disposition for the Sacred Conversation.

We continue the investigation of the picture with an attempt to suggest the identification of the two unknown characters in the composition.

The saint who is reading in the group of the two holy women may be Saint Barbara, if we consider the tower that is seen in her direction behind the Virgin Mary and the clump of trees. The placement of the saint's attribute in the landscape is similarly done in another *Sacra Conversazione* by Palma – in the Picture Gallery of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna –, painted in 1522, where she accompanies Saint John the Baptist, Saint Catherine of Alexandria and Saint Celestine gathered around the Virgin Mary and Child Jesus (Fig. 9), as well as in *The Holy Family under a tree with Sts. Catharine and Barbara*, in the Liechtenstein Princely Collections, in Vaduz-Vienna.

Interesting to find out is the identity of the male character sitting next to the Virgin Mary, on her right side (Fig. 5 – detail); it replaces the usual physiognomy of Saint Joseph in the *Holy Family* scenes with that of the patron of this painting. The client in veneration for the Virgin Mary and Child seems to be Francesco Querini – "Venetian Patrician, Poet and Soldier"[8] –, whose portrait was painted by

[8] Giovanni da Cavino (1500–1570), *Medal with the portrait of Franceso Querini as a Roman Emperor*, 1563 (Samuel H. Kress Collection); https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.45030.html

Palma in 1527/1528,[9] in pendant with his wife's, Paola Priuli, as wedding portraits (the wedding was celebrated on April 23rd 1528) (Fig. 6). Francesco Querini (ca. 1503–1554) was one of Palma's documented patrons, along with several nobles and intellectuals from Venice, such as (his father-in-law) Francesco Priuli[10] – the Procurator of the Venetian Republic –, Angelo Trevisan, Francesco Zio, Andrea Odoni, Taddeo Contarini, Girolamo Marcello (Piazzoli-Villa 2014, 15), or Girolamo di Giorgio Capra from Vicenza. "Unfortunately, due to the sudden death of the painter during a plague, on July 30th, 1528, the two canvases [the wedding portraits] remained unfinished. Precisely the fact that they are incomplete enables us to understand which pictorial technique Palma il Vecchio used: he used to spread different coats of colour over the wide base, while he created the details with the tip of his brush. (...) The faces of the couple showcase the artist's incredible ability to interpret the character of the people he portrayed (...)."[11] During the same period, in addition to the portraits of Francesco Querini and Paola Priuli, Palma painted at least other three paintings for "messere Francesco Querini", through which two other *Sacra Conversazione*, which were also found in the artist's workshop at his death and finished later by his pupil and collaborator, Bonifacio de' Pitati Veronese (one of which is reproduced in Fig. 8).[12]

The features of Francesco Querini in his wedding portrait and those of the commissioner of the *Sacra Conversazione* painting in the Swiss private collection are remarkably close; the devotional picture seems to precede the portrait only a few years. For the soldier and poet Francesco Querini, the significance of the devotional painting could have been a visual confirmation of his desire and gratitude for the divine mercy he coveted. "Madonna paintings are (or were originally) objects of practical use, instruments of prayer that aided devotions." (Goffen 1979, 198)

If one looks in parallel at the *Sacra Conversazione* in the Swiss private collection (Fig. 2) and the one in the Galleria Estense in Modena (Fig. 3), it is noticeable that both have identical compositions and the contours of the figures appear to have been applied with the same patterns; changes only affect the physiognomies of the male characters or some parts of the background landscape.

The online file of the painting in the Galleria Estense in Modena – *Holy Family with two saints*, Venetian School, 16th century – on the Frick Art Reference Library website mentions that it was bought in Venice, by Francesco V,[13] as the *Holy Family with SS. Bridget (?) and Catherine* by Palma Vecchio. The attribution varied from a "distinguished work" by Palma il Vechhio (Castellani 1854, no. 129, 39)[14] and "a good picture of Palma Vecchio, but entirely damaged by retouching" (Venturi 1883, 441),[15] to a copy after Palma Vecchio (Crowe-Cavalcaselle 1871, v. 2, 490; Morelli 1897, 302; Zocca 1933, 23), "the School of Palma Giovane" (Ricci 1925, 88, cat. 203; Gombosi 1937, 115), "a late work by Palma il Vecchio" (Palluchini 1945, 168, cat. 378, fig. 134), and "Palma Vecchio or workshop?" (Rylands 1992, 288, cat. A46). The panel was cleaned by G. Forghieri in 1943. The online file of the Modena painting concludes that: "It must be a late work by Palma il Vecchio or perhaps only from his [work]shop, almost completely repainted in the 19th century, and therefore

[9] Palma il Vecchio, *Portrait of Franceso Querini*, 1527–1528, oil on panel, 88 x 72 cm. Venice, Pinacoteca Querini Stampalia.

[10] For comparison see Priuli's portrait as a patron in Palma's painting *The Virgin Mary and Child with Saints and a Donor*, ca. 1518–1520. Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bronemisza, Madrid (inv. 309.1934.36). https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/palma-vecchio/virgin-and-child-saints-and-donor

[11] https://www.venetoinside.com/hidden-treasures/post/the-portraits-of-francesco-querini-and-paola-priuli-at-the-querini-stampalia-foundation/

[12] http://www.querinistampalia.org/eng/uploads/Schede%20Museo_eng.pdf

[13] The Galleria Estense – formed around the art collection of the d'Este family – opened to the public in 1854 by Francesco V. d'Austria-Este.

[14] "Quest' opera distincta, che fu acquisita in Venezia per ordine di Francesco V, prova quanto giustamente il Palma sia stato considerato fra i migliori artisti di quella felice eta, e quanto nel seguir la natura fosse scelto nelle figure e nelle vesti, dipingento poi con tanta diligenza che quasi non si conosce colpo di pennello. Tavola al. 0.75 - lar. 0.92."

[15] „Acquisto inoltre ... un buon quadro del Palma Vecchio, pero guasto interamente dai ritocchi (n. 129 del catalogo del '54)."

really impossible to judge at present. Some very small parts of the painting, such as the Child, for example, are intact, and allow us to guess that the quality of the painting was originally fairly good."[16] The Rylands's catalogue raisonné of the works of Palma (1992, 288, A46) comments that: "What Pallucchini said of the painting is accurate, and the picture is almost totally repainted. Nevertheless, the painting undoubtedly came originally from Palma's workshop, even if it is not by Palma himself. The figures types and poses are all typical of him, and belong to the period 1514–16. The infant Christ for example, which Pallucchini accepted as one of the better preserved parts, is similar to the infant Christ in Palma's half-length *Sacra Conversazione* in Bergamo [ca. 1517], while the two female saints recall those in the *Sacra Conversazione* in Vaduz [Liechtenstein Gallery, Vienna]."[17]

Although with his typical features, the particular representation of Saint Joseph's posture in Modena painting – with clasped hands in prayer – is less common for the *Holy Family* scenes (except for images of the *Nativity* or *Adoration of the Child Jesus*, where Saint Joseph prays, seated next to the Virgin Mary, whose hands are generally crossed on her chest). In the painting in Modena, Saint Joseph is rather portrayed as a donor. The possibility that this picture is a later work of the painting in the Swiss private collection is also questioned by Rylands (1992, 288), and previously by Suida (1934, 90), who considered it an "old copy of picture in Schwegler collection, Zürich". Pallucchini (1945, 168, cat. 378) takes into account Wilhelm Suida's opinion by mentioning it in his writings on Palma's work: "Il Suida pubbilcò come originale un dipinto della raccolta Schwegler di Zurigo (Suida, Studien zu Palma, in Belvedere, 1934/5, 5/6, fig. 3), dove al posto di S. Giuseppe sta un committente in preghiera, che può ritenersi una derivazione dalla tavola dell' Estense."

In the Swiss version of the painting, Saint Joseph has the physiognomy of his commissioner, so that the purpose of this personal devotional painting is noticeably clear. The praying image of a donor consecrates his commission as a humble act and, on the other hand, the special physiognomy of the donor – who undoubtedly wanted to be identified – is a form of portrait painting. The inclusion of the donor in *Sacre conversazioni* as a devotional motif is supposed to be inspired by the Franciscan doctrine, and is related to the visual imagery of "the relationship between sacred paintings and pious writings" (Goffen 1979, 202). The opinion is plausible and one can see it expressed, in the posture of Saint Franciscus, in another commission of Francesco Querini to Palma, *The Virgin Mary with Child Jesus and Saints Catharine of Alexandria, Franciscus, Barbara and Peter* (Pinacoteca Querini Stampalia, Venice) (Fig. 8).

Another painting attributed to Palma, *Mary with Child and Saints Joseph and Magdalena,* in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (Picture Gallery, inv. 2161)[18], from the same period (1520–1525), and having almost similar dimensions (68 x 98 cm) (Fig. 4), seems to precede the painting from the Swiss private collection (Fig. 2). The physiognomy of the Infant Jesus provides a near identical match in both versions. For the profile of Saint Mary Magdalene (Fig. 4) and that of Saint Catherine of Alexandria (Figs. 2-3), Palma adopted one of the "modelli carpacceschi", namely *The Virgin Reading*, painted by Vittorio Carpaccio in ca. 1505–1510[19] (National Gallery of Art, Washington, tempera on canvas, inv. 1939.1.354) (Fig. 7). The conservative style of Vittorio Carpaccio (Venice, ca. 1465–1525 / 1526) shaped Palma's work, in parallel to his fascination with the innovations that Giorgione and Titian brought to Venetian painting.

"In his latest period Palma shows an inclination of greatly to amplify the outline of his masses of figures and drapery" (Hadeln 1923, 173), which can be seen together with

[16] https://digitalcollections.frick.org/digico/#/details/bibRecordNumber/b11276459/Photoarchive

[17] See photo on: Venturi (1928), 400, fig. 245.

[18] Provenance: 1528–1529, Palma's workshop, Venice, no. 31; 1636, Coll. Bartolomeo della Nave, Venice: Coll. Leopold Wilhelm: 1868 in the gallery depot (sacristy of the palace chapel / Belvedere). https://www.khm.at/objektdb/detail/1294/

[19] https://docplayer.it/4847036-Giacomo-nigretti-nato-venezia-nel-1548-1550-e-morto-il-14-ottobre-1628-nella-stessa-citta-detto-palma-il-giovane-1.html

his masterfully free style in one of his rare drawings, *Madonna and Child*, from a private collection in London (Fig. 10)

Apart from the character of Saint Joseph in the Vienna painting (Fig. 4), the other figures in the three paintings (Figs. 2, 3, 4) were created according to the same patterns; only a few changes were introduced in the compositions of these works. The Virgin Mary and Child Jesus' poses are almost identical; the two female saints' attitude is also analogous; only their left hand is rendered in a different position: Saint Catherine's is lying on the broken wheel (that covers her left ankle), while Saint Mary Magdalene's is holding the container of ointment; in her raised right hand, Saint Catherine holds a palm, while Saint Mary Magdalene the lid of the container. The olive-green colour of the two saints' robes is identical. The (triangular) space between Saint Catherine of Alexandria and the Virgin Mary was completed in the paintings in the Swiss private collection and in the Galleria Estense in Modena with the figure of a female saint / Saint Barbara reading (Figs. 2-3), while in the painting in the museum in Vienna the landscape extends across the entire background of the painting, and also replaces the trees in the two previous paintings (Fig. 4). The patron's / commissioner's clothes and respectively, Saint Joseph's, are rendered in the same range of colours: blue and orange (Figs. 2, 4).

The similar figure of Saint Catherine of Alexandria was integrated in Palma's painting from the Pinacoteca Querini Stampalia in Venice (Fig. 8) –, rendered this time "in the mirror", namely, posed in the left corner of the work, facing the Madonna with Child. Due to Palma's premature death, in July 1528, this painting, commissioned by Francesco de' Querini, was completed sometime later by Bonifacio Pitati, as we have already mentioned above (Fiocco 1930).

What draws our closer attention is the unfolded sheet of paper on the lap of the reading saint (Barbara) from the painting of the Swiss private collection (Fig. 2), the meaning of which would be interesting to find out. Since the female saint reads from a holy book, it is very likely that the sheet of paper represents the patron saint's fervent blessing demands and prayers for his salvation, appealed not only to Child Jesus and Virgin Mary, but also to Almighty God through the female saint (Barbara), who acts as an intercessor for him. In addition, the sheet of paper may be an allusion to the classical and humanistic writings that were circulating in Venice at the time (translated and printed by Aldus Pius Manutius, 1449/1452–1515), thus an allusion to Francesco Querini's passion for poetry and literature. What we also notice is that the respective sheet of paper does not appear in the painting from Modena, so it is clearly related to the patron of this painting, Francesco Querini.

„As the result of a relatively new development in *sacre conversazioni* intended for a domestic setting, one notices the way in which the donor in Palma's painting seems to be very much aware of the Holy presence." (Cottrell 1998, 243) His gaze tries to look for that of Christ Child in a way that contradicts the lack of participation on behalf of the donor in previous examples. "One could accept that the patron's awareness of the scene is dependent on the close proximity of his patron saint whose humanity operates as an intercessor, and therefore a bridge, between the corporeal and the divine. … The donor appears fully aware of the situation in which he finds himself, no longer staring straight ahead as in previous examples such as those by Bellini. The participatory role assumed by the donor in these domestic *sacre conversazioni* is one facet that separates them from the more formal approach taken in the public works … within the context of the altarpiece." (Cottrell 1998, 244) The Child Jesus' eyes try to catch the gestures of the male figure next to him as if He had heard his prayers. There seems to be an internal dialogue between them on a spiritual level (Fig. 2). In the other two paintings, in which appears Saint Joseph (Figs. 3, 4), the Holy Family does not express a conversation, but rather a state of pure Adoration of the Child Jesus, and the sadness and acceptance of His fate. The real meaning of such *Sacre Conversazioni* has been well explained by Philipp Cottrell (1998), who argues the inclusion of an art work patron in a Holy Conversation; he "is supposed to exist on a different plane of reality from the heavenly figures. (...) He does not see them, but they see him, just as they see all of us. The picture is first and foremost an invitation to us to honour a particular group of saints, second, an expression of the donor's devotion to these saints, and third, an invitation to us to

remember him in our prayers to them (...) even though the manner in which donors were represented might have tempted people in the Renaissance to speak of them loosely as being 'presented' to the Virgin, the actual mechanism of the process seems to have been generally understood." (Cottrell 1998, 244, note 19) "The subject of a painted *sacra conversazione* is (...) a celestial reunion of models of piety who themselves constitute the conversation, both as individual *exempla virtutis* and together as a «holy community»". (Goffen 1979, 200)

If we look at the landscapes of the *Sacre Conversazioni* mentioned above, we notice that the characters are placed on an almost similar background, a landscape – seen from the same angle – composed of a similar mountain range, a citadel on a promontory and a bay that opens on the left of the horizontal compositions; on the right corner, behind the female saints, the painter introduced a clump of trees in two of the three paintings (Figs. 2-3), while in the other, the open landscape is continued (Fig. 4). "The way in which Palma was able to invent and exploit a new type of pastoral 'holy picnic' during the 1510s and '20s" reflects his knowledge of contemporary pastoral poetry. "The emphasis on landscape is a symptom of the Venetian interest in sub-Arcadian settings that first manifests itself in the work of Giorgione. It is (...) a response to the pastoral themes explored by contemporary poets such as [Pietro] Bembo and [Jacopo] Sanazzaro." (Cottrell 1998, 241) Palma used a variety of natural elements in the metaphorical sense to represent landscapes: "The Clouds, symbol of the divine mysteries or of the humanity of Christ; the Sea, equivalent to the Gospel; the Mount, valid for Holy Scripture, for Christ's highest virtues ('a celsitudine virtutum'), for the Angels or for the Church; the River, for Baptism; the Hill, for religious life etc." (Villa R. 2015b, 118, note 14).

Analysing Palma's pictorial way in the painting from the Swiss private collection (Fig. 2), we cannot but get excited about the vivid coloristic of his style, specific to the Venetian painters of the High Renaissance. The dominant nuances of blue seem to be absorbed by the ultramarine blue of the Virgin's mantel, which is harmoniously balanced with the orange colour of the patron's mantle and the red and olive green of Saint Catherine's garments. The radiant, wealthy and bright colours, with clear hues and various shading effects, which reflect the extraordinary beauty and naturalness of the falling and rippling heavy folds of the garments, testify to the ability of a great master of paint brush and colour handling. "(...) Putting Palma on a par with Giorgione or Titian, in his best moments, Palma's paintings have sumptuousness and sensuality that epitomize Venetian *colorito*." (Villa 2015, 626)

After the necessary cleaning and restoration of the painting in the Brukenthal National Museum (Fig. 1), it will obviously display the same splendour of colours specific for Palma and his workshop.

The *Sacra Conversazione* painting in Sibiu provides a near identical match of the version in the Swiss private collection. The duplicative nature of this painting reflects a practice in Palma's studio, familiar to the Renaissance Venetian artists. There are several similar examples of such duplicative works, some of them included amongst Palma's autograph work, other carried out with his assistants' help. For example, the researchers have added on the list of the artist's oeuvre "A new Palma Vecchio in the Chapter Hall Museum, Birgu" (ca. 1515), which proved to be a duplicate of Palma's *Madonna and Child with Saint Peter and a Donor* (ca. 1515) in Galleria Colonna, Rome (Cottrell 1998, 248-249); the same is with Palma's *Madonna and Child in a Landscape* in the Hermitage, and the variant sold at Christies in 1990 (Rylands 1992, 169; Cottrell 1998, 240, note 7). "Other variants mentioned by Rylands (1992, 237) of an 'original' work, include those after the Hampton Court *Madonna with Sts. John the Baptist and Catherine of Alexandria*. This duplicative approach was one fostered, in particular, by Palma's pupil Bonifacio Veronese." (Cottrell 1997, 24-25)

"Although the original model was produced for a specific patron, it is quite common for one or more close variants to exist of a particular commission of this type. Their number hints at workshop practices in Renaissance Venice – presumably, the copying of completed commissions, or even the mimicking of work still in progress, was an ideal way of inculcating a student in his master's style and teaching him how to replicate it. The student's subjugation of

his own personal manner to that of his teacher was essential to the success of a busy studio such as Palma's. It is a facet of painting from this period that continually frustrates the connoisseurial approach of critics, both past and present. In the work of Palma, and to an even greater extent in that of his pupil, Bonifacio Veronese (1487–1553), the boundaries between master and assistant are often impossible to define. In the case of the 'bread and butter' nature of the immensely popular *sacra conversazione* format, the problems are particularly acute. This is especially so in Palma's case as the artist's oeuvre devolves around paintings of this type." (Cottrell 1998, 240)

The overall quality and completition of the picture in Sibiu are pretty much *palmanesque*. Considering the well-known collaboration of the artist with a series of assistants in the continuous replication of the established formats, it would be interesting to find out the degree of participation of the artist himself in the execution of this duplicate.

At this moment of research, we appreciate that the duplicative painting of our museum followed the original in a short period of time; otherwise we might wonder what the explanation for making a late replica of the painting would be, depicting the portrait of the commissioner, young, in the position of Saint Joseph. In addition, art historians have accepted that a replica may not necessarily amount to the artistic value of the original work, as seen in the duplicative works mentioned above, and could also be the case with the painting in our museum (Cottrell 1998, 240).

The intention of the present research is to include the painting of our museum in the list of works by the studio of Palma il Vecchio − with the possible personal interventions of the artist, which are unfortunately difficult to assess.

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TWO WORKS BY ANNIBALE CARRACCI WITH THE THEME OF *CROWNING WITH THORNS* IN THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM'S COLLECTION

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Abstract: *This article aims to bring to light two works attributed to Annibale Carracci, whose compositions has the same theme, but are interpreted in different ways and techniques. It is about the painting 'The Mocking of Christ', on display in the Masterpieces section of the European Art Gallery of the museum and, respectively, an engraving with the same title, preserved in the Cabinet of Prints and Drawings. Carrying out a brief review of the artist's biography, we wish to underline the periods when the two works have been produced, thus reflecting the artist's feelings in the two different stages of his carreer: we can see in the painting the apogee of his artistic production, while in the etching we witness his artistic style from the last years of his life, marked by deep depression.*

Keywords: *Annibale Carracci, painting, etching, Crowning with Thorns*

Rezumat: *Articolul de față își propune să aducă în lumină două lucrări atribuite lui Annibale Carracci, a căror compoziție are aceeași temă, dar este reprezentată în moduri și tehnici diferite. Este vorba despre pictura ,Batjocorirea lui Iisus', aflată în expunere la secțiunea Capodopere din Galeria de Artă Europeană a muzeului și, respectiv, o gravură cu același titlu, păstrată la Cabinetul de Stampe și Desene. Umărind viața și opera artistului, dorim să subliniem perioadele în care cele două lucrări au fost realizate, fiind astfel reflectate trăirile artistului din cele două perioade diferite de creație: în pictură este vizibilă perioada sa de maximă creativitate artistică, în timp ce în gravură suntem martorii artei sale din ultimii ani de viață, marcați de o depresia adâncă.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Annibale Carracci, pictură, gravură, Încoronarea cu Spini*

One of the most important Italian works preserved in the Brukenthal National Museum is *The Mocking of Christ* (oil on canvas, 60 x 79,5 cm, inv. 700) by Annibale Carracci (1560−1609), which currently is on display in the section of the Masterpieces of the European Art Gallery (Fig. 1). The work originates from Samuel von Brukenthal's former collection, purchased in Vienna in the second half of the 18th century (Ionesco 1971, 256), and was restored in 1968. The painting was mentioned in the museum's catalogues from 1844 and 1893, where it was attributed to Giorgione (*Die Gemälde-Galerie* 1844, 27, cat. 137; *Freiherr Samuel von Brukenthal'sches Museum* 1893, 10, cat. 120), and then in 1901, attributed to Sebastiano del Piombo (Csaki 1901, 191, cat. 685).

The debate over the attribution of the painting was resumed by Theodor Ionesco in 1971, who, taking into account the stilistic characteristics of the work, considered that the painting should not be attributed to Sebastiano del Piombo, as in the 1901 catalogue; according to Ionesco's correspondence with Roberto Longhi, the painting could have been an autobiographical replica of Annibale Carracci's work in the Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna (Ionesco 1971, 256-257). Olimpia Tudoran agreed with this view in her subsequent studies (Tudoran 2004, 8; Tudoran 2007, 68-69). The painting in question is presented in more detail by Dana Hrib in her *Guide of the European Art Gallery of the Brukenthal National Museum* (Hrib 2007, 101-103), where, besides the biography of the artist, are presented some aspects related to the stilistic characteristics and the chromatic symbolism. The dating of the painting − estimated between 1585 and 1595 (Hrib 2007, 102; Newman 2013, 49) − should be closer to the autograph work in Bologna (Fig. 2), dated by most of the experts around 1596.

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A second work by Annibale Carracci with the same subject (*The Mocking of Christ / Christ Crowned with Thorns*), on which we focus on in this study, is an etching preserved in the Cabinet of Prints and Drawings of the museum (18,2 x 13,5 cm, and 19,4 x 15,1 cm with passe-partout, inv. III/27) (Fig. 8). The work is signed in the lower part of the image: *Annib. Carracius inu*, and reproduces the inverted image of the original. There are other similar prints, but with the image not inverted, ex.: four dated in 1606, preserved at the Brtitish Museum, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Fine Art Museums of San Francisco and at Harvard Art Museums; another from 1608, at the Davidson Art Center, Wesleyan University, a.o. Our print originates from the Samuel von Brukenthal's collection, as stated in the electronic register of the collection, and it is mentioned in the old Catalogue of Copper Engravings, dated 1783. The museum's print was not published until now, not even in the museum's catalogue of the Italian Prints by Alexandru Avram (Avram 1976).

The article aims to analyze these two works from different artistic genres of Carracci − painting and etching −, totally different compositions, but both reflecting the talent of the great Italian artist.

Annibale Carracci (Bologna, November the 3rd 1560 – Rome, July the 15th 1609) was one of the three founders of the Accademia degli Incamminati in Bologna, together with his brother Agostino and their cousin Ludovico, established in 1582. The Bolognese school of art was one of the most important art centers of the late 16th century in Italy, coming second after Rome (Benati 2013, 63), which trained many important artists in the Baroque movement such as Guido Reni (1575−1642), Domenichino (1581−1663), Guercino (1591−1666), Elisabeta Sirani (1638−1665) Guido Cagnacci (1601−1663) and many more. The aim was to reject the Mannerism and to reform the art of painting by returning to the study of real nature and of the common people in their daily activities, but also to study the great Renaissance masters who promoted an adequate immitation of the nature (Jerneyi-Kiss 2013, 24). We must mention that the establishing of this art school took place in a very delicate context regarding the religious movements of the period, when, along with the uproar caused by the Reformation and specifically with the concluding of the Council of Trent (1545−1563), the religious iconography suffered a great shift which, in one way or another, forced the rejection of the Mannerism (Bertelli, Briganti, Giuliano 1997, 145). The sacred images were reconsidered and the artistic freedom was limited through an academism, with rules that the artists could not break (Bertelli, Briganti, Giuliano 1997, 145). Both the Bolognese school and their famous contemporan Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (ca. 1571−1610) are the promoters of the new style that we call today Baroque, in which the emphasis is put on the lighting, chromatics, new structural complex combinations instead of perfect symmetry (Gombrich 2012, 390). Although the Carraccis and Caravaggio had a totally different approach, they all tried to 'save' the painting from the Mannerism's shallowness (Gombrich 2012, 390). The Carraccis created harmonious works, following the standards of the classical beauty and creating dramatism so that the people could emphasize with the works (Gombrich 2012, 391), while Caravaggio shocked with his extreme realism and chose to reject the artistic conventions, both having a great impact on the art produced afterwards (Gombrich 2012, 392-393).

In terms of style, Annibale's first major influence was his cousin Lodovico, who was also his first master, from which Annibale inherited the realism (Newman 2013, 47) and the naturalism, often shocking, as in one of his first works *The Bean Eater*, 1583−1585, now in Galleria Colonna in Rome, and he also was one of the first artists who experimented the genre painting in Italy (Giorgi 2010, 27). Annibale also started the landscape painting genre with his work *Flight into Egypt*, 1603, in Galleria Doria Pamphili in Rome (Giorgi 2010, 27; L'arte nel Seicento 1966, 70). Ludovico encouraged him to travel in 1580 (Newman 2013, 46) in Parma to study the works of Correggio (1489-1534) and then in Venice to study Titian (ca. 1485−1576), and also in Florence and Urbino, travels from which Annibale concluded that the manners of Correggio and Titian were the most accurate (Ticozzi 1830, 277). Giorgione (1478? −1510) was another artist who had a great influence not only upon Annibale, but also on many

artists in the following decades, mainly for their use of light and colors that offer unity to the compositions (Gombrich 2012, 331). In his *Madona with Saints and members of the Pesaro family*, today in the church of Santa Maria dei Frari in Venice, Titian had the courage to abandon the usual symmetry of such a theme and, even though at first glance the image seems messy, it is brought to life by the colors and the manner in which the light was used, giving the work a vibrant atmosphere (Gombrich 2012, 331-332). The same situation is with Correggio too, the other major influence in Annibale's art. In the *Adoration of the Sheperds*, today at Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden, we have the same feeling of imbalance because of the positioning of the characters not at all symmetrically (Gombrich 2012, 337). However, the bright light from the Child offers a harmonious balance and gives unity to the entire image (Gombrich 2012, 337). Combining these three major influences, Annibale's art is an interfluent blend between the lighting use in style of Correggio, Titian's colors and the realism and drama of the Bolognese art school (Ticozzi 1830, 277). Late in his carreer he traveled to Rome and studied the ancient art and Raphael (Ticozzi 1830, 277), the latter being another major influence in Annibale's art. Raphael (1483–1520) was, along with Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, one of the major influences in Renaissance art because of his extraordinary delicacy in rendering the feminine figures, as seen as in his many works with the Virgin and Child and also in his famous *Galateea* fresco from Villa Farnesina in Rome. His paintings are very simple, yet very close to perfection in terms of composition, they are perfectly balanced, with the figures harmoniously placed (Gombrich 2012, 316-320). Annibale, as many other artists, was fascinated by his manner. In Rome, he worked at his most famous masterpiece, the ceiling of the Farnese Gallery, between 1597 and 1600 (Newman 2013, 49). Despite his intense effort and his inventivity regarding the decoration of this space, the cardinal payed him only 300 scudi, which were very little money for a work at this amplitude (Ticozzi 1830, 277). Annibale, humiliated, went into a deep depression that affected him for the rest of his life and died in 1609, buried in the Pantheon in Rome, near Raphael (Ticozzi 1830, 277).

A version of the Bologna painting, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, preserved in the Pinacoteca of the Brukenthal National Museum, reflects the harmony that made Annibale Carracci so much appreciated. The work is a three-figure composition, with Jesus shown at the centre as a half-length figure. He is rendered frontally, with his hands tied and his head towards his right shoulder, looking to the man in front of him directly into his eyes. His gaze speaks of sadness, fatigue but also resignation, accepting his fate. The man in front of him is with his back towards us, depicted in the moment in which he is crowning Jesus with the thorn wreath. The other man is behind Jesus, in the shadow, with only his eyes and his forehead visible. He is looking towards us, forcing us to be witnesses at Jesus's sufferings. The chromatics of the work, reminding us of the venetian colorito, is especially exquisite and vivid due to the Christ's red robe and also to his blood on his face. The discrete but inner lighting that comes throught Christ's skin, as in Correggio's works adds to the emotion of the scene. In the museum's catalogue from 2007, Dana Hrib mentioned that the painting was evidentely executed in the most creative period of the artist's life (Hrib 2007, 102), and regarding the colors, Newman also stated that in the 80's and 90's of the 16th century the artist showed an intense appreciation towards the venetian chromatic (Newman 2013, 49).

The autograph work from the Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, *Cristo deriso,* painted in oil on canvas (60 x 69,5 cm), in ca. 1596, is documentated as being exhibited in the Palazzo Farnese in 1635, and later, it was recorded in the inventory from 1653. It was also there that Anton van Dyck probably saw it on his study trip through Italy, and reproduced it in his sketchbook in 1622 (Fig. 3). In 1672, the painting is mentioned again, as: "Christo coronato di spine beffato da gli Hebrei, dipinto al Cardinale Farnese." (Bellori 1672, 77) There is more evidence that, in 1609, on the day of Annibale Carracci's funeral, this painting stood at the artist's head, on the catafalque.[1]

The composition of the Bologna and Sibiu paintings is the basis for the execution of an inverted etching, in 1627, by the Italian

[1] https://www.frammentiarte.it/2014/39-cristo-deriso/

engraver Sebastiano Vaiani, with the following inscription: *Anibal Carac. Invenctor / Sebast[ianu]s Vaianus Sculp. anno d[omi]ni 1627 / Sup. pmissu.* (Fig. 6)[2]. Besides this engraving, the art historian Giulio Carlo Cavalli mentions another print, created by François Andriot (Paris ca. 1669–1704 Rome), with the inscription: *Anibal Carrachius Inven. et Pinx. in palatio pharnesio. F. Andriot Sculp.* (*Christ, seen bust-length, crowned with thorns by two men*, print, 49.7 x 55.1 cm., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, inv. 53.600.2066).[3] Both engravings confirm the existence of the autograph painting from the Palazzo Farnese, which is to be seen now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna (after passing through the hands of several private art collectors).[4]

A version of the Bologna *Christ crowned with Thorns* was performed by the Italian painter Andrea Sacchi (1599−1661), currently on display at Museo del Prado, in Madrid (Fig. 4). By comparing this version − of the great and well-known Baroque Master − with the replica from Sibiu, we can notice the personal style of Carracci in the work from Sibiu, which is without doubt an autograph replica.

Annibale approached the theme of *Christ Crowned with Thorns* in some other compositional versions, looking for the most expressive variant of representing the *Flagellation of Christ* during His Sacrifice for the Salvation of Mankind. The dramatic expressiveness and naturalism of the physiognomy of Christ in Carracci's paintings from Bologna and Sibiu can be found in a previous work of the artist, exhibited in the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden (Fig. 5), dating from 1585−1587. "The face of the Saviour, shown in profile, streams with blood, and is partly cast in shadow by the heavy crown of thorns; the eyes and mouth are half-open."[5]

An engraving which reflects another attempt to express this theme is kept at the Städtel Museum in Frankfurt am Main, attributed to Annibale Carracci or Lelio Orsi?, dated in the 16th century (Fig. 7).

Titian's influence on Carracci is very suggestively highlightened in the Brukenthal Pinacoteca by the display side-by-side of Carracci's painting *The Mocking of Christ* along with Titian's *Ecce Homo*. Christ's physiognomy and suffering expression, the chromatic range and the oppressive atmosphere created through diffuse light, complete the two paintings' compositions, which seem atemporal, theatrical, and of an intense melancholic dramatism.

In contrast to the painting, Annibale's engraving from the Brukenthal Museum shows the same scene, but from a much more grothesque perspective, typical to the compositions from the late gothic art (Fig. 8). Jesus is seated and the other two figures are standing near Him. The man to the left is hitting Christ with a wooden stick and the other figure is pushing the thorn wreath on Jesus' head. Both of them are laughing with their expressions distorted in mockery, while Jesus, although visible in suffering, seems calm and has an painful expression on his face, as in the painting discussed above. It is interesting that the print, although created much later, reflects a compositional type more close to the late gothic art, in which the toughness of the moment and the grothesque details are evident. The work, probably dating around 1606 or 1608, as the engraving at the Davidson Art Center (Fig. 9), was made just a few years before his death, a period marked by the depression caused by the humiliation after completing the Farnese Gallery. According to the information on the Minneapolis Art Institute's website regarding the print from their collection, in his last years Annibale did not take any commisions for monumental paintings, but instead he created numerous drawings and etchings, like the one at the Brukenthal National Museum, in which the depression he was suffering from at that time was visible. "In the same year of 1606 he dated another etching, the *Madonna della Scodella*, also a small devotional piece in which all subsidiary elements are omitted to allow complete concentration on the figures, their

[2] https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1989-1104-423
[3] https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/692327
[4] https://www.frammentiarte.it/2014/39-cristo-deriso/
[5] https://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/c/carracci/annibale/1/thorns.html

actions and emotions. The emotional intensity of the Crowning is remarkable: Christ is caught between the sadistic violence of the armoured figure and the contemptuous stare of the animal-like man with the reed." (Bury 2001, cat. 50)

We conclude, hoping that the research will continue, by saying that the two works from Sibiu reflect two separate stages of Annibale's career: in the painting we have the apogee and his glory, full of experiments and inspiration, while in the etching we are witnessing his depression and his interior tension from the last years of his life.

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CONNOISSEURSHIP & DEEP MACHINE LEARNING. EDUCATED INTUITION, SCIENCE AND 'PEER-REVIEW' VERSUS ALGORITHMS

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Abstract: *Painted masterpieces occupy a special place in the public consciousness and in the history of art, since they instantly reveal their power for the discerning eye. Restoring them and identifying the artist also imply a re-evaluation, which must be explained to the contemporary art lovers art historians by means of objective argumentation, scientific material analysis and connoisseurship. This must be confirmed by a 'peer-review' of connoisseurs and a critical 'prima-vista-educated' intuition. They initially rely on systematic doubts, incidental learning, and a form of situational intelligence beyond consciousness, developed by ultra-fast lower brain coding algorithms, before applying all the various disciplines of art history research. This essay challenges the primacy of human cognition in the aesthetic response to quality in art. Currently, 'Deep machine learning' can assist connoisseurs in their difficult endeavour. Using a few examples of differences observed by a connoisseur between the hand of the master, that of an assistant, workshop practice and forgeries, this essay investigates how data mining and algorithms could objectify these judgments and make them more accessible for non-connoisseurs.*

Key words: *connoisseurship, neuroaesthetics, beauty, quality, wavelet theory, algorithms, attribution.*

Rezumat: *Capodoperele pictate ocupă un loc aparte în conștiința publică și în istoria artei, deoarece își dezvăluie instantaneu puterea pentru ochiul care știe să discearnă. Restaurarea lor și identificarea artistului implică, de asemenea, o reevaluare, care trebuie explicată iubitorilor de artă și istoricilor de artă de azi prin intermediul unei argumentări obiective, a unei analize materiale științifice și prin capacitatea de a discerne și aprecia valoarea artistică (connoisseurship). Acest lucru trebuie confirmat de o „recenzie între egali" (peer-review) a cunoscătorilor și de o intuiție critică „educată la prima vedere". Ei se bazează inițial pe îndoieli sistematice, pe învățarea din incidente și pe o formă de inteligență situațională dincolo de conștiință, realizată de algoritmii de codificare inferioară ultra-rapidă ai creierului, înainte de a aplica toate variatele discipline ale cercetării istoriei artei. Acest eseu contestă primatul cogniției umane în răspunsul estetic la calitate în artă. În prezent, „învățarea automată profundă" (deep machine learning) îi poate ajuta pe cunoscători în eforturile lor dificile. Prin câteva exemple de diferențe observate de către un cunoscător între mâna maestrului, cea a unui asistent, practica de atelier și falsuri, eseul de față investighează cum extragerea de cunoștințe din date (data minining) și algoritmii ar putea obiectiva aceste judecăți și face mai accesibile pentru necunoscători.*

Cuvinte cheie: *connoisseurship, neuroestetică, frumusețe, calitate, teoria undelor, algoritmi, atribuire.*

Criticism levies a tax on merit and talent. Connoisseurship has long been the main tool for attributing an artwork. Attribution is a research method, not an exact science, stabilizing a great number of uncertainties. This means 'associating it with a specific artist, period, and to make the difference between the hand of the master, the pupil and the copyist, through critical looking'.

Truth and authenticity (Grimm 1995, 28-43) are essential requirements of a masterpiece which has no precedent, only followers. It is open to all, but keeps its highest reward for the discerning eye. All connoisseurs have an exceptional visual memory, not only of images but also of specific painting strategies and the therefrom resulting ductus of a particular artist.

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It takes a well-trained eye and good knowledge of the artist's common practice at a certain moment in career to spot differences and irregularities while attributing a painting to a master, a pupil or a copyist. Judging is comparing between accepted masterpieces and the painting which has to be examined. The comparison of images obtained with raking-light, UV, X-Rays, X-Ray Chromatography, IRR and other technical data obtained through material analysis of a work of art, eliminating a great number of fakes and mis attributions, is a challenge for the eye of a connoisseur. Differences in observation method, viewing conditions, knowledge of painting materials and techniques influence a connoisseur's identification of the painter's working method in the painting he examines. Can machines bring a certain degree of objectivity in his appreciation of texture (impasto) and brushwork by recognizing measurable characteristics?

Algorithms

With the help of *Deep machine learning*, the *Wavelet theory* (expressible only in 3-D shaped form, the results are expressed in higher-dimensional maps with more than 80 different measures of the shape of the brushstrokes and their inter-relation), developed by Ingrid Daubechies a mathematical technique refining the *Fourier transformation*, breaks down complicated data such as the assessment of brushstrokes that vary in shape and space into simpler building blocks of pixels (maps of patterns), representing them as numbers arranged on a grid. One of the weaknesses of this system is the fact that wavelets-pattern recognition is not practiced on the original masterpiece but only on high-resolution scanned images. Moreover, it is only feasible on paintings by artists with a differentiated enough texture surface revealing clearly the brushstrokes.

A high-performing connoisseur interprets all scientific data in front of the original. Therefore, an efficient form of data mining is needed to create these algorithms, guided by the best connoisseurs to indicate the computer the specific key landmarks of the texture; so that the algorithms can be efficiently trained in their pattern recognition. Different forms of Computational geometry, ECG tracings, High resolution scans, Analysis of 3-D shapes of the ductus (Choy *et al.* 2000) and other digital data, can be compared automatically under the supervision of a connoisseur with a great domain knowledge and sufficient expertise in the interpretation of each of these specific technical data. Wavelet-patterning turns a painting in a stream of data and might reveal aspects that are hidden to even the well-trained eye. Supervised algorithms create features derived from *Hidden-Markov-Tree-modelling* of the wavelet coefficient (Durand *et al.* 20004) of the paint structure distinguishing original and copy (Polatkan *et al.* 2006). They can often objectify the subjective aspect of identifying the artist's handwriting by his style, configuration of brushstroke orientation and ductus up to a certain degree (Richard-Johnson jr. *et al.* 2008). The results obtained today add valuable information to the knowledge of restorers (Pizurica *et al.* 2015) and connoisseurs, knowing how to interpret them accurately.

In the recent conservation campaign of the Ghent Altarpiece (2012−2019), thanks to the '*local crack contrast enhancement algorithms*', the restorers were able to distinguish clearly in low contrast areas the often overpainted cracks in the original paint layer, notwithstanding the extensive overpaint done in 1551 by Jan van Scorel and Lancelot Blondeel and later, with the help of algorithms upgrading, the technical images taken from the photographic negatives made available by the Dierick fund (Fig. 1): the left image illustrates cracks normally observed by K-SVD, the right one after post-processing with K-means clustering, illustrating the overpaint in the eyebrow (Cornelis *et al.* 2013).

In another conservation project in the KMSK[1] Brussels (2009−2014), the *Portrait of Suzanne Bambridge*, 1891 (canvas, 70 x 50 cm) by Paul Gauguin, restorer Etienne Van Vyve and the team directed by Frederik Leen were not helped much by the Multispectral Image Technology of Lumière technology (Paris).[2] The problem to distinguish different paint layers on this loosely woven jute canvas

[1] De Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België / The Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium.

[2] www.fine-arts-museum.be/nl/onderzoek/onderzoeksprojecten/multispectrale-analyse-van-digitale-afbeeldingen.

between the first and the second intervention by Gauguin and later restorations, dirt and varnish was not solved.

More traditional technical examination: X-Rays, IR and most of all X-ray Chromatography revealed two superposed autograph paint layers resulting from Paul Gauguin's reworking of the first composition some years later (essentially the background of the portrait). The X-ray mapping of cadmium, calcium and cobalt allowed Van Vyve (Fig. 2) to distinguish clearly the distinct paint layers.[3] This makes it clear that technology is only relevant when the analysis is guided by an experienced specialist in front of the original, knowing what technical assistance he needs and what not.

The most daunting task for machine intelligence is to define the abstract pattern characteristics of the artist's personality, ductus and style in data clusters that segregates them from copies. A connoisseur classifies specific brushwork characteristics instinctively, machines have to determine them mathematically. The rhythm of the strokes and their particular arrangements as well as the specific size, shape and nature of each of the painter's brushes leave marks behind. The edges and relief of the touches, the spontaneity of the stroke, the gradualism of its evolving, the fine trails the brush leaves when lifted at the end of the stroke (as in Rubens' case), the consistency of the impasto (fluid or dry, thick or shallow, constant or differentiated, etc.), preciseness or blur intended by the artist, are all elements observed by connoisseurs that ought to be translated in specific algorithms for each artist and for each of his different style periods from high resolution scans.

There is a continuing conflict between scientific evidence and the complexity of a masterpiece, which cannot be resolved on a 'non fault basis'. Science is not a fixed set of established truths and equations. It aspires to produce simplifications which capture reality. There is no such thing as 'The Scientific examination of Art'. Science is only a tool. To look for certainties is a natural human aspiration, but models are only a particular expression of science. A connoisseur has these models integrated in his experience by incident learning and is able to use a wide variety of cognitive strategies. The AI's mathematic modelling versus intuition? All predictions are based on models, which also contain human expert intuition about what to include and what not. AI depends on assumptions as much as connoisseurs do. Different specialists of the many art historical disciplines say often different things. Absence of evidence is often mistaken for evidence of absence. The remaining ambiguity makes their assumption no better than 'an opinion'. Therefore independent peer review is essential. Ideally, a model developed by AI to authenticate paintings should offer more insight into the reality of the painting than educated observation by the best connoisseurs. This is yet by far not the case. AI will always need the input of their models but it can be a useful tool for connoisseurs.

The surface and the substance of old master paintings transform themselves over time and through accidents, restorations and alterations. It is also possible to analyse patterns of cracks and colour degradation (such as the altering of 'smalt' in 16th century northern paintings) and to undo them digitally (Jafarpour *et al.* 2009). Wavelet algorithms are not there to compete with connoisseurs but as a form of accretive science to allow them to judge in function of a greater number of variables.

Connoiseurship & Neuroaesthetics

There are many definitions of art (Adajian 2012). We limit us here to the '*artness*' and quality of old master paintings perceived through our senses as an embodied neural experience. Nowadays science shares, up to a certain degree, the 'atomist view of the world' as described by the Roman poet Titus Lucretius Carus (ca. 99−55 BC) in *De Rerum Natura* (Frantantuono 2011). He described the world not as a divine concept but as the hazardous result of accidently colliding atoms. They are born, move and disappear finally in the endless sea of atoms. He does not deny the existence of Gods, but the Gods are not interested in Humanity. This inclines a real Epicurean to meditate the fundamental values of a freely chosen simplicity, free of mental distress. Lucretius observed that a particular beautiful thing has the quality of beauty in so far as it participates in the 'idea of beauty' at

[3] Interview with conservator Étienne van Vyve, Brussels, April 3, 2020.

some degree of removal from the (unknown) ideal (on a scale) (Johnson 2016).

Ever since the 16th century and Giorgio Vasari, attributing works of art was the foremost task of the connoisseur. Traditionally, attribution is predicated on meticulous examination by a connoisseur since the time of Max J. Friedländer (Friedländer 1946). This hypothesis (of the attribution of a name of an artist) occurs through a top-down selection of the bottom-up visual evidence, according to the inherent rules of the artist's particularities. Yet for some time now, art-historical attribution has been virtually absent from academic training. Indeed, it has even been denigrated as an unscientific, anachronistic activity. For museums and the art market, however, it has lost none of its significance since this intuitive judgment became recently a method of the application of all the different disciplines of art history in function of the accurate observation of the visible traces of the production process (bottom-up) of the painting. In the everyday work of museum curators and in the art trade, the attribution of works of art is a subject that constantly generates further research. Moreover, connoisseurship and matters of attribution are the most readily 'visible' branches of art history for the general public. Museum curators, scholars and dealers – presumed to be connoisseurs in their own right – have traditionally decided on the attribution of the works entrusted to them.

The FMRI[4] analysis of brain physiology demonstrates that the human long-term registration of perceptive-cognitive elements is a synchronous combinatory neural activity, in a number of specialized neural zones. Neuroaesthetics analyse the neural response to beauty and art. When paintings or some of their specific particularities appear repeatedly, the learning algorithms of specific neurons in the temporal lobes, of which the hippocampus is part, form new connections or reinforce older ones. The hippocampus transforms them in memories. From them, the brain creates abstractions by submitting the particular to the general (De Maere 2011, 51-260). The enlightened connoisseur's high-level automatisms play an essential role in his intuition before the critical accumulation of elements. His critical sense is a combination of a number of the discerning neural networks (filters) motivated by the reward system (o. a. nucleus accumbens). Critical attention is one of these clusters, the Default Mode Network (DMN) and the connecting network between both are other instruments of is judgment. Emotion, through its non-conscious inferences, initiates the first hierarchical structure of cognition, from which consciousness and memory draw their conclusions. All these elements define the perceptive-cognitive style of the connoisseur (his intuitive brain's pattern-recognition algorithms).

Uncertainty is inherent in all scientific examinations. Neuroaesthetics are a discipline that constantly seeks to disprove itself in the face of new evidence. This is what distinguishes science from belief. Experts are not always right and lend to focus solely on their area of expertise. They often disagree. Out of their knowledge, practice and talent, connoisseurs propose the most adequate answers. In the absence of strong evidence, they consider different options and make sure the eye prevails. Therefore, their attributions are in need of scientific validation and social recognition as much as possible. Can algorithms help to compare an artist's hand, style and ductus? A pupil following the master or a forger will be less spontaneous and more precise. This changes the velocity and the handling of the brush. Machines read brushstroke patterns and 250 shades of a colour, creating 20 million distinct hues each with a specific number code. They are often able to quantify these aspects which are otherwise only recognizable by the best connoisseurs, if ever.

Neuroaesthetics considers art as a specific subjective embodied-cognitive experience, wanting to be shared (De Maere 2011, 261-328). Beauty was always one of its targets but it is not sufficient to define art. Its historical and pan-cultural aspects point in the direction of a relatively stable aesthetic core, linked to our evolutionary nature craving for a neural form of selective 'beauty' (Dickie 1974), as a sub-form of the innate erotic attraction. The quest of a certain aspect of timeless beauty is always present in art (except in, what political correctness labels 'Contemporary Art' today). In all cultures, the entire history of art attests to

[4] The Functional Magnetic Resonance Image

the fact that artful beauty has always been a human necessity. The perception of art changes continuously but the interpretation resides always in the eye of the beholder. Notwithstanding the availability of its digital HD substitute, only the 'real thing' attracts art lovers, as the recent blockbuster exhibitions demonstrate. The neural beauty of the original is therefore only one of the many qualities of the 'artness' of a masterpiece, but an essential one. Novelty through invention, authenticity and a small degree of familiarity are some of the other qualities. The art experience is full of cognitive bias, inferences, as the result of our visual education and epigenetic adaption, according to Dewey's aesthetics. ("Aesthetic experiences are unified, intense sensations of the way things appear to us, controlled by the things experienced.") The present author would like to add to this: "intentionally endowed with appropriated aesthetic properties of a high quality". Looking at the same painting, each of us records different aspects of it. We like it or dislike it. Since Vasari, the perception of quality is one of the essential aspects of connoisseurship. It is hard to define it formally. Nevertheless, the best connoisseurs agree on a level of quality to be perceived in masterpieces, different for each master, in function of their analysis of style and ductus. Comparison through accurate observation is their tool. Neurasthenics observe the neural activity of the special perceptive-cognitive emotion caused by the contemplation of beauty (art experience). Authenticity and quality are seen here as neural phenomena defined by the laws of the brain. Another requirement is the external (material) evidence by the masterpiece itself, accepting faults but no lies. It has to supersede the horizon of our expectations without any additional desire. The observation of a masterpiece is an imperfect recreation (simulation) of it by the critical observer, a subjective experience wanting to be shared. This abstract neural concept depends on the accurateness of the observation related to great domain knowledge and experience. It activates the amygdala, the hypothalamus and the orbi-frontal median cortex, allowing pleasure (Zeki 1999). Therefore, beauty imposes itself unconsciously as a perceptive-cognitive communicative value, resulting from incident and conscious learning through superior observation (De Maere 2011, 273-275). So, beauty is defined by the laws of the brain physiology. Great artists understood them intuitively through their observation, their genius and their practice. That is why their masterpieces acquire a timeless relevance. A master creates an ontological-significative relation between the inherent order of the masterpiece and our critical aspiration for its universal (both internal and external) abstract order. A copy or a fake does not survive the critical eye of a connoisseur with great domain knowledge when he compares them to a masterpiece. The latter does not have a precedent, copies, pastiches and fakes. Therefore, all painted masterpieces reach the highest levels of the cortex as forms of sublime abstraction (from a neural point of view).

A connoisseur may propose initially an attribution intuitively, based on critical visual evidence. Where others only see chaos in a painting not seen before, he discovers intuitively the recognizable pattern of the ductus and style of an artist. After having considered the circumstantial and technical-material evidence, his final analysis has to provide a subjective evaluation of inherent features such as quality and ductus– features that resist definition. The lack of objectivity of attributions, based purely on old-fashioned connoisseurship, was the main reason for justified criticism.

Since the mid-20th century, art-historical research has undergone a process of ever-increasing differentiation and scientific material investigation. Expertise by independent specialists, knowledgeable about technical art history and having acquired a high degree of domain knowledge – while not being part of the museum world –, are now accepted, and in many cases expressly sought after. A connoisseur's judgment rests on the study of originals, as well as on detailed knowledge of comparable works, an analysis of stylistic and/or similarities of the ductus, and a discerning eye honed by experience. A connoisseur's opinion has to be corroborated by technical evidence. New disciplines of art-history investigate artworks, focusing on their genesis, structure and provenance. The actual connoisseurship, combined with scientific and technical examination, acquires a higher degree of objectivity through an independent 'peer-review'. An accurate connoisseur's opinion confronting earlier beliefs provokes a defensive reaction from established authorities

in the field. This is a normal reaction of the energy-saving brain, defending the established group cohesion which tends above all to confirm its authority and internal hierarchy.

Even today, in an age dominated by technical material analysis, the voices of connoisseurs make themselves heard. Each of these specialized technical disciplines is in need of its own connoisseurship to distinguish the hand of the master from that of the pupil and the copyist. Sharp observation skills became more important than before, as a counterbalance to technical art history. Connoisseurship about the hand of the master and workshop production is one of the most difficult and disputed aspects of this discipline. A problematic painting does not always allow it to be attributed to a master. Often it is given to 'workshop', 'circle', 'a late copy' etc. But attributions can't be based only on a hunch.

Jheronymus Bosch

The extensive research recently undertaken regarding Jheronymus Bosch and his studio is a good example of the confrontation of an independent connoisseur and a formally established committee of experts.

Let's look for differences in the painting method and pictorial strategy in details of two groups of paintings traditionally attributed to Jheronymus Bosch. Each of the four paintings: the Lisbon *Temptation of Saint Anthony*, the *Haywain Tryptic*, the *Garden of Delight* (both in the Prado Museum, Madrid) and London *Crowning of Thorns* are finally worked out in their execution and stylistically quite similar, as long as we do not look critically at the ductus (the structure of the paint-material shaped by the brush) and at the draftsmanship of the underdrawings revealed by IRR. The first two referenced artworks differ remarkably from the two last ones. If we compare the faces of *Adam and Eve* in the *Garden of Delight* (Fig. 4) with similar faces in the *Haywain* and the *Temptation of Saint Anthony* (Fig. 3) we observe two different painting techniques and artistic distance in the execution. The faces of Adam and Eve are not only painted in a technique using extensive glazes, they are also less caricatural and have a refined sense of volume determined by light and transparency, full of psychological expression. The faces in the *Haywain* and *Saint Anthony* are painted 'wet in wet' and less accurately depicted, with a less expressivity and more pattern-like stereotypical accents. This is a much less time consuming method than the first one.

The earlier attribution of the central panel of the *Haywain Trytptic* (Fig. 3) to J. Bosch himself (1450−1516) is here updated by Fritz Koreny (Koreny 2002/2003) and published extensively (Koreny 2012) to a more actual one: Attributed to *'The Haywain Master', Bosch's master-assistant. The original inscription on the painting of the name:* '*Jheronymus Bosch' has to be seen not as a signature, but as a 'trade mark' for all products produced by the master and his workshop.*

The fact that these two different groups are painted by a different hand and in a different technique, but following *grosso-modo* the same style is further objectified by IRR under-drawing technology. The under-drawing style of the first group is far more sensitive, resulting from a more accurate observation of nature, and done by a right-handed artist (Fig. 4a and Fig. 5a). The second group, here attributed to 'the Haywain Master', a close anonymous relative of Jheronymus Bosch, active in his studio, has a more coarse drawing style, more repetitive and caricatural; moreover executed by a left handed draftsman (Fig. 4b and 5b). Right- or left-handedness is inborn (Leonardo was a left-hander, his drawn hatchings run from top left to bottom right).

These and many other differences shed a new light on works of the Bosch-group. Jheronymus Bosch and the Haywain Master are two different artistic personalities, the first preceding and leading the other. Patterning algorithms could easily differentiate the two distinct paint -structures, -techniques and -strategies and distinguish two different production methods. The respective underdrawings (right- and left-handed) could be evaluated in the same way by 'Patterning algorithms'.

Peter Paul Rubens

In early modern Europe, most successful painters worked in their studio with a hierarchically organized team of 'Gezellen' (skilled professional assistants: such as Anthony Van Dyck in Rubens' studio or Jacques Jordaens in Rubens' studio

ca. 1615−1620) and pupils, each performing specific tasks. This allowed an increase in production at different levels of quality and greater profit for the artist. All pictures coming out of the master's shop have to look as if they were made by him, but connoisseur-collectors, called 'Liefhebbers' in the 17th century, appreciated the difference between the master's hand and the studio output. They paid for the first many times the price of the latter. Therefore, a master made the difference between his own and his assistants' pictures perfectly visible for the discerning eye. He made also a difference between autograph originals and his 'Principael' (the best version of a subject of his own invention and in his best manner) which priced differently (often up to 8 or 10 times). Enhanced studio copies by the master and workshop versions were marketed also at different prices. A survey of the existing paintings of Rubens and his circle show that almost all of his important paintings exist in more than one version. Not all of them are well suited to Rubens' fame and credit (*fit tort à sa reputation*) as Roger de Piles expressed it (De Piles 1699, 396-397). Rubens himself did not want any confusion between his hand and that of others (Magurn 1955, 33 n. 4: 'che mai patiro avendo avuti sepre per raccomandato il confondermi con nessuno qual I voglia grand huomo'), even if the products of his assistants had to be perceived as witnesses of his personal style (mimicry). He never hides the fact that he produced his works with the help of a studio (Balis 1993, 97-127; Balis 2007, 33-51). He considered his talent and 'inventio' as an intellectual achievement under the motto 'Pictura ut Poesis', i. e. 'Painting as Poetry'. The studio did the work and the effort after his designs and under his supervision (Büttner 2017, 41-53, n. 12). Would Rubens really have made an identical copy of a painting himself? Knowing the socio-economical context and art historical sources, this is highly unlikely.

Science brings rarely certainty about the hand of the master, a reunion of educated eyes does. And this more easily, the more it has the assistance of art socio-historical and scientific data, according to the present day criteria for an attribution to the master. There is always a tension between the visual impression, emotion, knowledge of the genre and the connoisseur's verbalization of rational arguments about this differences 'Master – Pupil'. Can algorithms bring more clarity in the difficult and longstanding (De Burtin 1808) Rubens problem?

Opinions on authenticity can differ between scholars and connoisseurs. The provenance of the painting 'Vertumnus and Pomona' (canvas 197.5 x 117 cm) from a private collection, reproduced by Blaise Ducos and Matías Díaz-Padrón as an 'autograph Rubens' (Fig. 6) is published wrongly (Díaz-Padrón 2009) as a 'Royal Spanish collection (Alcazar)'. In the opinion of the present author and many other art historians such as Arnout Balis, it is only a normal quality studio copy, one of two known after the lost original: "*Ik ken het werk zeer goed (meermaals gezien): het is atelier, maar geen spatje Rubens zelf. De door Diaz Padron opgegeven provenance is m.m. fout: er was in het Alcazar Madrid een stel van twee pendanten: Ceres en een Sater (nu in het Prado), en Vertumnus en Pomona. De Ceres is uitgevoerd door Rubens, Snyders en (wellicht) Frans Francken II voor de personages op de achtergrond. Dat moet dus als maatstaf dienen voor de beoordeling van het pendant. De nu opgevoerde Verumnus etc. is niet van de hand van Rubens maar een leerling (die ik hoop vroeg of laat te identificeren), het bijwerk van vruchten is sterk gereduceerd en in het beste geval het atelier Snyders maar niet Snyders zelf. Interessante is dat de typische hand van die Rubensmedewerker ook terug te vinden is in een tweede versie van de Ceres: dus het zijn deze 2 atelierreplieken die moeten «gekoppeld» worden. Maar het origineel van de Vertumnus is welllicht verbrand in de brand van het Alcazar van 1734.*" (A. Balis, written e-mail communication to the present author February 20, 2020, Adviezen Rubenianum, Antwerpen). In Angel Vergara's opinion: "It is most probably a copy (by someone in Rubens' studio or circle) with the same subject and almost identical dimensions, listed in 651 as a 'copy after Rubens', in the inventory of the famous Spanish collector Gaspard de Aro." (Alessandro Vergara in his conference *Connoisseurship* Codart 19, 19-21/6/2016, Madrid Prado)

In the eyes of a number of connoisseurs expressing their opinion, many clumsy anatomical aspects disturb the harmony of the composition. To name only one: Pomona's legs come from nowhere; their position is

anatomically impossible. Many aspects of the brushwork are non-characteristic for Rubens' hand. If we compare these elements with a similar subject *Pan and Ceres* by the hand of the master (Fig. 7-8), we see the mechanical careful execution of Pomona, especially the uniform and dense rendering of the flesh tones. This contrasts heavily with the fresh and lively brushwork in the *Ceres and Pan* in the Prado Museum (Fig. 10). Here Rubens' strong sense of three dimensional and moving form is always the result of a complex strategy of thick multi-layered paint texture alternating with transparent and thinly painted parts, often revealing the 'linear greyish imprimatura' preparation layer (Broersma *et al.* 2007). Rubens' own handed calligraphy gathers force and mobility. His 'fresh in fresh' painting technique creates instantly a coherent surface complexity. In Ceres, the rapid moving brush dominates by its speed and subtlety all the careful and precise craftsmanship seen in Pomona. A connoisseur's eye does not distinguish any genial retouching by the master himself in the *Vertumnus and Pomona*. The same can be said about the *Vertumnus and Pomona*'s landscape attributed to Jan Wildens and about the still-life attributed to Frans Snyders. Their execution is mechanic, clearly produced in the workshop of these two specialized collaborators of Rubens or by a copyist. Having acquired a 'Louvre label' through the Louvre-Lens exhibition, the painting dwells since 2009 on the market in search of a believer. Strange, since we know that years before, the Spanish government declined the painting's acquisition, motivated by the Prado curator based on Alessandro Vergara's report on the painting qualifying it as a 'Workshop copy', revealing already the mistakes in the usurped Royal provenance and its lack of quality.

A simple careful observation of details and painting strategy (Fig. 7-8) suffices to reveal essential differences between these two paintings which ought to be almost pendants. Pattern algorithms could easily differentiate the two working methods and the differences in the texture and impasto in a scientific way. Brushstrokes could easily be compared, since the speed and complexity of the master's hand differs from the painful accurate craftmanship of the workshop assistant.

Since the 17th century, individual talent and painterly quality were highly valued and paid for. Contemporaries worried about issues of attribution to the master's hand as a matter of connoisseurship. Disputes about originality and quality of a deceased master's painting were mostly judged before the courts by the other famous artists of that time. But some writings are explicit in distinguishing originals, studio copies enhanced by the master and other copies. Rubens explained in a famous letter to Sir Dudley Carleton (Magurn 1955, 65 n. 4 and 76 n. 4; see also Rooses, Ruelens 1887−1909), the degree of autography of each painting he was offering for sale. Connoisseurship has been associated with the art market since the Renaissance. It expresses the ambition of collectors, motivated by social competition and the necessity of securing their transactions. This was true in the 17th century and still today.

Frans Hals

Reading the ductus of a masterpiece and evaluate differences between the original, a studio copy, a pastiche and a fake was always a difficult task, even for the best scholars and connoisseurs. In 2011, Sotheby's Private Sales brokered, what was thought by many scholars (such as Blaise Ducos and Piet Biesboer), a newly discovered *Portrait of a Man* by Frans Hals on copper (Fig. 14) for 10,750,000 $ (Noce 2019a). Some independent connoisseurs expressed doubts. (In London, after it was refused by the Louvre Museum and before the final sale to Richard Hearden, the present author examined the painting and later again in the presence of Claus Grimm & Fritz Koreny. None of us felt the excitement of recognition of Frans Hals's hand; we clearly doubted the authenticity of the painting. The muddy 'curd like' even impasto (*ductus* or *factura*), did not correspond to what we expected from Hals at that time in his career). A second 'supposedly-fake Frans Hals, *Portrait of a Man sitting, holding gloves*, with the same Ruffini provenance, offered by the same dealer, was refused by the vetting committee at TEFAF[5] 2016. In the present author's opinion, by the same XXth century hand (Fig. 15). When after the sale by Sotheby's in 2011 doubts emerged, the buyer asked Sotheby's to have the painting

[5] The European Fine Art Fair (at Maastricht)

examined. The technical forensic study (2016), carried out by the then still independent Orion Analytical Lab directed by James Martin, stated: 'The painting is undoubtedly a modern forgery containing modern pigments at many places (synthetic phtalocyanine blue & green in the paint layer, and also titanium white in the lead-white preparation layer, all pigments not known before 1930.' In the London court room (2019), James Martin stood by the "strict ethics that have guided all his career" (Noce 2019b). Another witness and leading Hals expert Claus Grimm explained he had never believed the portrait, which lacks any credible provenance, could have been created by the painter from Haarlem. Sotheby's returned the payment to the buyer and annulated the sale. Computer data, digital chemical algorithms, X-ray fluorescence and the Fourrier-transform-infrared-spectrometric microscope delivered a severe blow to the reputation of some of the scholars initially defending the authenticity of the painting.

This case of the 'fake Frans Hals' was not yet known in 2010, when Ingrid Daubechies at Duke University (Durham, USA) trained wavelet-algorithms to recognize the specific brushstroke-design of Frans Hals' ductus. Advised and trained by some of the best connoisseurs in this field and with the collaboration of the Frans Hals museum (Haarlem, NL), finally the machine was able to have accurate results in circa 80 % of the cases. Frans Hals' virtuous and rough painterly strategy kept some secrets observed by connoisseurs but not by the machine.

When the French and Italian police investigated the provenance of the different paintings sold by what they supposed to be the same ring, they discovered that they all came from Mr Ruffini, an Italian art dealer who probably (as supposed by the Italian & French criminal police) had acquired them from a very skilled Italian artist Lino Frognia, author of many good copies & pastiches after old masters. Neither Ruffini nor Frognia ever pretended any particular painting to be authentic. They acted in the same way as the famous faker of old master drawings Eric Hebborn. They let the joy of discovery of the name of the artist to the enthusiastic experts. They sold only a 'nice painting' enjoyed for its quality and wall-power. About 20 painting are documented as sold with a Ruffini provenance by important dealers and auction houses and some of them exhibited in museums. The intrinsic quality, full of strikingly scrupulous detail, typical for each of the name bearing artists of all these fake paintings is so high that their faithful duplicity fooled a great number of experts and scholars, but not the forensic analysis. It is clear that in such a case pattern-recognition apps and wavelet-technology are yet not accurate enough. The difficulty of the task of reading a ductus is illustrated by the similarities and differences in the paintings illustrated below (Fig. 11-13).

Joshua Reynolds & Rembrandt van Rijn

Rembrandt painted the Berlin panel in three stages. He started sometime around 1635 and only completed it twelve years later, in 1647. His initial inspiration was a drawing he made after a painting by his teacher, Pieter Lastman. He made more studies at each stage of his modifications. Numerous drawings and painted variations on the theme of Suzanna by his pupils illustrate that Rembrandt used this story as a subject in his workshop.

In circa 1769, Sir Joshua Reynolds bought from Edmund Burke one of Rembrandt's most admired masterpieces: 'Suzanna and the Elders'. He later bequeathed it to his niece. In 1911 it was donated to a Berlin museum (Fig. 16). Nobody until recently put the autograph authorship by Rembrandt in question until a thorough technical examination in 2015 (Exhibition Rembrandt's Suzanna and the Elders, March 3 – May 31, 2015, Berlin Gemäldegalerie, Cabinet). Pigment analysis of some areas revealed elements not existing in the 17th century. X-ray Chromatography and X-ray analysis revealed that large swaths of this masterpiece were overpainted at the end of the 18th century. The underlying paint surface by Rembrandt is well preserved underneath the later overpainted areas, and different pentimenti were observed. These later overpainted areas had escaped until 2015 the eye of the connoisseurs. As Rubens did, when re-mastering Italian drawings, and Rembrandt himself reworking extensively the sky of a landscape painting by Hercules Segers, Reynolds took it upon himself to 'improve' the painting. He repositioned Suzanna's feet, repainted one of the elder's face as well the entire background. Technical material analysis and provenance inquiry confirmed this

unexpected 'creative co-authorship'. The question to restore or not the painting to its original condition remains a matter of opinion. This artistic co-ownership illustrates also the fact that connoisseurship is a valuable tool as it recognizes its limits.

Virtuoso technique and Connoisseurship

Our brain creates its own stable image of what we perceive as what we think is reality. It proposes us the most probable scenario, out of the many unstable propositions it generates (De Maere 2011, 51-260). Connoisseurs, more than others, avoid seeing what their imagination expects them to see through its cognitive bias. This bias is only (partly) avoidable by matching a thorough knowledge of the different stages of the technical painterly aspects of the act of painting and its effect on the painted surface, taking in account a deeper expertise in the different drying stages and their interaction, with an adequate knowledge of the relation of the master with his studio assistants. This has to be seen in the context of the moment of creation, the ambition of the artist ('o*rgueil*' in French language) to make his unique masterly touch readable in the relief and the consistence of the paint structure (*ductus* or *factura*) for the cognoscenti ('*liefhebbers'* in Dutch language) of his time. Deep- Machine-Learning and Pattern-Recognition algorithms will need the adequate input of the observations of the best of connoisseurs to progress. The complexity of quality in art is enormous and requires highly educated bottom-up observation combined with the input of all relevant disciplines of art history and science.

What is perceived at first glance by novices is not always what it is. All talented studio assistants tried to imitate the virtuosity of the great master. Only a few matched it, such as Anthony Van Dyck when in the Rubens studio (Muller 1990, 27-36), but then he achieved this only as an identifiable sign of their own virtuoso expressivity and grace. Therefore it is possible for great connoisseurs to distinguish each painter's hand in the execution. The immemorial idea of 'Quality', not of in what a great master does but in what he could achieve one day is his main endeavor, an antidote to all vanity, face to face with his own creations. The context of the relation of Jeroen Bosch and his studio and successors is radically different in painting strategy than the other examples here demonstrated. Pieter Paul Rubens's mature manner at a given moment in his career could be described as a spontaneous control of his powerful and rapid brushstrokes, blended daubs of modulated color smudging in the still fresh former layer (wet-in-wet painting technique), defining at once form, movement and light. It results in a complex alternation of thick and thin passages of the paint relief, often revealing the underground preparation. As seen in the Rubens studio copy of *Vertumnus and Pomona*, the careful imitation of meaningful and spontaneous virtuosity is not the same as achieving it. As well Frans Hals as Rembrandt in their mature phase of their career demonstrated, each a different, experimental bold mastering of paint materials with highly visible touches undulating in thickness producing even uneven tails contrasting with the overall thinly distributed paint, leaving the ground exposed in some areas. They even scratched the drying paint with the back of their brush to create effects. Hastily applicated blended daubs and thick sweeps of unmodulated color animate the pinkish flesh tones a top of other layers, without mistakes or visible effort. Their gestured painting touch was considered as 'virtuoso', as long as this effect was locally in fashion. Virtuosity only was not acclaimed as such. Purposeful virtuosity superseding high craftmanship requires to appear as masterly, unique, functional, without visible effort and evident (Mark 1980, 28-45). It has to enhance the overall vitality of the work of art. Since Karel Van Mander's praise of Titian's virtuoso spontaneous sketchy technique (Van Mander 1973, 22-26), probably knowing it from Vasari's ekphrasis, the rough ('*rouw en kloeck*, in Dutch language) style was associated with the fame of the Venetian master, at least in the Dutch perception of it at that time. This is the reason why Rembrandt advised Christaen Huyghens to admire his painting from a distance. Frans Hals himself declared his rapid flourishes as the sign of his master touch: '*Nu moet er het kennelijke van de meester nog in*' (now I have to add the recognizable aspect of my master touch) (Houbraken 1943, 71-75). Hals responded to the general appreciation of the virtuoso master touch of his rough handling from 1616 on, and more and more as his career progresses (Atkins 2003, 280-307). Fakes and

studio copies lack that kind of quality.

Conclusion

Some artists such as Diego Velázquez made autograph replicas of high quality, others such as Peter Paul Rubens did not. Since deliberate fakes, mis-attributions, poorly- or over-restored paintings, pastiches and copies encroach often into the realm of authentic masterpieces, connoisseurship is a dangerous and complicated mine field. The golden rule for a connoisseur is to double check the material substance of an old master painting thoroughly before following his educated first guess or attribution (if any). Scientific material analysis, forensic sciences, wavelet- and other deep machine learning- algorithms are able to eliminate a great number of fakes and misattributions. The accurate assessment of their scientific results is more easily understood by a wider public than connoisseurly opinions. New technologies are not there to compete with connoisseurs but as a form of accretive science to allow them to judge in function of a greater objectification of their hypothesis. But even after the results of material analysis, to distinguish the hand of the master and the pupil will always be a challenge for a connoisseur's intuitive talent and domain knowledge. However, it remains a matter of opinion.

Connoisseurship allows also positive discoveries and re-attributions. These are the contrary of 'unveiling deception'. They reveal the genius of neglected and under-estimated paintings in museums, dealerships, collections and auctions, when a keen eye discovers a sleeper of great quality and value, which is later confirmed by material analysis and peer review. The general public expects impossible certainties, where the best connoisseurs are only able to qualify their doubt at the best of their talent and experience. New tools developed by deep machine learning could possibly enhance some of their achievements.

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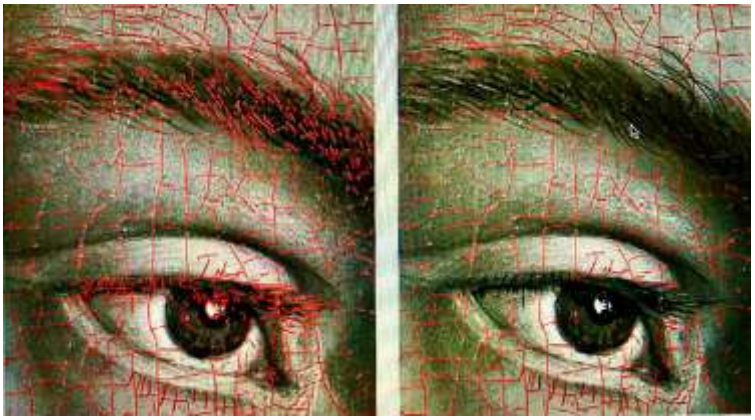

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A PAINTING ON COPPER PLATE IN THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM'S COLLECTION RENDERING *ESTHER FAINTING BEFORE AHASUERUS*

Alexandru Gh. SONOC*

Abstract: *The painting on copper showing Esther fainting before Ahasuerus was purchased in 1969 and attributed to a Neapolitan painter, active between ca. 1600−1630. Its composition follows a pattern created by Andrea Vicentino, modified by the anonymous author, who tried to exploit newer means to improve the illusionist suggestion of spatiality. Considering this, in addition to the existence in southern Germany, Austria and South Tyrol of some frescoes with the same theme and whose compositions derived from the same pattern created by Andrea Vicentino (which seems to have been spread in a certain measure in France as well, most likely by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli), as well as the regional specificity of the depicted armament and military equipment items, the work can be dated in the late 17th c. or the first half of the 18th c., and may be attributed to an artist of uncertain ethnic origin, who seems to have worked most likely in the southern Germany or Austria (including the actual South Tyrol), less probably in Friuli or in Switzerland. However, his preference for bright colours recalls obviously the works of the 16th−17th c. Venetian painters.*

Key words: *Esther and Ahasuerus, painting on copper, compositional pattern, Andrea Vicentino, spreading of patterns*

Rezumat: *Tabloul pictat pe cupru înfățișând-o pe Estera leșinând în fața lui Ahasver a fost achiziționat în 1969 și atribuit unui pictor napolitan, activ la cca. 1600−1630. Compoziția sa urmează un model creat de Andrea Vicentino, schimbat însă de către autorul anonim, care a încercat să exploateze noi mijloace de a perfecționa sugerarea iluzionistă a spațialității. Având în vedere aceasta, ca și existența în sudul Germaniei, Austria și Tirolul de Sud a unor fresce cu aceeași temă, ale căror compoziții erau derivate din același model creat de Andrea Vicentino (dar care pare a se fi răspândit într-o anume măsură și în Franța, cel mai probabil prin Giovanni Francesco Romanelli), ca și specificitatea regională a pieselor de armament și echipament militar reprezentate, lucrarea poate fi datată la sfârșitul sec. XVII sau în prima jumătate a sec. XVIII și poate fi atribuită unui artist de origine etnică incertă, care pare a fi lucrat în sudul Germaniei sau Austria (incluzând și actualul Tirol de Sud), mai puțin probabil în Friuli sau în Elveția. Cu toate acestea, preferința sa pentru culori strălucitoare amintește în mod evident de lucrările pictorilor venețieni din sec. XVI−XVII.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Estera și Ahasver, pictură pe cupru, model compozițional, Andrea Vicentino, difuziunea modelelor*

In the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum there is a painting on copper, *Esther Faints Before Ahasuerus* (oil on copper, 66.5 x 81.3 cm; inv. 2558). It was purchased in 1969 from its previous owner, Uta Vogelsang, an inhabitant of Sibiu. The work (Fig. 1) was previously attributed to a Neapolitan painter and dated ca. 1600−1630. By its size, it is one of the largest paintings on copper in the museum's collection of European paintings (Sonoc, Albișor 2018, 618). Its condition of preservation was quite poor, as it stood for decades unframed, in a vertical position, leaning against the wall of the painting store. The copper support was oxidized on its backside, its lower right corner was bended towards the onlooker and close to the right upper corner there is another mechanic deformation. The painting showed an aged varnish, deposits of dirt, scratches, and gaps in the painting layer.

Its conservation began during the last months of 2018 and was performed by Celestina

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Albișor, an expert in conservation of paintings, who restored during the last years several paintings on copper, tin and sheet iron. This was as well an opportunity to study more thoroughly this still unpublished anonymous work.

1. Some remarks on the history of Esther and its rendering in painting

Most of the modern authors (Middlemass 2009, 145; cf. Larkin 1996, 71) identified Ahasuerus either with King Xerxes I (486−465 BCE), because he is mentioned in the Bible also as a successor of Darius I (*Ezra*, 6: 1), or with Artaxerxes I, the son and successor of Xerxes I, following the opinion of Titus Flavius Iosephus (T. Flavius Iosephus, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, XI, 6) and considering both passages *Ezra*, 6:14 and *Ezra*, 7:1. According to contradictory modern opinions, which do not always consider the rule of Ahasuerus over the whole land from India to Ethiopia (*Esther*, 1:1), respectively over Egypt as well, this biblical king was identified with Artaxerxes II (who lost Lower Egypt) or with Artaxerxes III (who reconquered Egypt in 343 BCE). Despite these attempts to identify Ahasuerus, the *Book of Esther* should not be understood as a true historical account, but more as a historical novel with a religious purpose (Coogan 2009, 396; Grossman 2011, 218-246; cf. Davidovich 2013), even as a "theological carnivalesque genre" narrative (Craig 1995), because "one of the themes of the *Book of Esther* is the contrast between wise and foolish joy" (Carruthers 2007, 220). New researches show that the story is actually based on an older one, the Assyrian story of Ishtar and Marduk, whose names were changed into Esther and Mordecai (Dalley 2007). Since ancient times, the story of Esther was well known in Persia, where later Muslims and Jews were often forced to reconcile or choose between the conflicting historical narratives provided by their religious and cultural heritages respectively, especially if considering that the Muslim sources are preserving much pre-Islamic materials which have not survived elsewhere, but which are important for a better understanding of the biblical narrative (Silverstein 2019). Nowadays, the *Book of Esther* is considered as a favourite writing to learn and exercise the biblical reading and exegesis, in a modern and liberal way, in order to improve the text-critical method (Debelak Jr. 2008). However, the Churches are not fully ready for such an approach, which recalls actually that of St. Jerome, who also faced divergences in the biblical texts (Sanders 1990, 64).

Esther (or Hadassa, after her initial name) is not at all historically documented as queen (*malkah*) in the contemporary records concerning any of the Achaemenid monarchs (Davidovich 2013, 140) and was, most likely, only a concubine (*pilegesh*), perhaps the favourite one (Davidovich 2013, 139). She is considered a godly and prudent, but determined, patriotic and courageous woman, who acted as an instrument of the divine will in order to save the Jewish people. Her deeds, narrated in a particular book of the Bible, are commemorated by the establishment of the Purim holiday (*Esther*, 9: 17-32), which is celebrated on Adar 14 or, in Jerusalem and in other cities surrounded by walls, on Adar 15, following the example of the Jewish community in Susa (*Esther*, 9:17-19). According to the Talmudic tradition, Esther is a descendant of the dynasty of David and, thus, she was considered by the Christians as an ascendant of the Virgin Mary, with whom the Church has metaphorically and iconographically associated her, as well as on other hand with Judith and with Jael, who also saved their people (Nutu 2009, 117; Bohn 2002, 183), although the latter two triumphed directly, through their own actions, over the enemies of the Jews, unlike Esther, who used her influence (Bohn 2002, 183). Henry Kraus associated the frequency of the older renderings of heroic women like Esther and Judith not only with the growing cult of the Virgin, but also with changes in the social and legal status of women, marked in particular by new rights of inheritance (Bohn 2002, 184).

The association of Esther with the Virgin Mary began already in the 13th–14th c., following St. Bernard of Clairvaux and St. Bonaventura (Bohn 2002, 184). The Church regarded the scene of Esther before Ahasuerus as the prefiguration of the Virgin's intercession at the Day of Judgment and her coronation was seen as a parallel to Mary's coronation as Queen of the Heaven (Bohn 2002, 184). Thus, despite the moral complexity, which was recognized already by Geoffrey Chaucer (1343−1400),

who refers to her in order to discredit a woman in *The Merchant's Tale* (Bohn 2002, 184), Esther became an exemplary model for women (Colbert Cairns 2017, 15-16). Many works illustrating episodes inspired by the biblical book in which Esther's deeds are narrated may have been made actually for women or following their commissions. The feminist art historian Babette Bohn believes that in 16th and 17th c. Venice and Bologna this biblical female hero was considered as a model of the women's autonomy (Bohn 2002, 184 and 192-193). Earlier, in 15th c. Italy, Esther seems to have been a model especially for the virtuous married women, as evidenced by her occasional rendering in *cassone* paintings and other furnishings which were customarily commissioned for newlyweds' homes (Bohn 2002, 184). The much later datable anonymous painting from the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum showing *Esther's fainting before Ahasuerus* is therefore just one of the many works celebrating Esther as an exemplary female hero.

Since 15th till mid-17th c., in many Western European writings intended to educate the noble women the Virgin Mary was associated with heroic women from the Old Testament, but also with other famous women, seen as her prefiguration (Colbert Cairns 2017). However, one of the most impressive art works of this kind was created in Russia in 1698, probably as a commission of Princess Natalia Alekseevna Romanova (1673−1716), the sister of Peter I the Great: the miniature tondo portraits of 18 famous women from the Old Testament (including Esther, Judith and Jael) by an late 17th c. – early 18th c. anonymous Flemish artist were joined to an early 15th c. Eleusa type icon of the Virgin Mary, painted in Russia by Theophanes the Greek (ca. 1340 – ca. 1410), which was known to the Russians as *The Donskaya Icon of Mother of God* (Evans 2004, 166, cat. nr. 88). Later, during 1894–1896, this new work was fixed in the iconostasis of the Annunciation Cathedral in Moscow Kremlin. As under the Soviet regime the mentioned Eleusa type icon had to be permanently exhibited at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, it was replaced by a Hodegetria type icon dated in the 15th c., known as *The Shuyskaya-Smolenskaya Icon of Mother of God*, coming from the Church of St. Nicholas Gostunski in the Moscow Kremlin (which was demolished in 1816). Following a similar tradition of associating the Virgin with famous women from the Old Testament, Esther is rendered together with Judith and Ruth in a dome fresco showing the Virgin Mary's Assumption, painted in 1743 by Joseph Ignaz Milldorfer (1719−1775) in the pilgrimage church of Hafnerberg (Austria, federal state of Niederösterreich).

Several depictions of *Esther before Ahasuerus* are known in European art since the 13th until the 18th c., but Esther is not always depicted fainting. Actually, the biblical narrative does not mention at all that she fainted before Ahasuerus.

Esther is more frequently depicted only since the 13th c., sometimes even in the architectonic sculpture, as in a relief on the north porch of the cathedral of Chartres (Bohn 2002, 184). Among the depictions of Esther before Ahasuerus dated during this early period, the type consistent with the biblical text is certainly the oldest, being found in a Jewish miniature in northern France at ca. 1278−1298 (North France Hebrew miscellany manuscript from the British Library, Add. Ms. 11639), in a German miniature made in Westphalia or in Cologne at ca. 1360 (*Speculum humanae salvationis*, ULB Darmstadt, Hs 2505, folio 67r) and in an early 15th c. French miniature (*The Bible of Guyart des Moulins*, kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. Français 9, folio 275). In the German altar painting, the ever earliest rendering of Esther before Ahasuerus of this type occurs on a panel dated 1434−1435 from the Kunstmuseum in Basel (tempera on wood, 85.5 x 79.5 cm), painted by Konrad Witz (ca. 1410−ca. 1445). In the German woodcut this iconographic type is known only later, at ca. 1470, as an illustration in the Cologne Bible, which enjoyed a rapid success, as evidenced by the printing of its 9th edition in 1483, by Anton Koberger in Nuremberg. In late 15th c., the same type of depiction, but showing Esther kneeled before Ahasuerus enthroned, can be seen in Sweden, in the mural painting of the church in Vänge, which was decorated by Albertus Pictor or by his students. The Italian painters seems to have used the same type in late 15th c., as shows a work (tempera on panel, 45 x 43 cm) by the Florentine painter Jacopo del Sellaio (ca. 1441−1493), dated in the 1470s and kept at the Szépművészeti Múzeum in

Budapest. A similar composition was painted by an anonymous from Antwerp on the central panel of a triptych dated during 1500−1515, which comes from the Zambeccari collection and is exhibited now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna (inv. 204). Although in the mentioned works Ahasuerus is not rendered sitting on his throne, but staying, this compositional pattern inspired those with many characters, architectural elements and a wide perspective, showing Esther kneeled, bowing or fainting before Ahasuerus, rendered usually sitting.

Since the early 16th c. can be noted an iconographic contamination of this type either with another episode of the history of Esther, namely her presentation at the Persian court in Susa (*Esther*, 2: 8-9), as in the work dated ca. 1478−1480 by Filippino Lippi from the Musée Condé in Chantilly Castle (tempera on wood, 47 x 130 cm; inv. PE-19) or with the immediately following one (*Esther*, 2:17-18), respectively her wedding with Ahasuerus (also known as *Esther's Coronation*), as for example in a work dated 1556 (oil on canvas, 450 x 370 cm) by Paolo Caliari called *il Veronese* (1528−1588) in the St. Sebastian's church in Venice, in the dome of Siena in a fresco by Ventura di Archangelo Salimbeni (1568−1613) which is dated during 1608−1611 and later in a fresco from the St. John the Baptist's parish church in Baindt, near Ravensburg (Germany, federal state of Baden-Württemberg), painted in 1764 by Franz Martin Kuen (1719−1771), a painter trained in Augsburg and in Italy, maybe in Venice.

The earliest rendering of Esther fainting before Ahasuerus known to me can be seen on a panel *Three scenes from the life of Esther* by Sandro Boticelli (1445−1510) and Filippino Lippi (1457−1504) from the Musée du Louvre in Paris (oil on wood, 48 x 132 cm; inv. RF 1972-13), dated ca. 1470−1475. This type of rendering, which may be therefore considered an innovation, becomes more frequent in the 17th−18th c. In Italy it seems to be more frequent than the renderings of Esther kneeled before Ahasuerus (Bohn 2002, 188), unlike in France, in the Netherlands and in Central Europe, where she is rendered more frequently kneeled or at least bowing than staying or fainting. The most of the later renderings of Esther fainting before Ahasuerus are closer not to the compositional pattern created by Sandro Botticelli and Filippino Lippi (showing however the monarch enthroned), but to the traditional ones, which show her usually kneeled before Ahasuerus enthroned and less frequently one of them or both staying.

More difficult is to explain what led to Esther's faint: it may be presumed that the cause of her faint was, most likely, the weakness caused by the unusual fast (Bohn 2002, 190) of 3 days and 3 nights, to which she resorted as a spiritual preparation for appearing before Ahasuerus (*Esther*, 4:16), but also to the fear that she might be put to death for appearing without being summoned to him (*Esther*, 4:11, 16), as certain versions of the biblical narrative expressly mention, because such an attempt was a violation of the court etiquette (*Esther*, 4:11) and, implicitly, to the fear to fail in her reckless attempt of saving the Jews from the massacre planned by Haman, the vizier. But Esther's faint can also be regarded as a feminine stratagem, which she may have believed to be indispensable for a sure success of her endeavour, in order to arouse the compassion of Ahasuerus and to use the latter's power and authority to fulfil her saving mission, whose immediate beneficiary is actually Mordecai himself, who, by his arrogant behaviour towards Haman, incited him against the Jews (Nutu 2009, 117). Although this modern and liberal perception of Mordecai as acting especially in his own interest seems biased, it is fully supported by all versions of the biblical narrative (On the various versions of the *Book of Esther*, which is known to the Jews as *Megillah*, i. e. "The Scroll" in Hebrew and on the differences between them: Clines 1984; Day 1995; Dorothy 1997; Greenspoon, White Harvey 2003; Crawford 2004; Davidovich 2013).

Indeed, according to the biblical narrative, Mordecai, a Jewish official at the court of Ahasuerus, is the one who raised his uncle's daughter Esther after she was orphaned (*Esther*, 3: 5), and later, after she became the wife of Ahasuerus (*Esther*, 2: 1-18) or, as already said, more precisely his concubine (*pilegesh*), maybe the favourite one (Davidovich 2013, 139). Being both her cousin german and step-father (*Esther*, 2:7), Mordecai manipulated her, using his moral authority, to obtain the repeal of the order to exterminate

and rob the Jews proposed by Haman (*Esther*, 4:1-17), who was enraged against them right because of Mordecai's insubordination and arrogant behaviour (*Esther*, 3:1-6; 5). Esther's goals are virtuous, but her means are deceitful and manipulative: she hides her Jewish identity and uses her beauty to manipulate both Ahasuerus and Haman (Bohn 2002, 184). By acting indirectly, through her powerful husband Ahasuerus, as B. Bohn noted (Bohn 2002, 183-184), Esther actually obeys the patriarchal family moral norms, which require that the woman (in her various social conditions, as daughter, as wife or concubine and as mother) serves the interests of the family from which she comes, and once married, has to assert herself in public through her husband, remaining however in his shadow, as the Moon receives its light from the Sun. Thus, from this perspective, the scene of Esther's appearance before Ahasuerus to ask him to revoke the order to kill and to rob all Jews (especially if Esther is rendered fainting) can be regarded as an allegory of the victory of Eve's daughters' charm and cunning over irrationality and over an abusive and corrupt power's arbitrariness. As an exemplary female hero, Esther won, but without to transcend the freedom of action limits allowed by the rigors of the traditional moral.

The compressed composition, with few characters, of a work (Fig. 6) from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (oil on canvas, 208.3 x 273.7 cm; inv. 69.281), painted at ca. 1630 by Artemisia Gentileschi (1593−1653), reflects precisely this message, as in this very dramatic scene the two companions of Esther have the role of supporting her physically and, very likely, through their reactions as well, to enhance thus her faint's emotional impact on Ahasuerus, who in the author's vision seems however rather surprised than worried, as the sovereign probably hasn't faced such a female stratagem for the first time. The reason of this uncommon perception of an already canonical scene by an early 17th c. Italian female artist may be interesting. As known, on Artemisia Gentileschi's highly naturalistic work a great impact had her own traumatic personal experiences, caused by her rape by the fellow painter Agostino Tassi (1578−1644) in 1611 and by the rough judicial inquiry of this crime (denounced to the authorities right by her father Orazio Gentileschi), which included her torture by thumbscrews and was followed by a mild 6 months jail sentence inflicted on the rapist in 1612 by the courts (on this event: Cohen 2000). The impact of these awful experiences on her art is generally believed to have been exaggerated by the feminist historians of art (Paglia 1994, 115; cf. Garrard 1989; Benedetti 1999; Garrard 2001; Bal 2006; Straussmann-Pflanzer 2013).

Only in the 18th c. there are some works that allow us to assert that Esther's faint seems to have been due to the very reading of the extermination order given by Haman, although, according to the biblical narrative, it had been given much earlier and had already been read throughout the whole territory of the Persian state, including in Susa (*Esther*, 3:13-15; 4:1-8). It should be mentioned, first of all, the painting by Antoine Coypel (1661−1722) from the Musée du Louvre (oil on canvas, 105 x 137 cm; inv. 3500), dated ca. 1704 (and reproduced by the artist in a print), in which Haman is rendered reading it from a scroll. This rare detail is occurring later again, in a work by Jean-François de Troy (1679−1752), dated in 1737, which is kept as well at the Musée du Louvre (oil on canvas, 322 x 474 cm; inv. 8216) and in a dome fresco in the St. Pancras parish church from Wiggensbach (Germany, federal state of Bayern), which was painted in 1771 by Franz Joseph Hermann (1739−1806), a painter from Kempten. A painting by Jan Steen (ca. 1626-1679), dated in 1666, from the Gosudarstvennyi Ermitazh in St. Petersburg (oil on panel, 106 x 83,5 cm; inv. ГЭ-878), cannot be relevant for the discussion of this question, as near to the throne of Ahasuerus and in front of Haman is rendered actually a scribe dressed as a bishop or a doctor of the Church, who is writing in a register, while a worried courtier is telling him about the faint of Esther, to whom he points.

2. The description of the anonymous painting purchased by the Brukenthal National Museum, with some clues for its dating, considering the origin of its compositional pattern

The animated scene with many characters is placed in the throne hall of a palace. The hall's ceiling rests on columns with composite capitals and sides a loggia, whose gallery is supported by pillars to which columns with

composite capitals are attached. In the centre of the work Esther is rendered fainting, to the concern of her five companions, who are depicted in various attitudes (relatively calm, trying to lift her or concerned, praying, crying or even tearing out the scalp hair, as a sign of despair). Ahasuerus is seated on the throne, leaning anxiously and sadly toward Esther, to whose back he is extending his golden sceptre, as a sign of protection (*Esther*, 4:11; 5:2; 8:4). On the right, near to him, but in a farther plane, there is a courtier dressed in red, probably a physician (or even Mordecai), in a worried attitude, ready to intervene. Behind this character, as well as behind the throne there are other two courtiers. In a closer plane, but also on the right, in a white *burnous*, which traditionally is worn by Maghrebis having a high social position (Bruhn, Tilke 1990, 80), is rendered a man who does not seem to be moved by Esther's faint, watching her with a worried wickedness. Therefore, he should be identified as one of the monarch's councillors, namely Haman, the vizier who plotted to kill all the Jews living in the Persian Empire and to plunder their properties (*Esther*, 3). Over the head of Ahasuerus and of his courtiers staying around his throne is hanging a drapery of indigo colour. In an even closer plane, also staring at Esther, there is a dwarf jester who is rendered sitting on a blue pillow but mocks a Roman high official's bodyguard (*lictor*) preparing to carry out a punishment sentence, as he holds a fasces whose axe blade is pointing downward. In the foreground, a halberdier of the royal guard (who is seen from behind, but in an even worse foreshortening than in the case of the dwarf jester, intended to be the soldier's comical counterpart) seems to approach the throne in a hurry. To the left of the work, in farther planes, at the entrance to the room, and in a lower light, there is a group of five worried courtiers. One of the female companions of Esther, turning her back to the viewer, cries with raised and widely stretched hands towards a character looking from a terrace adorned with balusters, which is situated on a farther wing of the palace. The blue sky is covered with clouds, letting however the sun be seen, but partially hidden by one of the palace's pillars. The scene is illuminated as well (and even stronger) by a different source, which can be supposed to come from left. This secondary source of light seems also to have been chosen by the painter in order to use more easily the lighting (to highlight some characters and at the same time to keep others in shadow) and on the other hand a balanced chromatic, dominated by blue, brown, ochre, white and invigorated by indigo, green, red, purple or grey accents on some drapes, footwear or military equipment. The extremely complex pyramidal composition is based on a succession of triangles which serve not only the perspective construction's requirements, but also makes more dynamical the scene, by varying and grading the intensity of the movement and the emotional involvement of the characters, emphasizing as well their status in the social hierarchy. Besides the visual impact of the yellowed varnish, the artistic quality of the work is diminished by the unskilled manner of using the foreshortening and even the strong secondary lighting on the farthest columns on the left.

The architectural framework (in foreground, the throne's hall, in a farther plane the loggia, afterwards most likely a courtyard and in the background a terrace of another wing of the palace, which necessarily should be connected with that where the throne hall is) recalls quite less the biblical narrative's description (*Esther*, 5:1): "Now on the third day, Esther put on her royal garments and stood in the inner courtyard, looking toward the royal palace, while the king was seated on his royal throne in the audience chamber, facing the palace doorway." The supposed courtyard (which is necessarily located between the two depicted wings of the palace) could be either an inner or an outer courtyard, as according to the Bible, the palace of Ahasuerus had as well an outer courtyard too (*Esther*, 6:4): "'Who is in the court?' the king asked. Now Haman had entered the outer court of the king's palace to suggest to the king that Mordecai should be hanged on the gibbet he had raised for him." The architectural framework and, in a certain measure, the indigo drapery hanging over the heads of the courtiers near the throne of Ahasuerus recalls the biblical narrative (*Esther*, 1:6), but the depicted pavement looks quite different: "There were white cotton draperies and violet hangings, held by cords of fine crimson linen from silver rings on marble pillars. Gold and silver couches were on a mosaic pavement, which was of porphyry,

marble, mother-of-pearl, and coloured stones." The number of Esther companions does not correspond to that which is mentioned only in certain versions of the *Book of Esther* (only two: on one whom she was leaned gently for support and the other following her to bear her train). In these versions her faint is expressly said to be caused by how Ahasuerus looked to her in extreme anger. Thus, the anonymous painter did not follow literally the Jewish biblical narrative, although he had most likely indirectly certain information taken from a version of it (from the *Vulgata*, which is closer to the Masoretic one, but includes also passages taken from the *Septuagint*).

The costumes of the characters are conventional, due to the artist's intention to emphasize their social status, but also to suggest a certain ethnic and cultural environment, as the biblical scene is rendered, according to its perception by *devotio moderna*, as a genre scene which may have happened (if considering the female garment and hairstyle) at any 16th–17th c. European court. Thus, although the most men wear Oriental-looking costumes, that of Ahasuerus is enriched with specific details of the Baroque iconography, showing elements borrowed from the ceremonial costume of the medieval European monarchs (like the ermine robe and the radiated open crown). The footwear of Ahasuerus, of the jester and of a female companion of Esther, as well as the "antique" armament and military equipment of the soldiers are recalling models inspired quite freely from the Greek and Roman art, to which the painter added specific 16th–17th c. elements, as the classical mid-16th c. *burgonet* / *bourguignotte* type of helmet (most likely, the open variant), called *(offene) Sturmhaube* by the Germans and used especially by the light cavalry (Stone 1999, 156-157; cf. Brett 1804, 81, fig. 46; Demmin 1869, 289, fig. 121; Boeheim 1890, 18 and 46-50, pl. 36; Hefner-Alteneck 1903, 49, pl. 88; Ffoulkes 1909, 83, pl. V/7; Dean 1921, 71, pl. XXXIV; Ashdown 1925, 176, fig. 163), and the 16th–17th c. halberd, whose type is quite difficult to be precisely ascertained. Apparently, it seems to be a less correct drawn version of a 17th c. Italian halberd, which was used in Germany as well (Boeheim 1890, fig. 392h). Sometimes however, during the same period, the improvements of the German halberd were adopted even by the Italian artisans (Boeheim 1890, fig. 392e), as already in early 16th c. the Italian halberd was the main weapon of the mercenary foot soldiers in France, Italy and Switzerland (Boeheim 1890, 341). In a certain measure, the depicted weapon recalls also the early 16th c. Swiss halberd, which is considered as a transition form from halberd to poleaxe (Boeheim 1890, 341, fig. 395), but also the hooked poleaxe (*Hakenstreitaxt*), which was used during 15th–16th c. in whole northern Europe, from Scandinavia to Russia (Boeheim 1890, 369-370, fig. 437-438). The Italians liked long shifts at their pole-weapons and for this reason the average length of an Italian halberd shift is 2.14 m (Boeheim 1890, 342). It should be noted that the exact classification of the war axe is quite difficult, as since early 13th c. a hammer head, a hook or a pointed tip was usually added to its blade and since late 14th c. even an additional blade (Boeheim 1890, 368-369). These improvements of the poleaxe were obviously influenced by the very transformation of the spear into a halberd, by adding an axe blade and/or a hook to its shift and even began at the same time with this change (Boeheim 1890, 368). It should be noted that hooked halberds were used by the infantry especially against the armoured cavalry (Boeheim 1890, 341), while the war axe, which till the late 11th c. was used mainly as weapon of the footed soldiers, became as well a weapon of the horsemen, maybe under Oriental influence (Boeheim 1890, 367-368). Since this period the war axe kept its importance as weapon of the footmen especially in the northern Europe regions (in Scandinavia, in Denmark, Scotland, Poland and Russia) and in the Switzerland (Boeheim 1890, 368), but also in Bohemia and Upper Hungary (Slovakia and Ruthenia), where it was the traditional weapon of shepherds and woodmen, as well as in Moldova, if considering the name of a similar axe (*baltag*), which is of undoubted Turkish origin (*balta*). By contrary, long shifted war axes (the true poleaxes), which appeared in 14th c., as imitation of the halberds (Boeheim 1890, 376), could be used only by the infantry. In the Alpine regions, the ice axe was still unknown in late 18th c., as Jacques Balmat (1762−1834), a chamois hunter and crystal collector, who was the first man who climbed on Mont Blanc (August 8, 1786), is rendered in contemporary prints as using instead of it two separate tools

(which only in 1840 will merge in a single one): an *Alpenstock* (a long wooden pole with an iron spike tip) and a hooked hatchet for cutting steps in ice. Considering all this information on the evolution of the halberds and of the war axes since the 11th c. and particularly during the 16th–17th c., but especially the way in which the foreshortened bodyguard of Ahasuerus rendered in the anonymous painting from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection holds his weapons close to its blade, he should be identified rather as a footed soldier armed with a poleaxe with a blade shaped in Italian style (not with an Italian halberd!) and wearing a light cavalry helmet rather than a horseman dispatched as foot guard, bearing a mid-16th c. short shifted cavalry war axe of Italian type (Boeheim 1890, fig. 445). Thus, the painter seems to have been influenced rather by the military equipment and weapons noted at the Swiss footmen (and maybe also at others from Central Europe) than by that of their Italian counterparts. Interesting is that instead of a spike tip, the hooked poleaxe depicted in the work from Sibiu shows an implement recalling rather a mace head than a hammer head.

Comparing the composition's structure of the anonymous painting from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection with other 16th-18th c. works (easel paintings and frescoes) rendering Esther before Ahasuerus (regardless if fainting before him or not), it is obvious that in the first the midget jester and in a certain measure even the halberdier are substituting different pets and characters who are placed right on the steps of the throne or even at short distance from it, whose role is obviously rather to amuse the sovereign than to defend him, because excepting the offspring of potentially aggressive animals, such as the leopard, only exceptionally the dogs are depicted in aggressive attitudes (although sometimes, but for an increased comical effect, they belong to small breeds, which practically are harmless), and because there is a situation when the dog is even nipping, in a nuzzled position. It should be noted as well that in the first half of the 16th c., in such compositions, pets are accompanied not by dwarves or soldiers, but by male children or youngsters of African origin, brought most likely as slaves from far away and who, by their rarity and high value, have to increase the sovereign's prestige, like the breed dogs or the exotic animals too. Thus, in *The History of Esther* (Fig. 3) by Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473−1531), a work dated in 1528 from the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (156.3 x 103 cm; inv. 689), is depicted a young leopard and, farther, but also on the steps of the throne, a black child and a small monkey. In a painting (Fig. 7) from 1547 by Jacopo Comin (previously known as *Jacopo Robusti*) called *Tintoretto* (1518−1594), belonging to the British Royal collection (oil on canvas, 207.4 x 273 cm; inv. RCIN 407247), is rendered a youngster with a leopard cub. In a painting (Fig. 9) dated ca. 1555 by Veronese from the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence (oil on canvas, 208 x 284 cm; inv. 912) is rendered a courtier sitting right on the steps of the throne, who is playing with a medium-sized dog and in front of the throne another courtier, holding a large breed dog. In a much later work, dated during 1575−1588, attributed to the same artist or only to his school, according to newer opinions (Bohn 2002, 187), which is exhibited in the Louvre (oil on canvas, 198 x 306 cm; inv. 138) in the 6th room of the Italian Paintings (namely the room of Mona Lisa), near to the throne of Ahasuerus, besides 4 courtiers, there is a medium-sized nuzzled napping dog and in a farther plane a Moorish dwarf. In the initial version of the painting (Fig. 6) dated ca. 1630 by Artemisia Gentileschi from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, near the throne of Ahasuerus was painted a black African boy, holding in chain a large breed dog, which can be considered as a reminiscent of the similar detail in Veronese's work mentioned above. A lapdog belonging most likely to Esther and two medium-sized hunting dogs are depicted in a painting (oil on canvas, 283 x 511 cm) by Filippo Gherardi (1647−1704) from a private collection, dated in the first half of the 17th c. (Fig. 12). A white dog barking in the direction of Esther is rendered in a painting dated during 1616−1641 (oil on copper, 43 x 59 cm), currently as well in a private collection, which previously was attributed to Willem van Herp the Elder (ca. 1613/1614−1677), but more recently, in the Bonhams auction in London on December 4, 2019, to Artus Wolffort (1581−1641). A medium-sized dog is rendered on the steps to the sovereign's throne in the scene of Esther before Ahasuerus by Peter Paul Rubens (1577−1640) both in a work dated 1620 in the

Akademie der bildenden Künste in Vienna (oil on panel, 33 x 31.5 cm; inv. GG-652) and in its version dated in 1620 too from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London (oil on panel, 60.7 x 62.3 cm; inv. P.1978.PG.367). A medium-sized dog is rendered near the throne of Ahasuerus in a ceiling fresco (Fig. 13) dated 1683, by Michael Christoph Grabenberger (1634−1684) in the church of the Garsten abbey (Austria, the federal state of Steiermark). A servant holding a medium-sized dog is rendered on the steps of the throne of Ahasuerus in a fresco painted during 1707−1713 by Jan Anthonie Coxie (ca. 1660−1720) in the chapel of the Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin (Fig. 18). In a fresco painted in 1760 from the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of Pain in Maria Dreieichen (Austria, federal state of Niederösterreich) by the Viennese artist Josef Hauzinger (1728−1786), a dog and an old man (who should be considered maybe rather a beggar than a Cynic philosopher), are depicted on the steps leading to the terrace where Ahasuerus is sitting on his throne (Fig. 17). In the already mentioned fresco in the dome of Siena, dated during 1608−1611, which shows actually not Esther fainting in front of Ahasuerus, but the wedding of Esther with Ahasuerus, Ventura di Archangelo Salimbeni painted as well a dog, but which is not rendered just as a guardian and a pet, as it is also a symbol of conjugal fidelity. The dog seated near the throne of Ahasuerus, depicted in the already mentioned scene of Esther's coronation on the occasion of her wedding from the St. Sebastian's church in Venice, has obviously the same meaning. However, it should be noted that usually in the compositions showing Esther before Ahasuerus the bodyguard of the latter is not rendered as a *lictor*. Besides the painting purchased by the Brukenthal National Museum, the single rendering of this kind occurs in a drawing dated ca. 1592 by Ludovico Carracci (1555−1619) kept at the Louvre (Bohn 2002, 187, fig. 5).

There is no doubt that the depiction of African slaves, jesters and dogs, as well as of characters wearing contemporary costumes, military equipment and weapons in such compositions is also a consequence of *devotio moderna*, which intended to bring closer the biblical narrative to the believers, in order to determine them to meditate on it, to strengthen thus their faith. Curiously, but surely for the same reason, also in a composition (Fig. 2) showing Esther kneeling before Ahasuerus, by Tintoretto, dated 1552−1555, from the Museo del Prado in Madrid (oil on canvas, 59 x 203 cm; inv. P00388), in the background of this scene can be easily recognized the Trajan's Column in Rome, which may allow rather a parallel between the situation of the converted Jews, frequently staying under the suspicion of apostasy and that of the exiled Jews, than between that of the latter ones and that of the inhabitants of the Roman ghetto, established right in 1555 and which was located on the east bank of the Tiber, close to the river, about 1 km southeast of the mentioned column (which is nearer to it than the Column of Marcus Aurelius or another similar Roman monument, close to the latter, namely the Column of Antoninus Pius, but which was already very damaged and partially buried before 1703 and whose shaft of red granite was not adorned with reliefs, as in the painting). This could lead to the supposition that scenes from the history of Esther were popular not only among women, but also among converted Jews, maybe particularly among converted Jewish women, as it is well known in Early Modern Spain and Portugal (Colbert Cairns 2017), as generally were for the Jews the stories of their biblical ancestors living among the strangers, due right to the "outsiders" status impressed on them (Harvey 2003; Wechsler 2010; Davidovich 2013). The popularity of the *Book of Esther* explains also why there are so much, but still less known Jewish medieval exegeses about it (Walfish 1993; Wechsler 2008; Wechsler 2010; Wechsler 2015).

By its place in the composition, as well as by the clumsiness of the foreshortening, the midget jester in the painting in Sibiu could be compared rather (though only to a certain extent) with a halberdier rendered in 1750 by Gottfried Bernhard Göz (1708−1774) in a ceiling fresco (Fig. 16) in the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary pilgrimage church from Birnau (Germany, federal state of Baden-Württemberg). The place where stays a sovereign's bodyguard (probably also a halberdier), rendered by Andrea Vicentino (ca. 1542−1617) as seen from the back and truncated in the lower right corner in a painting (Fig. 11) from the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung in Munich (oil on

canvas, 280 x 394 cm; inv. 3815) recalls to some extent the one rendered in a less-skilled foreshortening in the painting in Sibiu. The architectural framework's importance in structuring the composition of the both works reminds (albeit to a lesser extent) as well a painting by Claude Vignon (1593−1670) from the Musée du Louvre in Paris (oil on canvas, 80 x 119 cm, no inv. RF 3737), which is dated between 1620−1670, but whose title is still a subject of dispute (*Solomon and the Queen of Sheba* or *Esther before Ahasuerus*). This structure of the composition is actually much older, as it can be found also in the previously mentioned work by Hans Burgkmair the Elder from the work by Alte Pinakothek in Munich (Fig. 3), but even this artist's compositional pattern is inspired by a more compressed composition, namely that of a print dated 1518 by Lucas van Leyden (1494−1533), in which Esther is shown kneeled, outdoors in a city (Bohn 2002, fig. 2). Obviously, there is a great compositional resemblance between the anonymous painting in Sibiu and the Andrea Vicentino's work from Munich (Fig. 11), but it is worth noting that the author of the first one painted the midget jester as replacement of the young Africans or dogs in the already mentioned compositions showing the same theme by Tintoretto and by Veronese (which may have been known to him most likely indirectly, from sketches or even from prints, but rather only from certain more recent compositions inspired by these works). There is no evidence that the author of the anonymous painting from Sibiu would have known the work by Hans Burgkmair the Elder.

If more thoroughly studied, the compositional structure of the anonymous painting in Sibiu reveals that it is actually more complex than that of Andrea Vicentino's painting, especially if comparing the left third of both. In the work from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection, the most of the secondary characters are placed on oblique axes which are parallel to that on which the doctor, Ahasuerus and Haman are rendered and which intersect the painting's midline, which is crossing Esther's body right under her head. Their gestures emphasize their various reactions to Esther's faint. Besides the true lighting, the position of the Sun in the composition suggests itself how the lighting should be perceived, in a different way, increasing thus the complexity of the lighting. All these together are pointing on a secondary centre of interest, right in the first third of the composition, namely on the woman from Esther's suite who is desperately crying to the onlooker staying in the background, on the terrace of the palace. This secondary centre of interest, which is missing in Andrea Vicentino's composition, increases the dynamism of the first work's composition. Andrea Vicentino's work shows, instead, a greater concern for an accurate rendering of the characters' bodies and even of their physiognomies. In his composition Esther is rendered actually fainting right when she was bowing before Ahasuerus, not simply fainting as in the painting purchased by the Brukenthal National Museum. However, in his composition Andrea Vicentino was influenced by the 15th–16th c. traditional pattern with many characters, elements of architecture and a wide perspective showing Esther kneeled before Ahasuerus enthroned, which is already known in Italy, but well documented especially in the Low Countries (in prints, easel paintings and in tapestry) and in a certain measure in Germany (apparently at first in woodcuts and only than in easel paintings). Many variants of rendering Esther kneeling or fainting before Ahasuerus enthroned may have circulated throughout Italy till they were melted in a more elaborate compositional pattern, in late 16th and early 17th c. On the other hand, the already mentioned drawing by Ludovico Carracci, dated ca. 1592 and kept at the Musée du Louvre (Bohn 2002, 187, fig. 5) shows a compositional pattern very similar to that by Andrea Vicentino, but simpler, with less characters, and due to its sketchy nature, it does not offer any concern for architectural elements and for the perspective. It is very important to mention that, unlike in the composition of Andrea Vicentino, in that of this Bolognese artist (as in that dated ca. 1630 by Artemisia Gentileschi from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York) Esther is rendered fainting, as more usual in the Italian paintings (Bohn 2002, 188). However, the compositional pattern of the both latter works, as well as that of Andrea Vicentino is related to the older compositional pattern showing Ahasuerus enthroned, Esther kneeled before him, many other characters, architecture and sometimes a cityscape or a

landscape, which spread during the Renaissance over the Alps in early 16th c. and may have inspired Hans Burgkmair the Elder (Fig. 3) and Frans Francken the Elder (Fig. 4), but continued to be much used as well in Italy, as by Tintoretto, in his already mentioned work from Museo del Prado in Madrid (Fig. 2), dated between 1552−1555 and later by Leonello Spada, in a fresco dated during 1614−1616 from Basilica of the Madonna della Ghiara in Reggio Emilia (Bohn 2002, 190, fig. 7). Other Italian compositional patterns, used by Tintoretto (Fig. 7) and Veronese (Fig. 9), showing Esther fainting before Ahasuerus respectively stepping to his throne, which spread over the Alps during the second half of the 17th c. and will be finally mentioned below, are inspired as well by this old Renaissance pattern.

Despite the clear influence of the compositional model of Andrea Vicentino's work on the anonymous author of the work from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection, the latter's more complex scenery, the deficiencies in the rendering of the characters, but especially the unskilled foreshortenings and a certain tendency towards burlesque are recalling some 17th c. genre scenes from the Low Countries and even some 16th–17th c. German prints. This is an evident innovation, in relation not only to Andrea Vicentino's compositional pattern, but also to the other compositional patterns from the 16th c. and from the early 17th c. rendering the same biblical scene. Therefore, this can be another clue for a later date of the anonymous work in Sibiu, during the late 17th c. or even in the first half of the 18th c.

Another late innovative composition inspired by the same compositional pattern created by Andrea Vicentino shows a fresco (Fig. 15) painted in 1733−1734 by Johann Georg Lederer (working around Augsburg, during 1729−1757) in the pilgrimage church Maria Hilf from Klosterlechfeld (Germany, federal state of Bayern). Here, in addition to the baroque architectural background and the more complex perspective, specific to the ceiling mural painting (by emphasizing the ascending perception of the perspective), it is worth to note the use of illusionist effects to increase the frontal perspective using the staffage and the architectural framework, like in the case of the painting in Sibiu: the use of ascending radial axes which converge towards the monarch and the successive planes in the left third of the composition, which are offset in the right third by placing in a closer plane (on the steps of the throne) a halberdier, who is also seen from the back and truncated, but only by the lack of his feet. The complex composition of this fresco, respectively of the anonymous painting from Sibiu), both inspired by the pattern created by Andrea Vicentino during the late 16th c. or early 17th c., shows the assimilation of the results of the further 17th c. research on the perspective, due to various categories of artists (painters, draughtsmen and architects) interested to improve the possibilities of an illusionist suggestion of spatiality.

Other paintings showing Esther before Ahasuerus with which the work from Sibiu may be compared in some extent (regarding the type of the architectural framework, its depiction and the way to place it in the composition) are dated during the first half of the 17th c. or in the first half of the 18th c. Among such works from second half of the 17th c. should be noted the fresco by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (1612−1660) from the ceiling of the Queen's Parade Room in the Musée de Louvre in Paris (which may be made during 1655−1657), the already mentioned painting by Nicolas Poussin dated 1655 from the Gosudarstvennyi Ermitazh in St. Petersburg, but especially the work by Filippo Gherardi from a private collection, dated in the first half of the 17th c. (Fig. 12), which is maybe in this respect the closer to the painting purchased by the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu, as being influenced by the same compositional pattern by Andrea Vicentino. The fact that in Rome Filippo Gherardi became a member of the studio of Pietro da Cortona, the theacher of Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, who worked several times in France, especially in Paris and had since 1646 a strong influence on the French painting (Sonoc 2018, 284-285; cf. Waterhouse 1962, 55) could explain very well how a simplified version related to the compositional pattern of Andrea Vicentino influenced not only Giovanni Francesco Romanelli and through him Nicolas Poussin, but as well other French artists till mid-18th c., as the already mentioned one by Antoine Coypel (dated ca. 1704) from the Musée du Louvre.

In the same museum from Paris is kept as well an interesting painting with many characters and an intricate composition by Jean-François de Troy, dated in 1737. Its composition has only a far connection with other French works showing the same theme, excepting the work of Antoine Coypel and maybe only through it can be found a certain connection with the mentioned fresco by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli from the Louvre, in which Ahasuerus is rendered standing up from his throne when Esther faints before him. In the Brukenthal National Museum's collection there is another rendering (Fig. 19) of Esther fainting before Ahasuerus (oil on canvas glued on plywood, 202 x 183 cm; inv. 752) by Martin van Meytens the Younger (1695−1770), one of the most important mid-18th c. painters in Austria. The work comes from Baron Samuel von Brukenthal's collection and is quite well known (Die Gemälde- Galerie 1844, 121-122, cat. 196; Führer 1893, 63, cat. 363; Csaki 1901, 204, cat. 730; Csaki 1909, 226, cat. 752; Csaki 1926, 20, cat. 752; Spek 1941, 23, cat. 752; Lisholm 1974, 112, cat. 212, pl. 29; Mureșan 1987, 198-199; Budapest 1993, 281-282, cat. 101; Mureșan 2007, 117-119, cat. 68; Lechner 2017, 300). It shows as well interest for architectural details and an interesting way to adjust Andrea Vicentino's compositional pattern to particular needs of perspective. As Georg Lechner recently remarked, this work reflects the canonical pattern of the compositions showing Esther before Ahasuerus, especially of those created by Italian artists, but without to follow exactly a certain one (Lechner 2017, 300). As Valentin Mureșan noted (Mureșan 2007, 117), for the architecture the painter's source of inspiration were the works of the contemporary Italian artists Giovanni Battista Piazzetta (1683−1754), Giovanni Battista Pittoni (1687−1767) and Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini (1675−1741). The date of this painting can be approximated, however, because the artist has already painted in an almost similar manner this scene, in a version of the work from Sibiu sent to England before 1755, about which Georg Lechner stated that nothing is known at present (Lechner 2017, 300), although long times ago Klara Garas mentioned that it was sold on an auction at Christie's in December 1987 and that the work in Sibiu would be only an author's copy, made for a collection inside the Holy Roman Empire (Budapest 1993, 281). About the painting in Sibiu Birgitta Lisholm considered that it should be dated in the 30's of the 18th c. (Lisholm 1974, 112), thus it would be practically contemporary with that by Jean-François de Troy.

3. The work's author presumed origin and the work's date.

The painting on copper was already known in Italy during the Renaissance and frequently practiced in 16th–17th c. (especially in Rome) and spread to the Netherlands (where it was considered even as a national art) and to Germany, to Bohemia, Poland, England, France, Spain and Portugal and even to the Spanish colonies in Latin America, where in 18th c. it became dominant in New Spain, but was less practiced in Peru (Ward 2008, 145; Sonoc, Albișor 2018, 615-618; cf. Lăzărescu 1996, 23; Kirby 1999, 26-27; Malarstwo 2003, 10 and 25; Hill Stoner, Rushfield 2012, 100-103). After 1650 the popularity of this technique waned, although much slowly in southern Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Bohemia, as in some of these areas it was connected with the production of religious paintings for personal devotion. Although during the 18th c. the use of copper supports declined, artists as Giovanni Antonio Canal called *Canaletto*, Johann Georg Platzer, Franz Christoph Janneck and Angelica Kauffmann continued to work occasionally on them (Hill Stoner, Rushfield 2012, 101-102). In France, according to an early 19th c. statement of Jean-François-Léonor Mérimée, "since a very long time one does not paint on copper any more", which the mentioned author seemed even to regret, as he continued to say that the preparation of copper plates is not difficult at all (Mérimée 1830, 246-247). These facts have a certain importance for the debate about the Italian or Central European (more specifically, German or Austrian) origin of the author of this painting on copper plate from the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum, in which it is undoubtedly one of the largest of its kind.

Due to the poor documentation regarding the acquisitions of paintings made by the initiative of Theodor Ionescu (1915−1998), the curator of Brukenthal Museum's gallery (1956-1971), as well as the stage of the research on these

works of art, as consequence of the lack of relevant documents, as they were taken as evidence against him during the investigations on the 1968 painting theft (about the biography and the activity of Theodor Ionescu: Tudoran Ciungan 2007), it is difficult to specify the attribution with which this painting was purchased from its previous owner, Uta Vogelsang (an inhabitant of Sibiu), sometime before the date of July 2, 1969, when it was registered in the museum's collection. So far, it seems more likely that both the attribution of this work to an anonymous Italian artist from the Neapolitan school and its date (ca. 1600−1630) come from inside the museum, namely from Theodor Ionescu himself or from Maria Olimpia Tudoran Ciungan, who apparently did not have enough arguments to write about the purchased painting. Although the identification of the author of the work still remains quite difficult, the elaborate structure of the composition and the Mediterranean-looking architecture of the palace would apparently support the idea that he would be an Italian artist. From a compositional point of view (but also if considering the painter's use of lighting and his preference for many bright colours), the work looks closer to the works of the 16th–17th c. Venetian artists than to the religious-themed paintings of the Neapolitan school's artist from the early 17th c., who being influenced by the most radical phase of Caravaggio's style and then by Jusepe de Ribera, preferred darker tones in their less colourful compositions and an illumination with more intense *chiaroscuro* effects.

From a compositional point of view, the anonymous painting from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection shows some similarities (regarding the interest for the architectural framework and for certain types of secondary characters displayed around the throne of Ahasuerus) with certain Italian works depicting the same theme, especially by Tintoretto (both that in the British Royal Collection, where Esther is fainting before the sovereign and that in Museo del Prado, where she is kneeling) and by Veronese (the painting in the Uffizi, where Esther is rendered bowing before Ahasuerus) and by the latter's school from the Louvre (where Esther is rendered fainting). However, the closest similarities are revealed by the comparison with the painting by Andrea Vicentino (Fig. 11) from the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung in Munich, which was very likely influenced by the composition of that work by Veronese, whose compositional pattern seems to have influenced as well the French painter Claude Vignon, in his work from the Musée du Louvre. Almost like in the work by Andrea Vicentino, in which Esther is fainting right when bowing before Ahasuerus, in the painting by Claude Vignon from the Musée du Louvre she is rendered only bowing (if accepting the hypothesis that the work renders Esther presented to Ahasuerus and not the Queen of Sheba before Solomon). Regarding the structure of the composition (especially the arrangement of the characters), but also by his interest for the architectural framework and for a wider perspective, in this painting Andrea Vicentino is closer to the compositional pattern of the painting dated 1528 by Hans Burgkmair the Elder from the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (Fig. 3) than to the patterns created by Tintoretto (Fig. 7) and Veronese (Fig. 9). But related (although not so close) to the compositional pattern of Hans Burgkmair the Elder is also the already mentioned fresco dated during 1614−1616 from Basilica of the Madonna della Ghiara in Reggio Emilia by Leonello Spada (1576−1622), a Bolognese painter, who intended to connect the Virgin Mary with certain famous women from the Old Testament seen as her prefigurations (namely, Esther, Judith and Abigail), whom he rendered in frescoes in the same chapel dedicated to their counterpart from the New Testament (Bohn 2002, 190, fig. 7), by whose intercession the Christian believers will be saved, as the Jews were saved by these brave and faithful women (Bohn 2002, 184). In the first half of the 17th c. a closer analogy to the anonymous work from Sibiu is the already mentioned painting by Filippo Gherardi from a private collection (Fig. 12), which may have been made in Venice or (as the painter's preference for red and ochre instead of more brighten colours would suggest) rather in Rome, but after the pattern of Andrea Vicentino, known maybe already from Venice. Curiously enough, especially if considering so many late 17th and 18th c. frescoes in Southern Germany and Austria (including South Tyrol as well) which follow the compositional pattern of Andrea Vicentino and suggest that his work was in this period quite well known (directly or through drawings), as being

already in Bavaria, among the works dated from the second half of the 17th c. to the 18th c. by artists from central or northern Italy it is extremely difficult to find one which can be compared to that from Sibiu, excepting that (Fig. 20) by Giuseppe Diziani (1732-1803), a Venetian painter, which was auctioned at the Galerie Bassenge in Berlin, but has fewer characters and is dated only during the 1780s. Despite its simplified composition, it is closely inspired from the pattern of the painting by Andrea Vicentino, like its anonymous counterpart from Sibiu, which is undoubtedly of a better artistic quality. However, both in the latter one and in the painting by Giuseppe Diziani, Esther is rendered fainting before Ahasuerus, not kneeled or bowing, as in the work by Andrea Vicentino.

In the easel painting from the countries laying north of the Alps, despite the fact that during the 17th–18th c. can be noted a certain influence of the above mentioned compositional patterns created by Tintoretto, Veronese and even by Hans Burgkmair the Elder (which is although much rare) there are few easel paintings showing Esther before Ahasuerus which recall the compositional pattern created by Andrea Vicentino. This pattern had a certain influence on French painters, as shown by the more compressed composition of two works kept in the Gosudarstvennyi Ermitazh in St. Petersburg (Carruthers 2007, pl. 8 and 10): one by Nicolas Poussin (1594−1665), dated ca. 1640 (oil on canvas, 119 x 155 cm) and the other by Valentin Lefebvre (1642−1682), dated ca. 1675 (oil on canvas, 100 x 121 cm). In the Low Countries such compositions show as well fewer characters, as can be seen in the case of a copy after a work by Peter Paul Rubens of the former Swedish royal collection (in which it is attested in 1792, in the time of Gustaf III), but kept from 1866 at the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm (oil on wood, 41 x 55 cm; inv. NM 608) or a painting by Solomon Koninck (1609−1656) from the Muzeum Narodowe in Warsaw (oil on canvas, 157 x 225 cm; inv. M .Ob. 2361 (232530)), dated in the 1650s. It should be noted that in the first work Esther faints before Ahasuerus and in the second one she is kneeled. A composition with fewer characters, but which shows elements of natural landscape in the background, is the aforementioned work recently attributed to Artus Wolffort (in which there are also some elements that allow to be compared with the pattern of the work by Tintoretto in the King's Gallery in the Kensington Palace of London). Closer to the compositional pattern created by Hans Burgkmair the Elder (as having a cityscape in the background) is a painting (Fig. 4) by Frans Francken the Elder (1542−1616) from the Museo Nacional de Belas Artes in Rio de Janeiro (oil on wood, 56 x 86 cm; inv. 1878 T), in which Esther is also kneeled before Ahasuerus. Related to their compositional pattern, as showing Esther kneeled before Ahasuerus who is sitting on his throne, surrounded by some councillors and some architectural elements, with a wide perspective, but with fewer characters, is the Brussel carpet (Fig. 5) donated in 1574 to the St. Victor's dome in Xanten, Germany by Adolf van Wielick, who also commissioned it. A drawing by Pieter Coecke van Aelst (1502−1550), dated during 1541−1543, which is actually a tapestry project and is currently kept at the Muzeum Narodowe in Warsaw (ink on paper, 18.5 x 25.3 cm; inv. Rys.Obd.d. 715), shows that in Flanders, for depicting this biblical scene was used another compositional pattern (with Esther staying before Ahasuerus), which shows some similarities to that created some decades later by Andrea Vicentino (many characters, an intricate architectural frame and perspective), but also important differences.

It is as well extremely difficult to find analogies for the anonymous painting purchased by the Brukenthal National Museum among the easel painting works created in the German area. Certain compositional similarities (but less in respect of the chromatic) can be found only in some mythological and religious scenes by Johann Heiss (1640–1704), Johann Rudolf Byss (1660–1738) or even Franz Christoph Janneck (1703–1761) or, more rarely, in genre scenes by the latter or even in allegories or compositions inspired by the ancient history painted by Johann Georg Platzer (1704–1761). These works show also a wider architectural framework and a broader perspective. Here, like in the Low Countries, the compositional pattern created by Hans Burgkmair the Elder (Fig. 3) seems to have been less popular in the easel painting. However, it is worth to note that an 18th c. relief decorating the lodge (the oratory) of the abbess in the monastery church

in Wald (Germany, the federal state of Baden-Württemberg), made by Franz Sartori (Schneider), which shows Esther kneeling before Ahasuerus outdoors, in a cityscape, is obviously inspired by it.

Both in southern Germany and in Austria there are several frescoes depicting this biblical scene and showing compositions which are more or less close to that of the anonymous painting from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection. Their common feature is the interest for the architectural framework and, to a certain extent, for a broader perspective. Obviously, in order to suggest the perspective these frescoes (in which sometimes there are also elements of natural landscape, which in the anonymous work from Sibiu are lacking) use to appeal to some specific means of the mural painting, especially of the ceiling frescoes. From compositional point of view, closer to the anonymous painting in Sibiu are: the already mentioned fresco dated 1683 in the church of the Garsten abbey (Austria, the federal state of Steiermark) by Michael Christoph Grabenberger (Fig. 13), that (Fig. 14) in the church of the Schlierbach abbey (Austria, the federal state of Oberösterreich), painted at ca. 1687 by Giovanni Battista Carlone (1636–1713), the fresco (Fig. 15) dated 1733–1734 by Johann Georg Lederer (working around Augsburg during 1729–1757) from the Maria Hilf pilgrimage church in Klosterlechfeld (Germany, the federal state of Bayern) and the already mentioned fresco (Fig. 17) painted in 1760 by the Viennese artist Josef Hauzinger in the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of Pain in Maria Dreieichen (Austria, the federal state of Niederösterreich). As other examples, though less compositionally close, we quote the fresco in the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary pilgrimage church from Birnau (Germany, the federal state of Baden-Württemberg), painted in 1750 by Gottfried Bernhard Göz (Fig. 16), the fresco (Fig. 10) in the church of the abbey dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary from Vornbach (Germany, the federal state of Bayern), painted in 1730 by a painter originally from South Tyrol (Italy, the autonomous province of Bolzano – Alto Adige), namely Innozenz Anton Warathy (1694-1758), whose name is also spelled *Waräthi*, *Barath*, *Barati* etc. (suggesting thus a possible distant Hungarian origin of his father's family, as would show the typical Hungarian name *Váradi* or the less frequent one *Baráti*), that (Fig. 8) from the parish church of St. Ingenuin and St. Albuin from Taisten / Tesido (also in South Tyrol), painted in 1770–1771 by Franz Anton Zeiler (1716–1794), an Austrian painter from Brixen, and the one already mentioned St. Pancratius parish church in Wiggensbach (Germany, the federal state of Bayern), painted in 1771 by Franz Joseph Hermann.

From the study of these frescoes (which as noted above, are painted on ceilings, excepting only the work in Wiggensbach, painted on the dome) results some interesting information, which are summarised below. Except for Michael Christoph Grabenberger and Franz Joseph Hermann, about whose artistic instruction there are no information, the other of these artists were traditionally trained in local workshops by other Austrian painters (Innozenz Anton Warathy, Franz Anton Zeiler and Gottfried Bernhard Göz) or in Augsburg (Johann Georg Lederer) and only by exception at the Viennese Academy (Josef Hauzinger) or in Italy, in Florence (Giovanni Battista Carlone), but also in a painter's workshop (namely, in that of Domenico Passignano, in what concerns Giovanni Battista Carlone). They used various compositional patterns: either inspired by Veronese's work from Uffizi (in the case of Innozenz Anton Warathy) or by that of Tintoretto from the British Royal Collection (Franz Anton Zeiler) or especially by that of Andrea Vicentino in the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung (Michael Christoph Grabenberger, Giovanni Battista Carlone, Johann Georg Lederer, Gottfried Bernhard Göz, Josef Hauzinger and Franz Joseph Hermann). This situation is very interesting, as Andrea Vicentino was less famous than Veronese or Tintoretto and so his works were less copied and reproduced by engravers. It is possibly that many painters working in Southern Germany (the actual federal states of Bayern and Baden-Württemberg) and in Austria used Andrea Vicentino's compositional pattern, which was known to them either directly, seeing his painting kept now in Munich or indirectly, from drawings which may have circulated in Bavaria and Austria.

These frescoes (some of which are obviously later and have a less coherent composition than

the anonymous painting from the Brukenthal National Museum) are chronological clues which support a later date than previously proposed for the latter painting, namely during the late 17th c. or even in the first half of the 18th c. They are also strong evidences that the compositional pattern created by Andrea Vicentino was known and quite frequently used during this period (and even a decade later) in southern Germany, Austria and South Tyrol, but less so in Venice, where it is attested apparently only by a painting dated in the 1780s, whose author was a painter and a conservator of paintings and may have already known an old but famous and widely spread pattern. This may suggest that the anonymous author of the painting in the Brukenthal National Museum's collection could have worked in southern Germany, Austria or South Tyrol. He could have known as well, maybe, various compositional patterns (and maybe frescoes as well) depicting the same biblical scene, but perhaps also some paintings with religious and mythological scenes with a similar compositional structure.

In almost all these frescoes Esther is rendered kneeling before Ahasuerus, but fainting only in that from Taisten, by Franz Anton Zeiler (Fig. 8). Therefore, the rendering of Esther fainting before Ahasuerus should not be seen as a decisive element to attribute the work shwing this scene from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection either to a Venetian or to a Bolognese artist by misunderstanding the opinion of the feminist art historian B. Bohn (Bohn 2002, 192-197), who actually said *only* that in the northern Italian painting (but not *only there*, as would be misunderstood in such a situation!) the scene rendering Esther fainting before Ahasuerus substitutes her traditional kneeled rendering, as an expression of the women's autonomy in Venice (especially due to their great dowries) and in Bologna (especially as a result of their education). Esther is rendered fainting also in works by artists from the Netherlands, France, Germany and Austria. Andrea Vicentino worked in Venice and in the painting by him from Munich Esther is rendered fainting, but right when she was bowing before Ahasuerus. Although this compositional model was followed both by the anonymous author of the painting in Sibiu and by the authors of most of these frescoes from southern Germany, Austria and South Tyrol, she is not rendered fainting in frescoes from this region, but almost always kneeled, following the most frequent iconography in this region. In Italy, where traditionally Esther was also rendered kneeled, the works in which she is rendered fainting became more frequent in the 17th-18th c., but there are only few easel paintings following Andrea Vicentino'a pattern (one by Filippo Gherardi and much later one by Giuseppe Diziani). Although the compositional pattern of the work from Sibiu is of Venetian origin, as well as the artist's chromatic preferences, it is difficult to say that it may have been painted or that the painter was surely an Italian. In the first half of the 17th c., a compositional pattern inspired by Andrea Vicentino's work (nowadays in Munich) was followed in Italy by Filippo Gherardi and through Giovanni Francesco Romanelli as well in France, but since 1683 and during the 18th c. it was used by fresco painters southern Germany, Austria and South Tyrol, but in Italy only by Giuseppe Diziani, a late 18th c. Venetian easel painter.

A curious situation is the rendering of a similar scene whose compositional pattern is very close to that of Andrea Vicentino in a fresco in ochre *camaïeu* from the chapel of the Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin (Fig. 18). It was painted during 1707-1713 by the Flemish master Jan Anthonie Coxie (ca. 1660–1720), trained in Mechelen by his father Jan Coxie and by his uncle Jooris Biset or, according to newer opinions, by Charles Emmanuel Biset. Before being documented in Berlin (1705), he lived since 1699 in Amsterdam, whose citizenship he got in 1703 (on the biography and work of J. A. Coxie: Thieme 1913, 22). It is difficult to ascertain wherefrom the painter took his inspiration. He may have seen one of the various late 16th c. (or rather early 17th c.) scenes showing Esther kneeled before Ahasuerus enthroned (maybe even simpler ones, with less architectural elements and interest for a wider perspective) by artists from the Low Countries or Italy or even works following the compositional pattern of Andrea Vicentino, perhaps by Italian or German artists. However, the helical (or Solomonic) columns of the throne, recalling those of St. Peter's Baldachin (*ciborium*) made during 1623–1634 by Gian Lorenzo Bernini could be seen as an own improvement, as they are unknown to me in older depictions of this

biblical scene. Later, such columns are depicted also in the already mentioned painting by Jean-François de Troy from the Musée de Louvre, dated 1737, which obviously does not follow Andrea Vicentino's compositional pattern.

Some details resulting from the study of the weapons and military equipment items depicted in the anonymous work from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection support as well the hypothesis that the artist was active in southern Germany and Austria (including the whole territory of Tyrol) and less probably in Friuli or in Switzerland, wherefrom the mercenaries who used such items were recruited and where they were also extensively employed, although considering the epoch in which the painting may be dated these military items seem to be rather antiques, which may have been seen in a local collection of weapons than used as props in a painter's workshop. It is still unknown to me if in Catholic churches from Friuli and Switzerland during the 17th-18th c. there are as well similar frescoes using the compositional pattern created by Andrea Vicentino or if during the same period artists working in these regions used the same compositional pattern for rendering in easel paintings Esther fainting before Ahasuerus. Considering the ethnic diversity of Tyrol, Friuli and Switzerland, as well as the patterns' and artists' circulation and especially the fact that at this time there are Italian artists who worked in Austria and last but not least the trade with art works during the 17th–20th c. and also the internal and external migration during this period, the ethnic origin of the author of this painting cannot be exactly ascertained.

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FINE CERAMICS OF BATIZ FROM THE DECORATIVE ART COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF DACIAN AND ROMAN CIVILIZATION

Diana Loredana PANTEA*

Abstract: *The essay presents a brief history of the fine ceramics factory from Batiz and through brief descriptions, the over twenty pieces of fine ceramics of Batiz − preserved in the Decorative Art collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization − are made known to the public. These represent only a small part of numerous variants of fine ceramics pieces produced at Batiz, of vessels and tableware made of porcelain.*

Keywords: *fine ceramics, Batiz, decorative art*

Rezumat: *Lucrarea prezintă un scurt istoric al fabricii de faianţă fină de la Batiz şi prin descrieri succinte, se fac cunoscute publicului, cele peste douăzeci de piese de ceramică fină de Batiz, păstrate în Colecţia de Artă decorativă a Muzeului Civilizaţiei Dacice şi Romane. Acestea reprezintă doar o mică parte din nenumăratele variante de piese de ceramică fină produse la Batiz, de vase şi servicii de masă realizate din porţelan.*

Cuvinte cheie: *ceramică fină, Batiz, artă decorativă*

The first testimonies about the Batiz manufacture are linked to Bordán István's name. Bordán István ascertained that around 1805, there was a workshop in Batiz, where tobacco pipes were made, led by Georg D'André (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 31) and that later, around 1810, they began to make the first vessels of ivory colored fine ceramics. (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 46) There are various opinions regarding the founding of the manufacture, one of them being that Georg D'André moved his activity from Bobâlna to Batiz. In the summary of the petitions registered in the Cluj County, in 1805, it is mentioned that: Georg D'André, a master coming from Triest, addressed a request to the magistrate of Cluj for the approval of the establishment of a fine ceramics factory, making a generous offer to the owner of the land, Nalátzy József.

József Nalátzy was one of the most important Transylvanian personalities, a visionary and enterprising spirit of the time, a fan of progress. The Hungarian landowner, with reformist initiatives, was a supporter of capitalist development and industrialization.

In order to capitalize resources on his domains, he tried to set up a paper mill and to build thermal baths, and in order to realize his ideas and plans regarding the manufacture of Batiz, he made material sacrifices; he also financed and became involved in the development of the local industry, training the local peasants to work at the pottery factory.

The landlord proved to be understanding and receptive to the problems of employees on the domain and invested in the quality of the work by acquiring advanced tools, by applying rational working methods and technologies. Although Georg D'André made serious investments in setting up the pottery factory, we cannot consider him equal owner in rights with Nalátzy. But, József Nalátzy, having a visionary personality and being a businessman with the prospect of increased profit, supported by D'André, in the "pioneering work" (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 208), for the brave initiative of the specialist dedicated to the profession and received him in his service and supported him by ensuring the start of fine ceramics production in Batiz. Thus "took shape the project of establishing, at Batiz, a manufacture of fine ceramics objects." (Petresc 2014, 5)

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"The excavations, the exhaustive researches carried out by Magdalena Bunta and Paul Gyulai, high-profile museographers, in Batiz in 1968, brought out of the shadow of time, a first-class factory, not only from Transylvania but from the entire south-eastern part of Europe" (Pilly 2019, 3) – discovering that the Batiz manufacture worked between 1805-1865, run by the D'André family. Within the evolution of the manufacture of Batiz, we distinguish three stages.

In the first stage, which ended in the third decade of the nineteenth century, yellow vessels were made, with the raw material and the enamel well worked, among which we can see pieces such as plates, trays, fruit bowls with perforated patterns, without great differences in style, of various shapes and multiple destinations.

"The raw material was yellow clay from the territory of the Batiz village" (Pilly 2019, 28), and 75% of the mass of this pottery was made of micaceous clay, the degreaser of 0.16 mm was composed of quartz and feldplast, mixed together until obtaining a homogenized paste, which was lathed on the wheel. The glaze on this type of ceramics is pigmented in brown and has cracks. With or without glaze, the ceramics were colored in yellow, red, brown and black, qualitatively, it was a "common ceramics" (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 104).

At the same time, was developed the technological variant for the manufacture of red vessels, made from red clay from around Batiz. The more fragile, the red products, with the strength of the clay products, were of inferior quality in comparison with the yellow ones.

József Nalátzy died in 1820, leaving the inheritance to his son. He was the administrator of Hunedoara County, then, moving to Cluj, he was a city councilor, and after 1834 he moved to Vienna and thus, he did not worry about the fate of the factory in Batiz. Against this background, D'André, under the conditions provided by József Nalátzy, continued to work and gained much more independence in the management of Batiz's manufacturing, so he made serious investments in improving working conditions by constructing new buildings: workshops, ovens, and warehouses, he created new jobs and increased production, and for the manufacture of the new models he employed decorators and modelers from abroad, who were specialized at the porcelain factory in Vienna. The fruits of labor were seen by the increase of capital, which, for the most part, was invested in manufacturing, gaining total independence in the management of the factory.

The second period in which the Batiz manufacture carried out its activity corresponds to the years 1820-1835. During this period the quality production was pursued through the elaboration of the technology of vessels of the color of bone, and: "The most artistic pieces among those decorated with blue cobalt are those representing portraits and landscapes." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 133)

The decoration by "embossed curmei braidings" (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 149) was simple and effective, but, made linear and floral, in blue cobalt the "Viennese Bouquet" (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 133) is the specific decoration for this periods: "The decoration exclusively with blue cobalt was favorite at the factory of Batiz. Plates, sauceboats and tureens are known, being part of the table services, which are decorated in the simplest way with thicker or thinner parallel lines. Even so, these are of considerable artistic effect." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 132)

The following materials were included in the production of the fine ceramics: the crushed and sorted quartz, with the granular feldplast were added in a calcitic and cryptocrystalline, micaceous clay paste. Technologically, plastic clay, a correct amount of chalk and a degreaser made of quartz and feldplast, sifted and finely grounded, were introduced into the paste of the chamotte ceramics. The calcination of the paste was carried out at temperatures of 950^0 C. The result was: „The chamotte ceramics (...) a vitrified product, yellowish, light and with appreciated ceramic properties." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 104)

In 1836, after the death of József Nalátzy, the son, the estate and the manufacture became the property of his heir, Jozefa. After Jozefa Nalátzy's second marriage, with Bethlen Olivér, the latter became the owner of the domain and increased the sum for the lease of the Batiz manufacture. In the past, the use of the Nalátzy family coat of arms as a logo for

stamping Batiz products represented a motive of praise and pride for the owners of the estate. By 1845 the products bore the logo of the name of the origin village: Batiz. After taking the lead of the estate, Bethlen Olivér, prohibited the use of the family coat of arms as a logo for manufacture. The conflict of interest arose between Bethlen Olivér, the owner of the estate and the leaseholder Franz D'André, the son of Georg D'André.

Georg D'André, considered a world-class fine ceramics entrepreneur, researcher, and exceptional ceramist, died in Orăştie in 1847.

Working with his father, Franz D'André honed his knowledge during a study trip to England, but also during his years of study abroad, especially in the Austrian capital, Vienna, where he studied at the Polytechnic and worked in the porcelain factory. An innovative spirit "the young D'André was a keen connoisseur of fine ceramics technology; (…) the researcher was never satisfied with the obtained results, he continued his experiences, researching for new techniques, new enamels" (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 59), always in search of new techniques and working materials, aware of the skills obtained, he applied numerous researches, techniques, and experiments for the expected result and succeeded in fulfilling his dream by introducing, the Batiz brand on the international market. "D'André specialized in Vienna" (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 61) and filled by the "porcelain fever" (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 60) he was concerned with the improvement of the various fine ceramics pastes and he endeavored to obtain a porcelain that corresponds to the demands of the public and accessible as a price, to compete with those existing on the external market. He was particularly fascinated by the application of enamelling techniques that mimic vessels with golden luster and metallic luster, Italian products of the 16th century and worked hard to obtain the technology of the black gloss vessels. It was about "developing the technological basis for the manufacture of porcelain, in order to start its production in Batiz." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 60)

After the death of his father, Franz D'André endeavored to implement his plans to improve production and to expand the business. He invested considerable amounts in the modernization work of the manufacture and built "new workshops and warehouses, dug new wells, modernized the workshop equipment." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 65) Franz D'André offered the chance to work at the factory for 100 peasants, called from Vienna a modeler at the wheel, Mathias Pradl and Hilf – a gold blower. In addition to the furnace already built by his father, he raised two more furnaces and adapted the milling and the crushing steps to the traction force of the horses. The archaeological discoveries of 1968 reveal precious elements, about the well-built combustion furnace, which is supposed to have high capacity and thermal indices. Also, the burning of the vessels took place at variable temperatures, and was made in protective capsules.

Contrary to Bordán Istvan, the discovery of a huge stone disk in a dry basin, as well as the remains of wooden pillars stuck in the ground, by the archaeologists M. Bunta and P. Gyulai, lead to the conclusion that the large millstone was part from the stone mill, which was driven by water. The jobs were the stone treadmills, the mill, the ovens and the laboratory, and probably hand grinders were used. There were three large buildings, where the molders and decorators worked, but there were rooms for ovens and workshops for the preparation of the paste and the enamel, annexes and warehouses. Soon, the investment yielded fruitful results, the development of the factory caught on and the capital had grown considerably.

He began to experiment with the production of pieces wishing to obtain for manufacture a material similar to the ceramics of Wedgwood that weren't found on the Transylvanian realms. The quality of the porcelain depended on the kaolin contained in the raw material, but also on the fineness and chemical composition of the other components: clay, quartz and feldplast, and the numerous color variants, the strength and the quality of the material required large quantities of porcelain paste, which needed knowledge of expertise, patience, and tenacity in research and evidence. The terracotta of the vessels bearing the Batiz and FDA brand, from the years 1850-1859, is white, well-burned and approaches the quality of the porcelain. It is the result of using very good quality kaolin obtained from the surroundings of Batiz, from the stone and marble quarries from Râu-Bărbat and Chimindia. For the preparation of colors for

the rich ornaments, the manganese, the uranium, the cobalt, the chromium and the iron oxides were used. For the preparation of paints, the materials were weighed, grounded and burned. Then, the oxides were grounded again in the rotary cylinders, were crushed with the help of stone balls until turned into a fine powder, and, finally, were liquefied, with water or oils. In the decoration of this type of fine ceramics, especially for the white and ivory vessels, the paint was applied under the enamel, after the first burning of the vessels. Thus, the application on the porous surface of the paints allowed a quick absorption of the color, without being able to be removed, resulting a pastel painting. After painting, the objects were submerged and clad in a thin layer of enamel, which prevented the paint from being lost from the object after various uses. For the production of the black and polished vessels, it was used a tin-based porcelain. The tin was sourced from the Czech Republic, from the Elbogen region. To create decorations based on gold dust, silver, and mussive gold, the deposits of the gold area of the Zlatna Mountains and the Arieş Valley were exploited. To apply the decorations it was used a special technique, the ornaments were applied "cold" over the enamel.

Between the years 1835-1848, the period corresponding to the third stage, in addition to the domestic vessels, the Batiz manufacture began to produce decorative pieces. Thus, Franz D'André "in the desire to produce black ceramic products, similar to Wedgwood's, achieved his goal of obtaining the black ceramics from Batiz. (...) The deep, shiny black vessels, with thin walls like porcelain, became known throughout Transylvania, under the name of <<black porcelain>>." (Pilly 2019, 30)

The pieces were made of black enamel, in shades of dark gray, passing through brown, to intense black, some of them also featuring gold or silver decoration. Such decorations were painted on the surface of the glossy black enamel with gold and silver flowers, and rendered an aesthetic specific to the manufacture from Batiz. Due to this ornamental feature of gold and silver, the Batiz black enameled pottery, competed with other products of the time made of silver and porcelain, and enjoyed great popularity, because it also met the most demanding demands of the nobility and of the great bourgeoisie, enjoying appreciation, at a qualitative-superior level, together with the silverware and the expensive imported porcelain, from abroad.

"The ornamentation was made by carefully executed decorations, simple, but aesthetically impeccable," (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 142) very beautiful, which were especially appreciated for the variety of the decorative used motifs.

The black ceramic vessels from Batiz are represented by about twelve models, made from the flowers with which were decorated the white vessels: tulips, daisies, forget-me-not, but various combinations of tulip flowers with chestnut leaves were applied, with oak leaf and daisy flowers. The gold-painted decorations of these vessels managed to soften the glow of black enamel and during festive events such tableware services were sophisticated by rendering an intimate and intricate atmosphere. Black stoves of various shapes and sizes were also decorated with such precious ornaments of gold and silver. The exhibition from Pesta, from 1846, certifies that the manufacture had reached its best and had great success with stoves decorated with noble metal dust.

The most mature result for D'André family experiences, masters of the porcelain-art, is the ceramics with the glossy black enamel of Batiz, worthy of competition with porcelain products of the time. The enamel with black and golden, metallic gloss, advertised large and smooth surfaces, suggesting noble spirit and modern style. "In order to obtain porcelain, high quality ceramic raw materials made of kaolinite, quartz and feldplast were used. (...) For the production of glaze and black mass ceramics, we may assume the use of iron and manganese in the form of sulfides." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 105) Thus, manganese and uranium oxides were used for the preparation of the black enamel and for the maintenance of the gloss "(...) it is about introducing a glass substance near the object, during the combustion, a process that must be imagined similar to the <<flowing>> technique." (Pilly 2019, 36) The vessels were submerged in this quite thick enamel, then, in closed capsules, on whose walls additional substances can be

added to produce high quality enamel. It remains a mystery, because it was not discovered what substances were used for the hardening process. Due to the portioned, weighed content and the degree of white obtained, porcelain is a "luxury product" (Petresc 2014, 4) of high quality made in Batiz. As for soft porcelain, the vitrification temperature was low: "*The Porcelain*. It is the most interesting, superior product, made in Batiz, both because of its careful composition and because of the degree of white achieved. The large proportion of the glass or optic-isotropic component of this porcelain piece confirms the claim that it had a low synthesis (vitrification) temperature. So it is about making here, in Batiz, 100-150 years ago, the low temperature porcelain, it's the <<soft porcelain>> of <<Sèvres>> type." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 104-105)

The ceramic pieces of Batiz's manufacture had to be correctly regulated at units between material, shape, and style of the products of Franz D'André brought fame and appreciation at the exhibitions of decorative art in Vienna and Pesta. He was one of the earliest experimenters in the entire monarchy, known for his skills in practical chemistry, for the enamels and pasta mixes which he discovered: "(...) Franz D'André remains first and foremost the creator of pasta and enamel recipes, one of the foremost arcane artists of the time contributing with original creations to the highest level of fine tile manufacturing technology." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 195)

The Batiz vessels were decorated with different motifs and decorative elements, such as the classic feminine head mask used for some sugar bowl and on an oil service, were specific and characteristic elements made by the artists of Batiz's manufacture. Also, the inspiration for choosing and realizing the decorative motifs started from the rich treasure trove of decorative elements from Transylvania, with floral and vegetable motifs. By using and observing the ceramic technique provided for the design of each type of vessel, taking over the stylization and clarity of the products' execution, the artists of the Batiz workshop were also inspired by the color harmony and the motives designed for the decoration of the furniture painted in Baroque and Renaissance style.

Regarding the shapes of the manufacturing vessels from Batiz, it was based on the local reality transposed in the designer's vision: "Relations with the forms of folk art and with the types of products of the guilds, which had reached the level of decorative art objects, decisively contributed to the individual note of the style of the factory." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 164) The special influence for the creation of the Batiz pottery was "the treasure trove of ancient world forms" (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 154), the Transylvanian goldsmiths from the 16^{th} to the 17^{th} centuries and the popular production of wooden vessels. The dominant fashion of the time put its mark on the influences, in designing the shapes of Batiz vessels, so we discover vessels and services in the Biedermeier, Neobaroc, Empire style; and, the black pottery was inspired by Wedgwood, who "produced a fine ceramics burnt at high temperatures that imitated ancient Egyptian and Greek pottery." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 125)

As a result of the events of the 1848 revolution, production was halted and, with the increase of the lease tax, Franz D'André was facing great difficulties in maintaining the factory, because he had invested most of the capital into the modernization of the work. Although, after the establishment of absolutism, the factory continued its activity, with Franz's financial support, unfortunately, all of these cost considerable amounts, and the capital was absorbed by investments and the revenues had decreased greatly due to the unfavorable circumstances so that D'André no longer could support the business and by 1853 he even wanted to leave the factory. Although he negotiated and won Count Mikó Imre through his projects to set up a fine pottery factory in the Micia area of Gyulai Lajos, being prepared to move, Bethlen's interventions and promises made him change his mind. The contract between Franz and Bethlen was breached, the latter not fulfilling its promises by stopping the timber harvesting necessary for the operation of the enterprise. He exploited the local workers for different tasks, turning them into slaves again. These adverse circumstances slowed down production and the amount of business fell from 26.000 florins to 12.000 florins. Gradually the reserves of deposits were reduced, the lower paid, the workers dispersed, the production decreased, so that although they

received orders, they could not execute them. The maintenance of the large enterprise involved large expenses and the material burden led to ruin. Thus, by the cessation of production, the decline of the manufacture from Batiz occurred: "The rapid destruction of these large workshops, which reach ruin in 25 to 30 years, cannot be explained solely by natural causes. It seems that a major role was played by the constant disinterest of both the owner of the estate (Bethlen Olivér), as well as the last entrepreneur, Franz D'André. (...) he had no opportunity to save the company." (Bunta, Gyulai 1971, 73-74)

D'André had won a lawsuit against Bethlen Olivér, claiming 100.000 florins for his investments, but the court awarded him only 30.000 florins. Although, resorting to a trial process, it only brought him losses and disappointments. Hilf died in 1862, and Pradl remained at Batiz in a smaller workshop and made clay pots according to the model of fine earthenware vessels, until 1868 when he died.

Knowing the fame and success, the fate of Franz D'André was even sadder, continuing to support his family from the remnants of the estate so that, in 1868 he accepted a position of janitor at the court of Ilia and, in this humiliating position, he found himself the end on September 26, 1881.

The Batiz was able to produce porcelain exclusively from local raw materials, exploited near the locality where the manufacturing functioned, and "by establishing a network of commercial representatives and warehouses, but also with the help of occasional traders dealing with the transitional trade" (Pilly 2019, 39) opened the horizon for the commercialization of fine tile products on a large scale. Another merit of the Batiz workshop is that it contributed to the introduction of continuous production at one of the first fine tile manufacturers in the Romanian Country, the factory from Târgu Jiu, where the workers trained at Batiz applied the same technology.

The merit of the pioneer in the domestic production of porcelain remains related to the names of the craftsmen Georg and Franz D'André, to that of the owner József Nalátzy, and it can be said that the manufacture from Batiz was a beginning of the local industry.

In the following, I made the presentation and the description of the fine ceramics pieces of Batiz that are part of the patrimony of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization in Deva. The popularity and fame enjoyed by the Batiz factory are documented by a large number of objects kept in other museums in the country and abroad.

At the museum in Deva, we find porcelain pieces belonging to the three important stages of execution.

Pieces belonging to the first production period of Batiz workshop

Fig.1
Type: Sugar bowl
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 270 mm, DG - 130 mm, DB - 110 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the brand of the Batiz workshop
The sugar bowl is made from white-yellowish, glossy and homogeneous enamel. The piece presents the body in the shape of a pyramid trunk, with a short leg toward the base. The lid follows the faceted shape of the body, ending with a button. On the surface of the body and on the cover are stylized ornamental vegetable motifs, composed in shape of a garland.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42733

Fig.2
Type: Vinegar and oil service
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Eclectic
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 168 mm, L - 230 mm, LA - 135 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the brand of the Batiz workshop
The spice service is made of yellowish and burnt sienna, glossy and homogeneous enamel, and is composed of three parts: the support and two containers. The support, beautifully

modeled, laterally encloses the two containers of truncated shape with a high neck, having a perforated geometric decoration. In the middle-lower part, the support has two molded surfaces in the shape of a shell, which have the purpose of salt-cellar.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42738

Fig.3
Type: Vessel
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Biedermeier
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 65 mm, DM - 108 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
Characteristic for the first period of the Batiz manufacture, and it is representative for the tableware vessels, modeled in red clay, with shiny and homogeneous burnt sienna enamel, with a cylindrical shape, which slightly flattens at the top. At the bottom, it rests on three legs, and the cylindrical body is slightly convex in the central part.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42740.

Fig.4
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 30 mm, DM - 220 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
The piece is identified by the manufacturing mark, has a circular shape, slightly meandering and is characteristic of the first Batiz period, being representative for tableware vessels modeled in red clay, with burnt enamel and an exceptional homogeneity and brilliance.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42743

Pieces belonging to the second period of production of the workshop from Batiz

Fig.5
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material / technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 30 mm, DM - 220 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
Plate made of yellowish-white, glossy and homogeneous enamel, of circular shape, and the edge has a perforated decoration. The curl line is marked with blue cobalt. The piece has an ornamental decoration using ring motifs.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42747

Fig.6
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 30 mm, DM - 220 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
The plate is made of white - yellowish, glossy, homogeneous enamel. Of circular shape, the piece presents a decoration with stylized floral motifs spreaded on two registers and painted with blue cobalt and violet manganese.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42749

Fig.7
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 30 mm, DM - 218 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
The plate is made of white-yellow, glossy, homogeneous enamel. Of circular shape, the

piece was decorated on two registers, one linear and geometric and another one with floral motifs, arranged circularly, painted in blue cobalt and purple manganese.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42752

Fig.8
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 40 mm, DM - 230 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
Product of exceptional quality, characteristic for ivory-colored, circular-shaped, openwork models, with a meandering decoration with cobalt blue, specific to the second Batiz period.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42748

Fig.9
Type: Plateau
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 43 mm, DM - 282 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
Characteristic product for the perforated models made of white-yellow, glossy and homogeneous enamel, of a specific color for the second Batiz period. The piece presents a decoration with stylized floral motifs arranged circularly on two registers, painted in cobalt blue and manganese violet.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42754

Fig.10
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 43 mm, DM - 282 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
The plate is made of white-yellow, glossy and homogeneous enamel. The piece has a circular shape with the edge marked by a linear-black decoration; centrally, it presents a decoration in the form of a circular medallion, depicting a conventional landscape with houses and natural elements.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42739

Fig.11
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 30 mm, DM - 218 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
The plate is made of yellow-white, glossy and homogeneous enamel. The piece has a circular shape with a narrow border, marked by a light cobalt blue linear decoration. Centrally, on an open ocher-yellow surface, in a rhombic medallion is rendered a local landscape frame composed of natural elements and a building, made of blue cobalt.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42751

Fig.12
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 30 mm, DM - 218 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
The plate is made of white-yellow, glossy and homogeneous enamel. The piece has circular shape with a narrow border, marked by a light cobalt blue, linear decoration. Centrally, on ocher-yellowish surface, in a rhombic

medallion is rendered a conventional landscape composed of natural elements (grass, trees) and a building (mill), made of blue cobalt.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42750

Fig.13
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 23mm, DM - 212 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
Made of homogeneous glossy white enamel, an exceptional quality product was characteristic for the ivory colored products. The plate has circular shape, with a narrow edge and a rich embossed decoration with stylized floral motifs, painted with blue cobalt.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42745

Fig.14
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing, painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 35 mm, DM - 245 mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
The plate is made of homogeneous, white-yellow, glossy enamel. The piece has circular shape, with perforated decorations and, centrally, has a linear decoration painted with blue cobalt.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42753

Fig.15
Type: Fruit bowl
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 130mm, DB - 120 mm, DG - 250mm
Trademark: The piece presents the mark of the Batiz workshop
Representative piece for the Batiz manufacture with a predilection for the second period, with a fine embossed pattern, with glossy enamel of the color of the bone. The fruit bowl was made of homogeneous, white-yellow and glossy enamel. Of circular shape, the body of the vessel can undress an embossed decoration by imitating the fulfillment of the curmei braid becoming compact through the center of the piece. The body is continued with a cylindrical bit that shapes the base.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42741

Fig.16
Type: Chalice
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing/ painted decoration
Dimensions: l - 140 mm, DB - 85 mm, DG - 105 mm
Mark: The piece is signed by Rogan Karoly
Exceptional piece with artistic value of the Batiz manufacture is made of a mixture of white and yellow clay that gives the ivory color to the vessel with homogeneous and glossy enamel in a simple and elegant shape inspired by Transylvanian silvery of the 17th century. The body of the piece consists of a cup with a flared lip. The leg of the chalice is extended from the cup, this passage becomes a knot. The cylindrical shape of the leg of the cup shapes the sole. The piece has a linear and figurative decoration, rendering two religious symbolic scenes. The decoration painted in hue of blue cobalt, uses an ornamental register for Christian motifs and is executed with much finesse and sensitivity by the Rogán Károly artist.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42732

Pieces belonging to the sthird period of production of the workshop from Batiz

Fig.17
Type: Plate

Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 25mm, DM - 218 mm
Brand: The piece presents the mar of the Batiz workshop
Plate made of homogeneous black enamel with metallic luster. The piece was designed in a circular shape, with the tapered edge realized in two records and in the center it presents an embossed decoration. Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42744

Fig.18
Type: Plate
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Neobaroc
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 35mm, DM - 208 mm
Trademark: The piece does not have the trademark of the Batiz workshop
Piece of circular shape, without ornamental motifs, is representative for the quality of the base material and the homogeneous, black enamel, with strong luster, characteristic of the famous third period of Batiz's manufacture.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42746

Fig.19
Type: Teapot
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Biedermeier
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 158 mm, DG - 90 mm, DB - 100 mm
Trademark: The piece does not have the trademark of the Batiz workshop
The black teapot is a piece made at Batiz manufacture, in Biedermaier style, dating from the first half of the 19th century. The piece is made of black, glossy and homogeneous enamel, and the lid is concave with a central button. On the body, it is presented a pouring mouth and a handle in the shape of a hook. Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42734

Fig.20
Type: Office set
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Biedermeier
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 55 mm, L - 210 mm, LA - 145 mm
Trademark: The piece does not have the trademark of the Batiz workshop
The office set is made of black, glossy, homogeneous enamel, without decoration and is composed of three pieces: the rectangular-shaped support provided with two boxes in which two cubic containers are fitted.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42742

Fig.21
Tip: Potpourri
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Biedermeier
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 120 mm, DB - 90 mm, DG - 97 mm
Trademark: The piece does not have the trademark of the Batiz workshop
Representative piece for the production of Batiz earthware vessels, from the third period, has a harmonious shape and good quality of the base material with black enamel, homogeneous and with a high gloss. Of cylindrical shape with the modeled extremities, towards the base, it is flared presenting a linear concentric arrangement. In the upper part, the container is bent and closed at the mouth, and the horizontal part has uniformly arranged circular perforations throughout the surface.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42736, 42737

Fig.22
Type: Sauceboat
Workshop: Manufacture of the fine ceramics of Batiz
Dating: The first half of the 19th century
Style: Eclectic
Material/ technique: Earthenware/ casting and glazing
Dimensions: l - 65 mm, H- 60 mm, L - 150 mm
Trademark: The piece does not have the trademark of the Batiz workshop

The base material is made of dark red burnt paste, matte enamel, and has a dark brown color. The naviform body widens in the middle where two hook-shaped torches are attached, facing each other. At the bottom, the body of the vessel narrows strongly and has an ovoid sole.
Decorative Art Collection of the Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization, Deva
Inv. no.: 42735

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DEPICTING ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE. CASE STUDY: *QISAS AL-ANBIYA*'S BOOK [STORIES OF THE PROPHETS] AND CHRISTIAN IMAGES

Fateme BARMAKI*, Habib Shahbazi SHIRAN, Samad PARVIN*****

Abstract: *The story of Ismail's Sacrifice by the Prophet Abraham, taken from the Quran and biblical verses, has been interpreted in many ways by narrators, performers, Christian and Muslim storytellers, and has also been represented by the visual artists in countless images. 'Qisas al Anbiya' was one of the books that illustrated this story during the Safavian period. The main purpose of this article is to examine the interpretations, images and implications specific to Islamic and Christian artists, in relation to their different attitudes, education and historical roots, and finally to determine the relevant visual representations and conduct a comparative study of them.*

Key words: *the concept of sacrifice, Abraham, Islamic imagery, Qisas al-Anbiya, Christian imagery*

Rezumat: *Povestea Jertfei lui Ismael de către Profetul Avraam, preluată din Coran și din versetele biblice, a fost interpretată în multe feluri de naratori, interpreți, povestitori creștini și musulmani, și a fost, de asemenea, reprezentată de artiștii plastici în nenumărate lucrări. Scopul principal al acestui articol este de a examina interpretările, imaginile și implicațiile specifice artiștilor islamici și creștini, în raport cu atitudinile, educația și rădăcinile lor istorice diferite, iar în final, de a determina elementele vizuale relevante și de a efectua un studiu comparativ al acestora.*

Cuvinte cheie: *conceptul de sacrificiu, Abraham, imagistică islamică, Qisas al-Anbiya, imagistică creștină*

Introduction

The *Story of Abraham's Sacrifice* is one of the most common religious themes in the field of painting of all time, which provided a suitable basis for the innovation and creativity of painters. The subject captivated both Islamic and Christian artists. The influences and relationships between the two views for interpreting the theme of sacrifice, as well as the controversy over the sacrifice of the Son are important topics of discussion and analysis.

The necessity to study this subject is based on the need to identify and develop common languages for all heavenly religions.

Despite the diversity and difference in symbols, visual signs, and the way of emergence of this theme and of the profound concepts of thought in the visual tradition of Islam and Christianity, their common roots can be identified and followed.

The questions that arise regarding the representation of this theme are the following: "What is the basis of the worldview of Islam and Christianity in *the Story of Sacrifice*. Did the composition of images have an imagery aspect in the story? What is the position of Prophet Abraham and Zabih[1] in Islamic and Christian religious paintings?" These Quranic indications and factors briefly narrated the image of the sacrifice of Ismail by Abraham in the historical and cultural periods of Iranian-Islamic art and the Christians, in order to better understand it.

The main objective of this paper is the comparative study of several reference images of the Story of Sacrifice in the Art of Muslims and Christians and the analysis of symbols, their visual, cultural and historical differences and similarities, as well as the interaction between the painters and artists of the two religions as a result of the economic and cultural exchanges.

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[1] Ismail was Az-zabih, the chosen sacrifice for Allah in Muslim tradition − *Ed.*

Review of literature

Sedaghat (2007) is among those who have investigated the Sacrifice of Abraham and briefly referred to the time of the incident and imagery in the article of '*Olv-al-Azm's Prophets'* in *Qisas al-Anbiya's* imaging of Ishak Neyshaburi. Kurt Whitsman referred to the position of the horned ram in the incident in his transcript. Mahmud Rasul Imani emphasized two perspectives in his paper on the *Sacrifice of Abraham* in the Islamic tradition (2010), which focuses more on, which son was sacrificed. Ayatollah Seyyed Nematollah Jazayeri (1998), in the book of *Qasat-e-Saba'ban*, and Ali Parvaresh, in the book of *Abraham Khalil Sheikh Al-Anbia* (1974), has conducted detailed research of how great the Prophet Abraham's trial was. According to the conducted studies, this article tries to investigate the exact subject of sacrifice in Islamic and Christianity painting and compare their shared characteristic with a new view.

Research Method

The methodology of this paper is a comparative and qualitative study. This is an analytical-descriptive writing and a comparative study between the two religions of Christianity and Islam. The data collection is of a library type. In this article, we describe and analyze the content of the focused images, and we compare these two areas regarding the selection of images from the Safavian[2] and Christianity school. The comparative method includes classification of images by providing tables, reviewing, and comparing two domains or areas.

Dreaming of Prophet Abraham (*pbuh*)[3]

God says in *Surah As-Saffat* [verses 101-107]: (Abraham said, "O my son, indeed I have seen in a dream that I [must] sacrifice you, so see what you think." He said, "O my father, do as you are commanded. You will find me, if Allah wills, of the steadfast."). Abraham has a strange and wonderful dream which suggests the beginning of another great trial about this great prophet. He dreams that he has been commanded by God to sacrifice and behead his unique son with his own hands. Abraham awakened from sleep terrified, knew that the dream of prophets is real. But two nights passed, and the same dream was repeated emphasizing the necessity of this reality and its urgency. Some say that he had dream at the night of the '*Troyyeh*' (the eighth day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah) for the first time, and the dream was repeated at the nights of '*Arafa*' and '*Eid –Ghorban'* (ninth and tenth of Dhu al-Hijjah), so that he had no doubt that this is the decisive command of God (Makarem Shirazi 1996, 111). When Abraham told his dream to his son, Ismail, the son was consented to be beheaded and sacrificed himself (Ismail said: "oh my father, do as you are commanded"), but what can be understood is that this satisfaction statement was in the form of command (do) and he said: "do as you are commanded". He did not say (to sacrifice me) to indicate that his father was the commander of this and did not have any choice except obey to God's command (Tabatabai 1984, 240).

Forbid the sacrifice and good tidings

Abraham suddenly heard the sound. At that time, he heard Gabriel recount: "O Khalilullah, you and your sons, Ishmael, with a strange power, show monotheism or oneness that was not believable to all the angels of heaven. This means that you, in this state of surrender and satisfaction, have proved that you are submitted or surrendered before the divine justice and in front of him without any conditions. Therefore, I greet you and your child because of this surrender (Muslim)". God salute you and says: We do not ask anything for our servants except mercy; we have appointed for man's position and human duties, not killing each other. Sacrifice this white ram with black spots instead of your child on our way. Divide it between the poor so that divine court accepts your sacrifice in the name of truth. But another sound was heard among the carbs of the high world which came to Abraham's ears, and all the angels heard it: "For this surrender". Ismail, there will be a Prophet from the descendants of your son since he was a Muslim like you and will submit to

[2] The Safavid dynasty was one of the most significant ruling dynasties of Iran from 1501 to 1736 − *Ed.*

[3] *pbuh*: "Peace be upon him"; an honorific phrase used by some Muslims after any mention in speech or print of the Islamic Prophets − *Ed.*

you as you will. He and his people will make countless sacrifices on our way in this place, and this place will also be a sacred place in the future because of your satisfaction and surrender. We have tested your sincerity and kindness in this place, admire you and your son because both of you have won the trial. Again, Gabriel came to Abraham's help (because Abraham was surprised and fascinated by that heavenly voice) and said: "O Abraham, why are you surprised? Get up and sacrifice this ram instead of your son in the way of God and give it to the poor."

Which one is Zabihullah?

God, the Exalted One, tested Abraham himself to sacrifice his son. The predecessors' scholars of the Prophet's people dispute who was the sacrifice agent of the two Abraham's sons. It was narrated from 'Obeid ibn Amir', 'Ibn Sayyid', 'Abu al-Ala'il', and 'Ibn Massoud' that Az-Zabih was Isaac. And it was also narrated in '*Majma al-Bayan'* of Imam Baqir (as) and Abbas ibn Abdulmutallab of Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) that Az-Zabih was Ismail. According to the Gospel writings mentioned in verse 22, the scholars of Christianity considered Isaac as 'Zabiullah'. God said Labayk to Abraham: "Now take your son, Isaac, who is the only one and you love him, and go to Moriah land and take him to stay there on one of the mountains. I will show you to sacrifice." Abraham put the burnt sacrifice on his son, Isaac, and took fire and knife; they both went together. When they arrived at the place God said, he built an altar and put some woods on it. Abraham placed his son on the altar, and then he stretched out his hand to sacrifice his son (Gospel 22: 29). Of course, some Christian sources referred to the fire, but most of the images were briefly referred to the fire besides Abraham. On the other hand, the scholars of Islam consider the issue of sacrifice of Ismail certainly and true based on the verses of the Quran and Muslim narratives: The narrator asked Imam Reza (as): Who is Zabih? Prophet Samen al-Aime (as) said: Ismail was Zabih, but did you hear the promise of Blessed and Almighty God in *Surah Al-Safat* after good tidings, Ismail, and his story, he said: "we gave Abraham good tidings of Isaac and this is the reason why Zabih was Ismail not Isaac. The author says that the subject of Ismail's birth in the year 90 was Abraham's lifetime, and Isaac's birth in the year 120 was Abraham's life. And thus, sacrifice was before the birth of Isaac. Therefore, Zabih was Ismail and it is said in *Surah Al-Sufat*: "So we gave him good tidings of a forbearing boy". The forbearing boy was Ismail and the righteous one was Isaac. "We left for him [favorable mention] among later generations."

Literary books of *Qisas al-Anbiya*

The *Qisas al-Anbiya*'s books are referred to Islamic works in which the stories and events narrated in the Quran are mentioned in both Arabic and Persian. The first version dates back to AD 6th century / AH 1th century or AD 8th century / AH 2th century.[4] It has 203 pages of 24/34 cm and 28 images. In terms of its writing, *Qisas al-Anbiya*'s books depict the expression of oral tradition from stories to the view of the theorizing of Scholars. The *Qisas al-Anbiya* expresses the stories of the Prophets commissioned by God to guide the people of his time (Nasr 2003, 29). In the case of the visual elements of the images which will be explained below, a number of selected images of *Qisas al-Anbiya*'s book have been discussed from the point of view of semiotics and structure.

To investigate the images of Prophet Abraham (*pbuh*) in the illustrated version of *Qisas al-Anbiya*

Figure 1 is the second version of the National Library of Paris. This version is smaller in size than other versions, and its paper is thick and orange. Text writings or scripts are in the form of *nastaʿliq* script and black color. Quranic statements of frontispiece and titles are written in red and gold colors. The papers of this version are decorated with gold. In the above image, like other images, Abraham (*pbuh*) has a white veil, a green cover, and glittering halo around him with a dagger on his right hand, while Ismail is putting his head on the ground looking at the sky. In front of him, Gabriel, with his open wings, shows Abraham (*pbuh*) a ram to sacrifice. The face mode and movements of people in this story are remarkably interesting. The twisting of the body and the faces of the people in the image suggest that they are doing some actions. Like other images, part of the story is written in

[4] AH: (Latin) *Anno Hegirae*, "in the year of the Hijra" (the emigration of the Prophets and Muslims from Mecca to Medina) − *Ed*.

black 'nastaliq' script[5] and white text in the upper and lower boxes. The colors used in this image are green, red (the cover of Ismael's garment), and yellow, brown, blue, and dark green. The main attribute of this image is the character of Prophet Abraham (*pbuh*) who is subject to a difficult trial. He is blessed with divine mercy and God left for him among other generations. Today, all those who go on the pilgrimage to the house of God and Hajj, should sacrifice their souls like Abraham (*pbuh*). This version has pictures of Isfahan's painting style. According to most scholars, this style was commissioned by Shah Abbas I and it was surely performed in the court of Iran. The unique features of this version are the relationship between text and its images (Sadaghat 2007, 33-34).

Making sacred faces notable

Ethnic and racial effects that have no casualties with the ethnic or race are seen in most faces, modes, and clothes. In some cases, painters used different methods to characterize prophets, which were generally depicted as a certain topic and among other people in a graphic art or an image, such as the allocating special spatial locations to work composition and taking into account the light for them called the Halo of holiness or the halo of light around their head. Further, it was changed into the form of diffused light or flame around head or whole body. But artists gradually achieve a set of conventional principles in portraying the image of the Prophet and Imams (Aemeh Athar) and in the process of transforming the sacred image of the saints. The purpose of this statement is to pay attention to the elements and/or common features that make the symbolism of the images in the painting of this period. One of the features has been found in many of the works of art is their symbolic aspect which is appeared in the religious image of Shia Muslims. Fig. 1 shows Abraham *(pbuh*). In this image, a visual element of the sanctity feature has found a symbolic place and his (Abraham) position has been used as a particular conception.

According to Sadaghat (2007), it can be concluded that the narrating pattern of the story mobilizes all the elements and dimensions of the story to create integrity, and according to investigation (Fig. 1), it can be inferred that various elements such as angel, cloud, and features such as the application of special colors, magnifying the head and turban, taking into account the particular place of Abraham, has been a symbol aspect in composition and in expressing the subject. The clothing of Prophet Abraham has been shown green that is a symbol of purity here, and the red dress of Ismail is the symbol of non-material love and yellow is the symbol of closed angels.

In the Figs. 2 and 3, Prophet Abraham (*pbuh*) wears a garlic blue color (the symbol of virtue and piety) and he seems a little short in front of Gabriel's huge body. Gabriel is flying hastily and diagonally while he has a precious ram in his hand (Sega 2006, 35). The size of the angel looks great and inappropriate compared to the mountains. The inversion of proportions between humans and landscapes has been changed during Timurid period and '*Miraj Nameh'* (ascension letter) of Mir Heydar (Ishaghpour 2000, 4) (Fig. 2). Restoration is seen in the elements of Figs. 2 and 3, such as sponge rocks, blue, golden or azure sky, twinkling and comet clouds, narrow bodies or figures in colorful garments, land covered by various irregular greeneries, trees with compact and uniform leaves (Pakbaz 2013, 27). In the upper left-hand side of the image, there is another person who witnesses the event from the above. Undoubtedly, he is Satan with a different manner of human faces. As always, he tries to turn away the divine parents from God's command. Part of the text that tells the subject of the story are at the top and bottom of the image like the rest of the images in a box. The common feature of the two images is an angel embracing the ram. The painter did not depict Ismail's face. As if the painter had depicted the sacredness, sanctity, and spirituality of them without drawing of their faces. It is the symbolic aspect that can be seen in the religious faces of Muslims. In Fig. 3, unlike the previous one, bodies have more dynamics and movements due to the balanced composition.

[5] 'Nastaliq' is the core script of the post-Sassanid Persian writing tradition and is equally important in the areas under its cultural influence − *Ed*.

The position of the body or figure of Abraham (*pbuh*) in the composition

As seen in Fig. 4, the body of Abraham is quite simple in terms of composition, design and the position of the hands and is drawn in a conventional way. Prophet Abraham and Ismail (*pbuh*) have been drawn with bright or glittering halo around them and garments of high sleeves, which have partially covered the hands. In front of them, Gabriel with beautiful wings observes the event, and on the top of scene behind the rocks, there are other people who are watching the event, which is likely to be the inhabitants of the area and followers of the Prophet. The paper used in this version is cream colored. Flowers and bushes have been drawn out of the box and image, and the colors of this image are dark, light blue, red, green, gold, and yellow. Also, red, yellow, green, white, and gold make human fascinated on a deep blue background. The Cerulean color that covers the background of this work is the color of sky. This vast sky in an unlimited and deep space takes human into an infinite and imaginary world and it is the symbol of eternity and immortality. The presence of twisting clouds and rough golden flames has created a warm atmosphere. The twisty and wavy clouds that guide our look from below to the top of the image emphasize on lightness, joyance, and spirituality of the scene (Goodarzi 2005, 136). The position of Abraham (*pbuh*) in the images is an asymmetric arrangement that allows the painter to create active and dynamic scenes. The central space that covers the body of Ismail is overcome by the greatness of the Prophet on the entire composition filled with other persons (Pakbaz 2013, 27). The sense of movement and action of the bodies revive them. This feature is seen in active and dynamic body of Gabriel (Fig. 5), which is also exacerbated by wavy strips and it is more dynamic than other faces (Pop 2005, 75). So far, what is seen in the images is that there is not much effort to be made about the perspective of both clothing and faces, because "images of individuals in Islamic face-painting are usually in two-dimensional mode, and painting also plays a significant role in this work" (Akashe 2001, 198). Therefore, about the perspective of bodies, photographer can compensate for the lack of shadowing by using lines in the collar of the garments. The artist was pleased to create a beautiful and decorative work, whose shapes are interconnected. He was also pleased to decorate it with eye-catching and attractive garment and exhibited his skill in designing these clothes. Another sign seen in Figs. 4 and 5 ignores the limitations of framing, achieves a new space during this period, and removes part of the image elements from the frame. This is "a sign of total power and the basic freedom of insight in relation to simulation contracts, which the accompanying text does not deal with it". This feature is the breaking of the cadre in most of the works of the Ilkhan[6] period. "Using this dry and rough quality method, which imprisoned the artist, makes the linearized framework moderated or adjusted and allows him to follow his artistic purposes with more feely actions." (Ishaghpour 2000, 14) As can be seen in Figs. 4 and 5, the image of Prophet Abraham (*pbuh*) is symbolically a holy person. Everybody can understand this concept when looks at this image. Even if the attached text is not seen, this symbol again represents a holy man. Accordingly, in most of the paintings or images, Ismail's garment is red. It is as a sign of religious position. This sign making has been taken from the mind of the artist and his religious passion.

This image, like the previous versions, has been extracted from *Qisas al-Anbiya*'s book and dates back to 984 AH. There is warm and pleasant atmosphere in painting, coloring, and features of Iranian painting, regardless of the effects of eastern paintings (Hosseini 2005, 19). In this version, the space of the sky has a pretty golden and azure color in which a few clouds are wandering, or it is seen in a flat and almost uniform golden color (Ahmadi Maleki 2001, 54). What is presented in most of the paintings or images is the symbolic element of water; it is considered as the fundamental element that is the symbol of life, motion, resurrection, the secret of creation, purity and salvation, fertility and growth, restoration, and transformation (Kafshchian-Yaghighi 2011, 19). The collection of images like the tree, the cliff, the cloud, the blooming trees, the image of Prophet are symbolic, the small sky that was blue and golden in color, and the clouds were drawn with the same painting. The trees have certain types, their leaves are single, and the

[6] Ilkhan dynasty was a Mongol dynasty that ruled in Iran from 1256 to 1335 − *Ed.*

water is depicted as simple as possible. Also, the complementing colors of the clothes of angels in the works, their colorful wings against a dark blue and cold background, and white and gray clouds create a movement in the background and make the eyes circulating once more. The rotation of the colors also emphasizes the central character as the angel enters the frame from all sides (Kamrani 2000, 262). The golden and fiery halo with a detailed layout surrounded their heads and gradually capture all the bodies in some of the paintings. They are closely related to the wavy clouds (in several images). Particular attention has been given to the image of Abraham (*pbuh*), emphasizing the type of deployment in the scene, the moods and behavior, the role of the head, and the movements of the hands presented in various combinations. According to the desired level, the size of the body of Abraham in the process of Iran's figuration in different periods is in harmony with other components of the scene and sometimes it is larger than other bodies of varying quality to emphasize his position (Alshibi Kamel 2001, 382).

The art of Christianity

Regarding the way of thinking and the Christian community, we find that artist, with his/her art, wants to bring the unseen world to the earth. Images must indicate the truth of Allah and other facts of the higher world through mysteries, similes, and references. Artists who worked for the first Christian community changed things into religious forms that were exclusively interpreted by words until then. This act has been depicted as a set of images without a regular relationship between them, and it is especially depicted in such a way as to induce the immortality of that ceremony to the viewer and elements of the religious message. Christian art begins with a focus on the mysteries. The work of artist is to pay attention to the inner and cosmic world in relation to these mysteries and secrets. All the images are manifestations that show a reality (Madadpour 1992, 176). Christian painting was developed in several stages. From the beginning, this art was the reflection of the absolute belief in the existence of Supreme Being in whom every believer found his identity. So, at the beginning, Christian painting was the concrete expression of the Christian man's religion. The initial attempts to do iconography date to the third and fourth century. The style was commonly used in this period and then in the Middle Ages in painting is called Byzantine style. Although it had technically undergone many changes, it had always been religious in terms of its theme and content (Shayestehfar-Kian- Shayestefar 2011, 44). According to the most experts, since there is no clear limit between the art of the beginning of Christianity and the Byzantine art; the beginning of the 5th century can be considered as the birth of the Byzantine art from the beginning of Christianity (Ayatollahi and Beheshti 2011, 40). Christianity is based on the embodiment or manifestation of God in Christ, and according to this, Christ is the parable of supremacy and leader. It is the sign that God has revealed His nature to the universe. It has been suggested that Byzantine's followers of iconography in the eighteenth century defended using painting in texts related to the Christian secrets. They considered painting as the most important tool for conveying the message of Christianity to illiterate people and familiarizing them with the foundations of that religion. The purpose of Christians in depicting saints, religious scholars, and martyrs of Christianity was to celebrate Oswah or excellent people of Christianity, not to sanctify or make holy their own images (Shayestehfar-Kian- Shayestefar 2011, 44). The visualization of the verses of the Torah was similar to Christian painting. The painters and the Christian illustrators made great efforts to express the visuality of the Bible stories in order to make the concepts of religion clearer for illiterate and literate people. Christian's book sources like Byzantine's mosaics should be found in artistic tradition. Religious subjects moved toward abstraction and a two-dimensional approach in order to adapt to spiritual content (Abdi and Mehrzai Mehr 2006, 19).

The holy or sacred images in this period have completely depicted as personal with feeling and full of bitterness and ascetically. In the composition of most of the works, there are a limited number of human faces or images (Ayatollahi and Beheshti 2011, 43). With regard to Fig. 7, Christian artists have painted a ram on the edge of the image of the incident in the middle ages and even before that. The

appearance of a ram in the grove is an essential part of the story in the Middle Ages. In this image, the ram appeared miraculously, while it was trapped with its horn in the grove. It is a gift for Abraham to sacrifice it instead of his son, and getting caught in the margin, which was induced by Hebrew writer from an ancient Babylonian-Sumerian ceremony, was interpreted by the church as a kind of prophecy of crucified Christ. An analogy has been implicitly depicted as showing the screen of a horny ram from the margin branches in pictures of the 12th century or later. The symbolic sense of Christianity is not implemented with these details in Islam; the description of the altar in the Holly Quran ignored completely the ram located in the grove. The static composition, the proximity of the components to the box or cadre, the types of lines, wrinkled clothes, the moods of the faces, and the long images have been affected by the elements of Byzantium.

According to the evidence in Figs. 6 and 7, the first argument is the representation of a kind of good tidings or Evangelism. In these images, the faces are completely long, while hedges and folds covered the thin or lean bodies. Here, perhaps for the first time in the history of Byzantine iconography, the bodies have been found to be physically and slightly grounded. It represents the influence of the art of west. The faces are bowed, three-dimensional, with immaterial or earthly light that were reflected in the manifestation event (Ayatollahi and Beheshti 2011, 46).

Regarding the image, it can be deduced that the figures are severe and motionless like the prominent Egyptian people. Abraham is seen in three and a half faced. He raised his hands as the sign of astonishment, as if he is God-like in the images. As seen in the images of Christ, the angel is seen in the form of a profile. He stretched out his right hand in a special state. It is the symbol of speech and forbiddance in the medieval art. The artist did not intend to simulate natural forms, but his attention was given to put together all those sacred religious icons that are necessary for religious representation. Ram is also trapped in the grove in both images. The kind of distinction between these images and Islamic images is in the type of arrangement of the figures, composition, valuation, and the type of color that has symbolic value.

The second argument is based on a mainstream or tendency to these beliefs (Fig. 7). In some Western examples, there are two angels: one of them takes the sword of Abraham and the other one takes the ram. The first angel is added only to the normal form of the scene and gives letter of action and gospel, and the second angel takes the sword in one hand stating that the artist has depicted the ram as a distinct part of the story (Fig. 8). The figure has a characteristic of high tolerance and rank. The expression of this deep sympathy has been the greatest success of Christianity in religious art. Space is intangibly divided into several parts; on the one hand, the Prophet Abraham (*pbuh*) has been presented while taking the sword, and in another part, Gabriel is taking the sword to prevent it. Also, in Fig. 9, the method of mountain processing, strong figure, distinct and regular wrinkles of the clothing of Prophet Abraham and Gabriel, the type of composition, and strength of the body has been derived from the Byzantine art. The only Iranian element of these images is the closeness and stickiness of the figures to the cadre, the type of face and body processing, and symmetrical composition. Also, according to the narration of the Gospel in which God said to provide fire woods to sacrifice, in most Christian works, there are fire woods and fire that can't be seen in Islamic paintings.

Conclusion

In the Safavian period, regarding the religious trend and formalizing the Shi'a religion, religious thoughts became a source of pictorial versions. Religious books with Quranic themes including the religious version of *Qisas al-Anbiya*, whose purpose is to present Quranic stories, make people aware, and guide them with different executive methods and styles, became prevalent. Regarding the discussed issues and approaches of the sacrifice theme in Islamic and Christian art works, conducted studies, differences in beliefs in the two religions about which son is sacrificed, and the similarities and differences in structural elements, it can be stated that although the tradition of Islamic illustration, as a Christian tradition, is based on a supernatural image and the products of revelation, it reflects illustration later than Christianity. Some of the elements of Christian's iconography including the way of framing, color combination, the processing of clothing, landscapes of nature

and so on, were at the service of Iranian painting and they could create great valuable works with their Iranian genius and ability. In fact, Islamic stories contrast with static and emotionless; from this perspective, there is a fundamental difference between worldviews of Islamic and Christian images. The theme of sacrifice was in the works of both domains for better understanding of religious issues. The standing position of the Prophet Abraham (*pbuh*) played a central role in the middle of the cadre and various elements in the Islamic painting, and also Ismail, as a main character, stood behind his father and other elements are sometimes decorative or symbolic, such as herbal elements, written script, glittering halo, and the mystical and simplified face of the Prophet. These cases can be considered as visual and symbolic features. Other features that have been used later, such as conventional situation, simplified designs, and details of the organs caused the Prophet to pass the borderline and he himself become a symbol for the holy character. The method of drawing figures in Christian versions influenced by Byzantium and its elements includes dry, irregular lines, and geometric of clothing and landscapes.

Unlike the Islamic versions of the images, the worldview of Christianity has a terrestrial or earthly aspect, and with respect to the mysteries or secrets, the artist has given the prophet a godly and symbolic form. The figures are conventionally depicted to represent a religious matter, but despite the fact that the spirit, the overall atmosphere, the hidden aesthetic feeling in painting, with respect to the movement and circular form, are very different from the sanctity and spirituality seen in the images of Christianity. In general, it can be concluded that the basis of all arts is in one common sense and that is their symbolic aspect.

Finally, in visual searching, there is a common interrelationship between subject and composition, and there is also a clear relationship between the theme or the subject of painting and its composition. The images have been drawn in terms of the variety, patterning of the subjects and the composition of the images. In both schools, theme affects the configuration of images and the configuration of images reveals a religious matter based on the subject.

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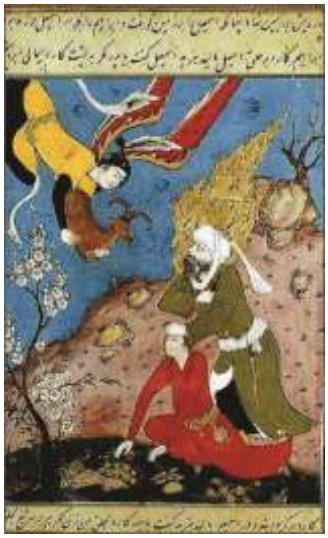

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Fig. 7

Fig. 8

Fig. 9

LATIN AFFINITIES AND POLITICAL AFFINITIES. HENRI FOCILLON ON ROMANIAN ART

Valentin TRIFESCU*

Abstract: *The present study analyzes the vision of the French art historian Henri Focillon (1881−1943) about Romanian art. At the same time, the emphasis is on the political dimension of the discourse on art, as well as on the personal and institutional connections that Henri Focillon made with his Romanian partners, among whom we mention George Oprescu, Coriolan Petranu and Nicolae Iorga.*

Keywords: *Henri Focillon, history of art historiography, Franco-Romanian cultural connections*

Rezumat: *În prezentul studiu este analizată viziunea istoricului de artă francez Henri Focillon (1881–1943) despre arta românească. În acelaşi timp, se pune accentul pe dimensiunea politică a discursului despre artă, cât şi pe legăturile personale şi instituţionale pe care le-a realizat Henri Focillon împreună cu partenerii săi români, dintre care îi amintim pe George Oprescu, Coriolan Petranu şi Nicolae Iorga.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Henri Focillon, istoria istoriografiei de artă, legături culturale franco-române*

To Erika-Mária Tódor

> „[...] *Dès le XVIII*e *siècle, les Transylvains se sont tournés vers Rome pour y fortifier les éléménts d'une culture nationale et latine. A la même époque, les boïards valaques et moldaves lisaient Voltaire et visitaient l'Occident, et, dans leurs vastes gentilhommières crépies de blanc, leurs fils ajoutaient à leurs bibliothèques les romantiques français.* […] *Les affinités qui sont entres les hommes existent entre les nations. Même mêlées, même foulées, elles leur demeurent fidèles. S'il est permis d'invoquer la latinité, c'est là, c'est aux rives du Danube, en Roumanie*" (Focillon 1928, 420-421).

In 1921, George Oprescu, at that moment a French associate professor at the newly founded Romanian university in Cluj, led a delegation of Romanian teachers from secondary education in Transylvania to Lyon. The stated purpose of this study trip was to familiarize Transylvanian teachers with French, as well as to eliminate, by reference to French culture, the adverse effects of Hungarian education in Austria-Hungary (Opresco 1944, 6). On that occasion, Henri Focillon, as director of the Museum of Fine Arts in Lyon, received the Romanian delegation, presenting it the art galleries. During this visit, a life-long friendship was established between Henri Focillon and George Oprescu, who had profound implications in the field of art historiography and in the cultural and institutional relations between France and Romania (Ionesco 1992, 4; Niculescu 1994, 3).

In 1922, following an invitation received from Alexandru Lapedatu, dean of the Faculty of Letters in Cluj, Henri Focillon first came to Romania, with the mission of holding a series of conferences (*Lettres de Henri Focillon*, *passim*; Medrea 2010, 118). During eight conferences dedicated to the general public, the French scholar has developed his topics of scientific interest from that time – French art, Buddhist art, Japanese printing and engraving – and, within the art history department, he spoke to students about research methodology (Petranu 1942, 7).

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Henri Focillon was received in Cluj in a French-oriented university[1]. Ever since the establishment of the Department of Art History in 1919, due to the lack of a Romanian art historian to hold the position of full professor, the idea of inviting a French university professor to be assisted by a Romanian associate professor was brought into play. In this regard, the Ruling Council of Transylvania addressed the French Government to propose an art historian, thus coming to discuss the question of assigning Professor Jobin. However, the negotiations did not reach a result until the beginning of the academic year so this idea was given up on for the provisional resort to the services of the archeologist Vasile Pârvan (Petranu 1924, 6-7). The Francophilia of the University of Cluj is also demonstrated by the statistics made by Petru Sergescu: there were 144 foreign guests, out of which 67 of French origin, invited to the Transylvanian university, between 1919 and September 1, 1940. Of all the foreign professors who came to Cluj, the mathematician Paul Montel (5 times), the geographer Emmanuel de Martonne (4 times), and the art historian Henri Focillon (3 times) were present most often. Other French art historians invited to the University of Cluj were Jean Alazard, Charles Diehl and Louis Réau (Sergesco 1945, 48-49).

Henri Focillon's first visit to Romania was not limited to the scientific field, manifested through a series of conferences held in Bucharest and Cluj, meant to bring the two cultures and nations closer together (Opresco 1944, 9). It also had a profound political and institutional implication. In a letter dated February 17, 1922, Henri Focillon confessed to George Oprescu that "Les Affaires Etrangères sont disposées à me donner une mission" (*Lettres de Henri Focillon* 1994, 5). The effects of this mission will be seen immediately i.e. in 1923, through the creation of the French Institute in Bucharest – L'Institut français des Hautes Études en Roumanie (Medrea 2010, 111). On the Romanian side, Henri Focillon's scientific merits were recognized at the highest level, the French art historian being elected a corresponding member of the Romanian Academy, on June 1, 1922, and honorary member of the same institution, on June 8, 1926 (*Analele Academiei* 1946, 631).

Over the years, Henri Focillon has developed a relationship of sincere friendship with a series of cultural and scientific personalities of Romania: George Oprescu, Nicolae Iorga, Vasile Pârvan, Gheorge Balş, Ion Cantacuzino, this personal situation bringing him closer to this country (Guy Marica 1974, 5-6). In addition, each time he arrived in Romania, Henri Focillon visited, in turn, the main cities, museums and monuments from all the historical provinces of the country. In this way, he made direct contact with the Romanian artistic heritage, a situation that helped him analyze Romanian art in a knowledgeable and unmediated manner. The French scientist knew the museums in Bucharest, Iasi, Sibiu and Cluj (Niculescu 1994, 5)[2], he saw the churches at Curtea de Argeş, Hurez, Cozia and Cernica, the churches with exterior wall paintings in the north of Moldova or the wooden churches in Transylvania (Colta, Sabău 1995, 73; Vlasiu 2004, 234-235). Moreover, Henri Focillon was not a mere visitor. Through a conference, he inaugurated the first graphic exhibition in Romania, at the Kalinderu Museum in Bucharest (Opresco 1944, 9), and endowed the collections of the Romanian museums, donating to the Toma Stelian Museum a drawing by Raymond Lafage and Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps (Oprescu 1931, 395).

During his travels in Romania, Henri Focillon was also accompanied by his family, thus combining the professional and personal aspects of life (*Lettres de Henri Focillon* 1994, 5; *Transilvania* 1922, 438-439; *Transilvania* 1923, 322). However, it is precisely these personal implications (family trips, friends) that will have scientific consequences both during the life of the scholar (exhibitions,

[1] On the French professors who taught at the University of Cluj, see the article (Stran 2010).

[2] Coriolan Petranu kept Henri Focillon informed about the museums in Transylvania and the other Romanian territories that belonged to Austria-Hungary and through the book *The Museums of Transylvania, Banat and Maramureş. Their Past, Present and Administration* (Bucharest, 1922), which he sends as a gift. (Colta, e Sabău 1995, 73). Romanian museums were a more important subject in 1928, when Henri Focillon prepared a favorable report on their condition, addressed to the League of Nations (Medrea 2010, 118).

conferences, book exchanges, etc.) and after his death. In this sense, art historian Răzvan Theodorescu testified that the only person who could introduce him next to the inaccessible Jurgis Baltrušaitis "was his wife, also the daughter of Henri Focillon, whose attachment to our country started from adolescence when, along with her illustrious parent, she had visited Romania and met some of her major personalities" (Theodorescu 1989, 13).

In the correspondence with the art historian Coriolan Petranu, Henri Focillon recalled with pleasure and nostalgia the trips he made in Transylvania, finding in the landscapes visually marked by the towers of the Romanian wooden churches a familiar atmosphere, which reminded him of his home country, France: "Je me rappelle aussi une promenade de tout un jour, dans le lumière dorée de l'automne, au fond des vallées du Bihor, où je croyais retrouver, dominant ces jolis villages, les clochers de bois de nos églises mérovingiennes, décrites par Fortunat!"[3]. These personal impressions confessed in the letters addressed to his Romanian colleagues were also synthesized by Henri Focillon in scientific or popular texts. A revealing passage in this respect is the one from the album *La Grande Roumanie*, published in Paris in 1929, where the French art historian pleaded for the existence of a "Great Romanian avant la lettre", which was "united" by peasant art. The Romanian wooden churches from Transylvania were presented in the symbolic quality of *axis mundi* around which the villages were formed, so that the Carpathian Mountains make up a true citadel that has preserved and defended the Romanian identity: "A une époque ancienne du moyen âge, nous trouvons une grande « Roumanie » rustique depuis longtemps installée en Transylvanie, appuyée sur sa foi, ses coutumes, son unité linguistique et ethnique. Le massif montagneux du Bihor était sa citadelle: les villages qui s'y groupent, serrés autour de leurs églises de bois, gardent encore leur pureté d'autrefois [...]" (Focillon 1929, unnumbered pages).

The travels in Transylvania also aroused the interest of Henri Focillon as artist. In the collections of the Stamp Room of the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest, there are several drawings by Henri Focillon. In one of the drawings we recognize the *Inner court of the Bánffy Palace in Cluj*[4] (Fig. 1), and in another, entitled *Landscape of Transylvania* (Fig. 2), we identify the friendly dedication of Henri Focillon to George Oprescu[5].

In a letter written to thank for the special way in which he was received by the representatives of the ASTRA Museum in Sibiu, published shortly (in Romanian translation) in the review *Transylvania*, Henri Focillon expressed (perhaps for the first time) his vision about the characteristics of the Romanian civilization and about the privileged connections between France and Romania. This vision, already well crystallized as of this date, will be found in his scientific writings on Romanian art, from the years to come. The following are invoked: the reason for the Latin fraternity, the reason for the East-West opposition, the reason for the Mediterranean civilization. In this regard, Henri Focillon states the following: "The reception of what you did in Sibiu ... has filled us with gratitude and emotions. To feel that France is so warmly loved by a great people who will realize all their destinies and to whom a glorious future is reserved, is a great joy for two travelers, received, as we were, with so much brotherly courtesy that comes from the depths of the heart. Let us tell you once more, that [...] those bright days you have brought us are among those whose memory shines throughout life. I will tell my compatriots what I have seen, felt and understood, and I assure you that they will understand me. Romania is loved by us like a heroic sister. You are at the gates of an unknown world and close to the borders of ancient Asia, the intellectual and military current of Mediterranean civilizations. I bear in my soul this great conviction, shared by all our friends" (*Transilvania* 1922, 438-439).

[3] Letter addressed by Henri Focillon to Coriolan Petranu, Paris, June 25, 1931. Arad, History Museum, Coriolan Petranu collection, inv. 1089 (apud Colta, Sabău 1995, 78).

[4] In the specialized bibliography, this drawing was entitled "Alley in Cluj", or "View of Cluj". We can say with certainty that the drawing shows the *inner courtyard of the Bánffy Palace in Cluj*.

[5] For the manner in which Henri Focillon's drawings were made from the collection of the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest, see (Dufieux 2007, 216).

Following the discussions held in Cluj, in 1922, with the art historian George Oprescu, Henri Focillon decided to complete a large-scale project, which will be finished in 1927-1928, by publishing the two volumes dedicated to painting from the 19th-20th centuries (Junod 1998, 100-101), which enjoyed a strong international reception (Rossi Pinelli 2014, 354). In a letter to his Romanian friend, Focillon sincerely confessed: „Enfin, je devrai à Cluj et à votre amitié de m'être rengagé dans cette grosse affaire"[6]. In this synthesis, Henri Focillon placed Romanian painting in a separate chapter, entitled *la Latinité*, alongside Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and South American painting (Focillon 1928, 409-439), so that French painting could be treated in many distinct chapters. The justification for this separate chapter dedicated to Latinism has been made especially with arguments related to the field of linguistics, political history, culturology and geography. The artistic manifestations of the specificity of Latinity were seen rather as a consequence of the other arguments invoked and as a conscious manifestation of the will, and not unconscious of the instinct, to be part of a community marked with a national specific by a common linguistic and historical denominator. At the same time, France was portrayed as an "older sister" of the Latin fraternity, which in modern and contemporary times offered a new cultural and moral model (following the ancient model given by imperial Rome) that guided the other Latin nations. France thus became the first heir to the Latin imperial idea, now metamorphosed into the Western Focillon concept[7].

In the chapter dedicated to Latinism in the work *La peinture aux XIXe et XXe siècles*, Henri Focillon felt the need to resort to a metaphorical underline only in the case of Romanians, whom he did not explicitly name, but resorted to the metaphorical formula: „les Latins du Danube". The other national schools (Italian, Spanish, Portuguese) were named correctly, depending on the name of their country. In this way, the French art historian marked the identity of the Romanians by an obvious reference to their Latin ethnic origin, which was reiterated and by a geographical location, which alluded to the Latin historical community, because the Danube marked the eastern limit of expansion of the Roman Empire[8]. In this sense, the Romanians became

[6] Letter from Henri Focillon to George Oprescu, Lyon, August 17, 1923. (*Lettres de Henri Focillon* 1995, 16).

[7] "Exite-t-il une latinité? Oui, si l'on considère la communauté des origines, la parenté des langues, l'héritage laissé par la grande civilisatrice méditerranéenne, la Rome de l'Empire, et sur les rivages, le long des routes, tant de monuments des morts. Ces traditions hantent la mémoire des peuples, leurs rêves politiques, l'éloquence de leurs orateurs. Il arrive même qu'elles excitent leur action historique et qu'elles élargissent leur nationalisme. Mais se maintiennent-elles dans une culture commune? En faint, cettenotion de latinité est récente. Elle s'étale, pour l'unifier, au-dessus d'un prodigieux mélange séculaire. [...] Sur les bords du Danube, la prudence de la politique impériale a reculé, avec la frontière militaire, les colonies de Trajan, et le Dace romanisé n'a plus en que la montagne pour abri, tandis que tourbillonnait dans les plaines la mêlée des invasions. De plus, chaque groupe réagit d'une façon qui lui est propre, il est modelé par sa fonction. Celle de la France n'est plus latine, elle est européenne. Le XIXe siècle donne à l'Italie sa tardive unité et resuscite en elle, avec le goût de l'empire, les plus fortes passions. Sur le Danube, il affranchit et réunit des principautés longtemps amollies par la servitude et leur rend, avec l'exercice de la liberté, la mémoire de leur grandeur et le désir d'un rôle politique. Il délivre l'Espagne du fardeur de sa ricchesse coloniale et la concentre en elle-même. En même temps, à chaque nationalité se superpose l'Europe moderne : à mesure qu'elles se saisissent, s'unifient et se découvrent, dans leur passé latin ou dans leur rêve d'action, des principes communs, elles subissent l'internationalité de la vie contemporaine, qui dissocie les blocs les plus compacts. [...] La notion d'une culture latine, comme la volonté d'un art strictement national, est détruite par les voyages, par les musées ouverts à la peinture de tous pays, par les expositions internationales, par l'attaction des deux ou trois villes qui sont capitales du monde. Que reste-t-il du vieux partimoine? Des volontés plus que des instincts, mais aussi cette grande force: les habitudes de la vie, le soleil, la vivacité, une éternelle aptitude au bonheur, la facilité des dons". (Focillon 1928, 409-410).

[8] In his text from the catalog of the exhibition dedicated to Romanian art, which took place at the *Musée du Jeu de Paume*, Henri Focillon depicted the Danube as a river artery that linked the Eastern European with France. At the same time, along with the Carpathian Mountains, the Danube and its tributaries offered unity and protection to the Romanian people. (Focillon 1925, 18-19).

”Latins of the East”, maintaining their identity fiber over the centuries, succeeding in not being denationalized by either Slavs, Mongols, Hungarians or Turks (Focillon 1928, 420). In the vision of Henri Focillon, the Romanians made a creative contribution to oriental tendencies, identified mainly in popular art. Analyzing the peasant carpets, which he loved to such an extent that he decorated his house and office at the Sorbonne with them (Opresco 1944, 9-10), Henri Focillon places the specifics of Romanian art at the confluence of two worlds, between East and West, to emphasizing the Latin artistic dimension: ”[...] Latinité, – mais d’Orient, avec une note de rêverie nostalgique et l’ardeur de la volupté. Regardez leurs tapis, peu connus, et dont les plus beaux comptent parmi les chefs-d’œuvre de ce grand art. C’est là que le mélange, ou plutôt l’harmonie se fait le mieux. L’usage, la matière, quelques règles de composition appartiennent à l’Asie. Mais il y a une grâce et une sensibilité toutes méditerranéennes dans l’invention des motifs et le charme des tons. De pauvres paysannes les fabriquent, comme elles brodent, dans des gammes chantantes et délicatement pécieuses, les belles chemises de leurs noces. En Olténie, ce sont des parterres, d’une luxuriance bien ordonnée, riches en entrelacements souples. […]” (Focillon 1928, 422).

By emphasizing the Mediterranean values and characteristics of peasant artistic production (not excluding Byzantine stylistic elements), Henri Focillon updated the idea of the Latinity of Romanian art, launched in the second half of the nineteenth century by the Romantics Auguste de Gérando and Jules Michelet, and continued in twentieth century by the Byzantinologist Charles Diehl (Buricescu 1944, 54, 55, 58). Oriental Latinity was presented, capitalizing on a common place of Romanian historiography, in the guise of an ”island of Latinity”, which remained constantly faithful to the Mediterranean model, resisting, at the same time, foreign invasions and neighboring peoples considered hostile. This situation later facilitated the connection of Romanians to French culture and civilization, a phenomenon that occurred under the sign of a specific affinity for family ties. In this regard, Henri Focillon appreciated that: ”[...] Séparés de la Mediterrannée, ce sont des Méditerranéens, et la goutte de sang grec qui coule dans leurs veines les raffine en vivacité subtile, ajoute à leur merveilleuse aptitude à comprendre. Entre le Bulgare, le Hongrois, le Slave, après tant de batailles et d’invasions, ce peuple, récemment soudé, se retrouve un et intacte, dans ce qu’elles ont de plus ancien et dans ce qu’elles ont de moderne. En aimant les penseurs et les maîtres français, il ne se détournait pas de son patrimoine, il ne le reniat pas. Les dons d’une humanité choisie établissent une profonde continuité morale entre le présent et le passé, le paysan et le seigneur, le potier de village et le grand peintre. Les affinités qui sont entre les hommes existent entre les nations. Même mêllées, même foulées, leur demeurent fidèles. S’il est permis d’invoquer la latinité, c’est là, c’est aux rives du Danube, en Roumanie” (Focillon 1928, 420-421).

The debate on the Latin character of Romanian art is part of a broader framework of Franco-German controversy over the archetypal origins of medieval art in Western Europe. The First World War was the one that further amplified the opposition, already triggered by the Franco-Prussian War, between the French and German perspectives on national artistic geographies, as well as on the relationship of ethnic influences in Romanesque and Gothic art. In this sense, Émile Mâle developed in the book *L’art allemand et l’art français du Moyen Age*, published in full war, in 1917, the idea that the Germans had not achieved anything original in medieval art - stating synthetically and sharply that „dans le domaine de l’art, l’Allemagne n’a rien inventé” (Mâle 1917, 5) –they are caught in the guise of rude imitators of Romanesque and Gothic art in France (Trifesco 2013, 208). These views were immediately criticized by German art historians, most notably Josef Strzygowski (Kultermann 1977, 163, 282), who, since 1901, had expressed a completely different view in the book *Orient oder Rom. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Spätantike und frühchristlichen Kunst*, where, in a polemical tone, he challenged the primacy of Rome in the genesis of primitive Christian art, insisting on the Eastern models that formed the basis of Western art since the early Middle Ages (Marchand 2012, 64).

Under the traumatic impact of the destruction and horrors of the Great War, Henri Focillon wrote a controversial article in 1915 entitled

L'art allemand depuis 1870, in which he disqualified German art production. Also in the same year, the French scientist wrote his first text about medieval art, on the occasion of a commemorative exhibition dedicated to the monuments on the territory of France that were vandalized or destroyed by the Germans. The catalog of this exhibition was replaced by a text about the cathedral of Reims, which became a symbol of German aggression on the French artistic heritage (Martin 2004, 112-113; Passini 2012, 233-234). The bombing of the cathedral of Reims brought to public attention the recurring theme of the struggle of "civilization" with "barbarism", reopening the patrimonial wounds (not yet healed and left alive in the collective memory) of the Franco-Prussian war (1880-1881), when the medieval monuments of Alsace, including the cathedral in Strasbourg, were bombed by the Germans (Grandhomme 2007, 312; Martin 2008, 376-377). As Michela Passini remarks in a number of other texts published in 1918-1919, Henri Focillon „[...] évoquait les dévastations de monuments, de villes et villages, de régions entières, en faisant se superposer et confondre le plan de la guerre pésente et celui d' « invasion » et « masacre » passés. La France éternelle se laissait aussi assimiler à la Gréce classique dans une perspective métahistorique, qui semble condamner l'Allemagne à revêtir à perpétuité le rôle du « barbare contemporain » [...]" (Passini 2012, 237).

Henri Focillon's conception of the art, civilization and culture of the Western Middle Ages was strongly marked by the First World War and the controversy with the Viennese art historian Josef Strzygowski. In this way, his writings on the history of art, which followed from the interwar period to his death, that also occurred during the war, in 1943, were doubled by a strong political dimension or burden. French medieval art was constantly put in opposition to German medieval art, eventually Gothic being "nationalized" in the French ethnic sense. At the same time, the delimitation of the concept of Western Europe was confused with the borders of France, in order for Germany to be excluded from the composition of this cultural and artistic geography (Grodecki 1963, 14-15; Passini 2012, 232; Passini 2017, 140-141).

Returning to the problem of Romanian art, we can see that Henri Focillon's views on this subject were in agreement with the privileged political relations that France had with Romania. The French scientist did nothing but demonstrate with artistic arguments the justice of the existence of Greater Romania, for the realization of which, let us not forget, the French Military Mission led by General Henri Mathias Berthelot and the French diplomatic support at the Paris Peace Conference had a capital contribution.

The argument of the ethnic-linguistic Latinity of the two peoples allowed the realization of a strong cultural-political rapprochement. But the connection between art and Latinity raised a number of serious problems that made scientific demonstrations difficult as, during the interwar period, they also had a political implication. One of these problems was that the Romanians, although of Latin origin, had in Moldova and Wallachia an art of Byzantine origin, due to the Orthodox denomination and geographical location. In Transylvania, the connection between Romanian art and Latinity was complicated by the point of view of Hungarian art historians, who invoked a series of arguments demonstrating that the Transylvanian Romanians made contact with Western art through Hungarian. In this sense, according to art historian Gerevich Tibor, the true representatives in Transylvania of the Italo-Latin spirit and the ideals of Eternal Rome were the Hungarians (Gerevich 1940, 181). At the same time, the art historian István Csabai developed the Hungarian view on the relations of Romanian medieval art with Latinity: „Nous venons de traiter brièvement de trois domaines de l'art roumain, toujours par rapport à l'art hongrois. La Muntenie s'était ralliée, des sa constitution en Etat, aux formes féodales chevaleresques et au style franco-italian de la même époque, par l'intermédiaire de la Hongrie. Mais, avec la disparition de la suzeranité hongroise, tous les liens se rompirent entre cette principauté et l'Europe latine et l'art roumaine de Muntenie tomba sous la domination de Byzance. En Moldavie, l'influence hongroise ne fut peut-être pas aussi intense qu'en Muntenie, mais plus durable, et l'art gothique de Transylvanie s'y infiltra pendant plusieurs siècles. Enfin en Transylvanie où les Roumains avaient vécu

constantemment sous le régime hongrois, leurs architecture aussi a l'époque les traits les plus essentiels des styles d'Occident représentés par la Hongrie. L'art hongrois et l'art roumain s'étaient développés l'un près de l'autre du point de vue géographique, mais leur style ont toujours représenté deux mondes différents exprimés par l'opposition de Rome et de Byzance. Toutes les fois cependant que l'art roumain montrait quelque penchant à ce rapprocher des styles occidentaux, c'etait l'art hongrois qui facilitait son chemin vers l'Europe latine" (Csabai 1940, 11-12).

In his writings on Romanian art, Henri Focillon was cautious, keeping away from an open controversy with Hungarian art historians, being careful to use the term "influence" (Lemoine 2007, 56), as he could easily take on ethnic and political connotations. The French scientist was content to develop a discourse only to affirm and support, through artistic, historical and cultural arguments, the existence of Greater Romania. The invocation of the Latin origin of the Romanians was used, on the one hand, in order to motivate the Franco-Romanian political rapprochement, and on the other hand, to substantiate, with another argument, the Focillonian theory about the origins of medieval art in Western Europe. Instead, Henri Focillon participated in the Romanian-Hungarian controversy in an indirect way, this being invoked in the writings of Romanian art historians as an authoritative author, who supported the Romanian point of view. Starting from the premise that „L'histoire de l'art elle-même est souvent mise au service du révisionnisme hongrois [...]", the Transylvanian art historian Coriolan Petranu asked himself rhetorically in a combative text: „L'art et l'histoire de l'art peuvent-ils servir la cause de la révision des traités de paix? Les faits montrent que oui [...]" (Petranu 1944, 367). In order to support the cause of a Romanian Transylvania, Coriolan Petranu also used the writings of Henri Focillon every time (Petranu 1934, 29; Petranu 1936, 30; Petranu 1938, 546, 551; Petranu 1944, 379, 389-390; Colta, Sabău 1995, 79-80; Sabău 2010, 106).

Viewed in the art historiography of France, Henri Focillon's way of approaching the artistic heritage of Roman antiquity gained a major change of accent, because it departed from the conception of his predecessor Louis Courajod, who saw in Rome and in Latinity the crowning of degenerative and artificial cosmopolitanism (Sabău 2007, 337). Henri Focillon defended, through a long line of arguments, the cultural-artistic heritage of Latinity in Europe, firmly opposing the anti-Roman views expressed by the Viennese art historian Josef Strzygowski (Strzygowski 1935, 75-127; Focillon 1935, 131- 165; Rossi Pinelli 2014, 349-350). The detachment from Courajod's conception was not total[9]. Henri Focillon remained faithful to the non-Roman origins of France. He himself signed with the formula "votre vieux Celte / le vieux Celte / votre oncle Celte / le Celte" (*Lettres de Henri Focillon* 1994, 94, 96, 102, 104, 106, 107, passim)[10] the letters addressed to his friend George Oprescu, to whom he was sometimes referred to as „mon Dace" (*Lettres de Henri Focillon* 1994, 81, 86, 89, 91, 104, passim).

To make things even more complicated, the Latin affinities between France and Romania were doubled, in Henri Focillon's conception of Romanian civilization, by a series of Celtic affinities. These ideas originate in the nineteenth century and are tributary to Ernest Renan (Bertrand-Dorléac 2007, 29; Passini 2012, 236). In this sense, Laurence Bertrand-Dorléac observed that „[...] Focillon n'est pas à l'abri des contradictions, en particulier quand il reprenda, en 1919, il est vrai, les idées de Renan sur la vitalité et le sens de l'aventure des Celtes, fruits désespérés d'un temps concentré sur l'idée d'une renaissance des fondements de la France, après la cathastrophe de la Grande Guerre [...]" (Bertrand-Dorléac 2007, 29). Thus, Henri Focillon also identified a series of Celtic affinities between the French and the Romanians, which once again strengthened the connection between the two sister nations. Referring to Nicolae Iorga, the French scholar appealed to the intellectual

[9] Henri Focillon was a man of his time, remaining at the same time anchored in the mentality and scientific vocabulary of the nineteenth century, as well as in the fashionable subjects of his time. As Philippe Junod and Laurence Bertrand-Dorléac observed, Henri Focillon used, like his peers, a series of concepts and words intensely conveyed at the time: West, race, homeland, nation, national genius, etc. (Junod, 1998, 109; Bertrand-Dorléac 2007, 29).

[10] Philippe Junod considers this practice also a legacy of the nineteenth century (Junod 1998, 109).

prestige of the Romanian historian to support his ideas: „C'est ainsi qu'il s'est pénétré de la France du passé et qu'il a compris la France de nos jours, expression contemporaine d'un composé séculaire. Sa qualité de Roumain l'y prédisposait. Il existe entre la Roumanie et nous, non seulement une communauté de souvenirs, mais des affinités profondes. J'ai entendu Jorga dénominer les noms de lieux celtiques qu'on rencontre dans la toponymie roumaine : peut-être ce sont là les vestiges authentiques d'un dépôt humain identique aux fondations de l'ancienne Gaule. Peut-être aussi la manière dont les influences méditerranéennes s'exercèrent dans une vieille culture aborigènr est-elle analogue à celle qui propage chez nous par les vallées fluviales un certain art de penser propre aux riverains du sud" (Focillon 1945, 79-80).

Starting from the Latin characteristics of the Romanian culture and civilization, to which was added the contribution of the Celts, in Henri Focillon's conception, Romania was portrayed in the guise of a France of the European East. According to the French art historian, „[...] Le Celte absorba le légionnaire et le magistrat latin. La France a fondu le Barbare, fixé le Viking [...]" (Focillon 1945, 19). As we saw above, like France, Romania had the same genetic basis. The Celto-Latin origins, to which were added other ethnic and cultural alluvium, determined the similar characteristics of the two nations. Moreover, the common origin was strengthened by the will of the two nations to be side by side, thanks to a neo-Latin solidarity. According to Henri Focillon, from the 18th century, the Romanians related directly to the model offered by France; the author assessed that: „Les affinités qui sont entres les hommes existent entre les nations" (Focillon 1928, 420-421). In this way, we can appreciate that in this case it was a matter of selective Latin solidarity, because the particularly close relationship that existed between France and Romania was not as strong as between France and Italy or Romania and Italy. The First World War largely determined the solidarity within the family of the Neo-Latin peoples, according to the political and territorial interests of each nation. Thus, revisionist Italy did not support the Romanian heritage interests in Transylvania, being mostly on the part of Hungary (Bardoly 2009, 66-67; Trifesco 2013, 212). On the other hand, the French Henri Focillon declared himself the "spiritual compatriot" of the Romanian George Oprescu, openly asserting, with arguments in the field of art history, the national and territorial cause of Greater Romania (Focillon 1937, 9)[11].

[11] A first version of this text was published in Romanian. See Valentin Trifescu, *Afinităţi latine şi afinităţi politice. Henri Focillon despre arta românească*. In: Ana-Maria Gîrleanu-Guichard, Jean-Noël Grandhomme (eds.), *Affinités latines. La culture, élément des relations franco-roumaines*, Nancy-Metz, 2018, pp. 47-57.

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ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA'S COINS DESIGNED BY ADRIEN PRÉVOST DE LONGPÉRIER. AN ICONOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

Vlad ȚOCA*

***Abstract**: Following his election as prince of the United Principalities, Alexandru Ioan Cuza pursued a series of reforms, of which the monetary reform was especially important to him. Cuza's monetary reform involved securing a loan abroad and the issuing of a new national currency. The mission was given to Victor Place, the French consul in Jassy, who contacted numismatist Adrien Prévost de Longpérier to design the new coins. A. de Longpérier designed three different coins which were presented to the prince.*

***Key words**: Romanian United Principalities, coins, Adrien de Longpérier, currency, Alexadru Ioan Cuza*

***Rezumat**: După alegerea sa ca domnitor al Principatelor Unite, Alexandru Ioan Cuza a urmărit implementarea câtorva reforme, dintre care cea monetară a avut o însemnătate deosebită pentru el. Reforma monetară presupunea contractarea unui împrumut în străinătate și baterea de monedă. Misiunea i-a fost încredințată lui Victor Place, consulul Franței la Iași, care a luat legătura cu numismatul Adrien Prévost de Longpérier pentru a face proiectul pentru monede. A. de Longpérier a proiectat trei monede diferite pe care le-a propus domnitorului.*

***Cuvinte cheie**: Principatele unite, monede, Adrien de Longpérier, bani, Alexadru Ioan Cuza*

In the wake of the Crimean War and as a result of the provisions of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, several changes in the region allowed for some momentous events to unfold, which eventually led to the creation of the state of Romania as an independent kingdom in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, on the fringes of Europe. The one event, which has been regarded as important, both politically and symbolically, was the election in the Danubian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia of the same prince to their respective thrones, in the person of Alexandru Ioan Cuza. This created in January 1859 a personal union of the two countries and lead to the full union in 1862, which created a new country, known between 1859 and 1866 as the United Principalities. After acceding to the throne, Cuza was intent on pursuing his political agenda, of which the monetary reform held a central position. An essential part of this reform was the creation of a national currency for the United Principalities. In order to do so, he looked to France for support, who, by aiding the principalities, pursued its own interests in the region. It was by involving in this project Victor Place, the French consul in Jassy, that Cuza hoped to create the first currency for the union. This was an impressive task, which reflected the ambitions of a significant part of the Romanian political class, which aimed at becoming a recognised European nation. A national currency was a sign of expressing those aspirations of territorial sovereignty and even a degree of independence from the principalities' suzerain power, which still was the Ottoman Empire. Territorial currencies were not yet common throughout the world, not even in Europe, and the principalities were literally flooded with numerous foreign monies. At the same time, national currencies became increasingly important in the nineteenth century as means of conveying powerful messages and playing an important role in the shaping and affirming of national identities.

The coins designed during Cuza's reign are well known and have been mentioned, described and discussed in the last century by

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various authors, such as Constantin Moisil, Emil Vârtosu, C.I. Condurache, Nicolae Iorga, Erwin Schäffer, Bogdan Stambuliu, Costin C. Kirițescu, Ioan Dogaru, Octavian Iliescu, Paul Radovici, or Marian Bolum. This paper aims at analysing the visual aspects related to this first issue of a territorial currency in the United Principalities from an iconographic perspective.

Today money is related to a territory were a certain currency is used as legal tender or accepted as money, but this was not always the case. Before the nineteenth century various currencies were used over vast territories and were not bound to the place of issue. In his extensive study about national money, Eric Helleiner argues that the emergence of territorial currencies is linked to two deep structural changes, one political and the other technological (Helleiner, 7). The author believes that the creation of the nation-state was an essential precondition, because the complex mechanism needed to enforce the construction of territorial currencies relied on the nation-state's enormous and unique capacity to influence and directly regulate the money in use within the territory it governed. The second factor which enabled the use of modern territorial currencies was the use of new industrial technologies which allowed the production of coins and notes, in a standardised fashion, at low costs, and of a quality which discouraged counterfeiting (Helleiner, 7). These factors were essential in creating high quality low-denomination coins that were stably and permanently correlated with the rest of the monetary system of a given territory.

Before that moment, monetary systems around the world were quite different from the type of territorial money described above. This was the case in most of Europe and the Romanian territories were no exception. Helleiner identifies three ways in which older monetary structures were different from the territorial model established in the nineteenth century. The first difference resides in the fact that foreign currencies were being used along with local ones. The second consists in the fact that low-denomination forms of money were poorly integrated in the monetary system as a whole, often being used by the poorer masses who could never amass enough wealth to use higher-denominations, and thirdly, not even the locally issued monies were homogenous and standardised (Helleiner, 3).

All these factors created a particularly complicated monetary system in the Danubian principalities. To complicate matters more and make things worse, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Romanian states, placed under Ottoman sovereignty, witnessed occupation by Turkish, Russian, and Austrian troops at various moments. All these episodes brought with them the use or imposition of various currencies, which sometimes coexisted, while locally other monies from France or the Netherlands were in use.

During the Middle Ages the Romanian states had their own currencies, various coins being issued at different times in their history, which coexisted with many more widely-circulated coins of numerous origins: Turkish, Hungarian, Polish, German, Venetian or Spanish. After falling under Ottoman domination, economic conditions deteriorated and the issuing of local coins became sporadic, although the countries never lost their right to issue their own money. They sometimes produced currency based on other monetary systems and, on occasion, counterfeited foreign coins as a profitable undertaking (Kirițescu, 93-113). The last issues in Wallachia were those of Mihnea III (or Michael Radu) in 1658, who solemnly swore before taking the throne not to issue money, but stroke coins based on the Baltic schilling. In Moldavia, Eustratie Dabija issued, in 1662 in Suceava, bronze low-denomination coins based on the Polish-Baltic schilling, and also counterfeited schillings from Riga and Elbing, and those of John II Casimir Vasa, these last entering the Polish kingdom's monetary system and severely disrupting it (Kirițescu, 100-101; Severeanu). A notable moment in Romanian numismatics was the issue, in 1713, of a gold coin-medal by Constantin Brâncoveanu, with his effigy on the obverse and the Wallachian arms on the reverse. These medals were issued on the occasion of the twenty fifth anniversary of his reign in the mint of Alba Iulia (Carlsburg, Weißenburg, Gyulafehérvár), in Transylvania, and weighed six and five ducats, respectively. This act that reflected his political ambitions and was used as one of the nine counts the Ottomans

formulated against him to oust him from the throne and execute him in 1714 (Kirițescu, 102-103). These aspects show the importance attached to issuing of money in relation to state sovereignty or territorial claims. A good example of such claims is the so-called Sadagura coin. It was issued during the 1769-1774 Russo-Turkish War, as a means for Russian troops stationed in Wallachia and Moldavia to use for the purchase of goods and furniture. After changing hands several times, the privileges were acquired by the adventurer baron Peter of Gartenberg-Sadogurski, who opened a mint on his estate in Sadagura near Chernivtsi (Cernăuți, Czerniowce) and produced bronze coins from captured Turkish cannons and imported Hungarian brass (Kirițescu, 114). These coins had on their obverse the arms of the two Romanian principalities in medallions, topped by the Russian imperial crown and the year 1772, while on the reverse, the legend had their value inscribed, expressed in both Wallachian-Moldavian and Russian currencies (1 *para*/3 *denga* and 2 *para*[le]/3 *kopeks*). Also, during the Russo-Turkish War of 1806-1812, in Saint Petersburg, coins imitating Turkish money were issued for the use of the Russian troops stationed in the two principalities (Kirițescu, 115).

To a great extent, the history of money in the Danubian principalities from the moment of the Peace of Adrianople and the establishment of the Organic Regulations regime, until the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and Romania's declaration of independence during the first year of that conflict, reflects the ambition of the ruling class of the two states to regain sovereignty and, eventually, independence. At the beginning of this period the monetary system did not suffer structural modifications. A bimetallic gold/silver system was adopted and the circulation of Netherlandish gold ducats and Austrian silver 20 *kreutzers* or the *Zwanziger* was encouraged, both valued in virtual leu, as were other foreign currencies. An important step was taken through the unification of exchange rates of both countries, resulting in a *de facto* currency unification. Some historians suggest that Michael Stourdza in Moldavia planned to issue a low denomination coin, which the prince strongly denied, insisting that the respective artefacts were, in fact, Treasury stones of great quality produced in Vienna (Condurache, 49; Moisil 1921, 2). In 1853, a loan note (*bilet de împrumutare*) was made by the members of the Romanian Revolutionary Committee, a group of exiled 1848 revolutionaries, which seems to have never been subscribed (Moisil 1920, 61), in an attempt similar to that of Lajos Kossuth in the United States of America (*Pallas*). Prince Barbu Știrbei issued low-denomination billon coins, but they were withdrawn after the suzerain power protested (Kirițescu, 120). But, in spite of efforts aimed at regularizing the circulation of money, the situation in the principalities is generally described as one of monetary chaos, with many types of coins on the market, from many countries, some coming from afar, of which some had an established currency, while others were demonetised or were not currencies (Condurache, 50-51).

The Treaty of Paris from 1856, although it did not grant the union of the two countries, held several important provisions regarding their future status. The principalities were taken out of Russia's sphere of influence and the Moldo-Wallachian *Organic Regulation* regime was nullified. The *Ad-hoc Assemblies* were created, which were designated to decide the future organisation of the two countries. The two territories still placed under nominal Ottoman rule, but were granted independent constitutions and national assemblies, which were to be monitored by the victorious powers. Moldavia and Wallachia managed to force the union of these territories by electing the Moldavian colonel Alexandru Ioan Cuza in both countries and consequently becoming, in January 1859, the United Principalities. Three years later, on the 22 January / 3 February 1862, Cuza announced the union of the two states, assuming the title of *domnitor* of the United Romanian Principalities, which he held until his abdication in 1866. He was succeeded by Charles I who became *domnitor* of Romania until 1881, when he became king. The country remained vasal to the Ottoman Empire, although it enjoyed a greater autonomy, until 1877, when it declared its independence.

Although the Treaty of Paris did not stipulate it directly, the right of the two principalities to issue their own money was understood as part of the rights they were granted in respect to internal administration. The union had limited

economic benefits and no real progress was made in the case of the monetary problem, as the suzerain power, the Ottoman Empire, was constantly against any changes made to the existing situation. The lack of progress in this direction had been a constant reminder of the international status of the United Principalities during that time and, as a consequence, the adoption of a national currency became one of the main objectives of those struggling to achieve national independence and sovereignty (Kirițescu, 122).

A.I. Cuza sought from the beginning to implement a national monetary system with an effective national coin as a standard. Already in February 1859, the Moldavian Foreign Minister, Vasile Alecsandri, discussed the subject during an audience granted by the French Emperor Napoleon III, while in the summer of the same year prince Cuza, in a letter addressed to the same ruler, announced the negotiations which were under way between the governments in Jassy and Bucharest, and French bankers regarding the issue of a national currency (Kirițescu, 123). Cuza strongly believed that a national monetary system was the first financial reform that needed to be implemented, but in order to do so he needed to secure a foreign loan which would have enabled the production of a national currency. It was a difficult mission, because western banks were sceptical to offer a loan to a new state that had an uncertain future, therefore reliable securities were required, as well as a skilled negotiator. The latter was found in the person of the French consul in Jassy, Victor Place, a devoted supporter of Romanian interests (Condurache, 52).

In June 1859, Wallachian politician and diplomat Vasile Boerescu discussed the problem of a national currency in the Legislative Assembly in Bucharest and in November the Council of Ministers of Wallachia decided the adoption of a decimal system for coins. Although the *leu* was the official accounting currency of both countries, used as such since the seventeenth century, a new name was considered. Two names discussed for this new currency of the United Principalities: *romanat* and *român* (Vârtosu, 4). This was an obvious influence of the French monetary nomenclature adopted during the French Revolution, when the revolutionary government abandoned the practice dating back centuries of naming currencies after an indicator of weight such as the *livre* or *pound*. Eric Helleiner points out that there is a strong symbolic component attached to the use of territorial currencies and names are an important part of this (Helleiner, 108). The French adopted a new name, the *franc*. The immediate goal of the name change might have been the desire to restore confidence in the national currency after the inflationary tendency of the assignats, but it was also used as a historical reminder of the country's long history and as a means to bind together the new liberated community of citizens created by the revolution. The *franc à cheval* was also a particularly stable gold coin introduced in the fourteenth century. The new name for the Romanian currency was particularly important. The name was new, it had no historical precedent, but it was meant to raise awareness within the country and abroad about the name its inhabitants began to prefer using when referring to themselves. Román or rumân had been used as an endonym by the Romanians, but it had sometimes a pejorative meaning before the eighteenth century as it was associated with persons of a lower status, while the common exonym was Valah (or its variants valah, valach, voloh, blac, oláh, vlas, ilac, ulah) (Arvinte; Pop). Therefore, this new nomenclature holds a powerful symbolic meaning, as it is an early example of the official recognition of the name which was already used in literature, historical studies and political discourse, since the Transylvanian School began using the term as the sole acceptable ethnonym for the Romanian people. It is also an indicator of the fact that the political class of the United Principalities was thoroughly aware of the importance of money as a vehicle for political and symbolic messages.

The iconography of these coins and its inscriptions are remarkable for several reasons. Victor Place, the French consul mentioned above, had an important role to play in the making of the new coin. He accepted Cuza's mission and went to Paris where he was to secure a loan and then sign a contract with the French mint for the production of gold, silver and copper/bronze/billon coins, of the *român* and its divisionary units the *centime*. After

obtaining a leave from the French government, Place left for Paris in December 1859, were he managed to secure a loan the following year (Condurache, 53). At the same time, he began negotiations with the Parisian mint for the manufacture of the Romanian coins. Place sent Cuza the design for the 20 *români*, 5 *români*, and 10 *centime*, made by the French numismatist, archaeologist and curator Adrien Prévost de Longpérier. In early June, Place recommended de Longpérier, in a letter addressed to Cuza, as probably the most qualified person in Europe to make the design for the new coin.

A series of letters between the two parties show the progress made in the design by the French numismatist together with the diplomat. A remarkable feature is the fact that the script on all the coins is completely in Latin alphabet. At the time, the Danubian principalities were undergoing a process of transition from the Cyrillic alphabet to the one used today in the writing of the Romanian language. A so-called transition alphabet was still being used and around this time it began to be pushed aside by the Latin alphabet. Latin letters were introduced in the Romanian Cyrillic alphabet since the late eighteenth century and the use of the Roman alphabet increased in the second quarter of the next century, except for religious text. Between 1856 and 1862, a number of laws and orders, at first in Wallachia, and then in Moldavia, made the Latin alphabet the official script of the United Principalities, although in everyday use and book printing the transition alphabet continued to be used for the next few decades (Boerescu, 146-147). Latin letters had been used before in coins and medals of the principalities even in the previous centuries, as a way of mimicking western numismatic issues, as was the case with the afore mentioned coin-medal struck in Transylvania by Constantine Brâncoveanu. But a contemporary example of a proposed bank note of the Moldavian Bank from just four years earlier shows the use of the transition alphabet of the Romanian text (*Dare de seamă*, 46; Moisil 1920, 2; Fig. 1). Place wrote that he deliberately advised the use of Latin letters, because he hoped that this would become the official alphabet of the Principalities, pointing out that the Central Commission in Focșani already used the script in its official documents, and also because it was the most frequently used lettering in numismatics.

It is worthwhile looking at the coins and following Place and de Longpérier's letters, which were published by Nicolae Iorga (Iorga). Most of the letters contain reports about Place's negotiations for the loan and the production of the Romanian coinage. Reading these texts, it becomes apparent that the French consul had a clear mandate for securing the loan and for negotiating a contract with the Mint in Paris, but did not have well-defined instructions about what needed to be represented on the coins. The only aspect which seemed clear was that the Moldo-Wallachian coins should be made following the French money of the same value, as the minting contract stipulated. The design itself was drawn by de Longpérier, based on his own research, and instructions and advise from Place. The numismatist wrote to the diplomat that he was very enthusiastic about the task he accepted, considering that, for the first time in his career, he was given the opportunity of designing a coin after spending a lifetime describing and inventorying thousands. The great problem the two Frenchmen faced was the fact that the Union which had just been created did not have an official and regulated coat of arms. During its existence, the United Principalities had various types of arms: a) with the symbols of the two countries not included in a shield and placed freely on the monetary, vexillary or sigillary field; b) the coat of arms with the adjoined escutcheons of the two countries, represented in a variety of forms, with several variants of the heraldic symbols of Moldavia and Wallachia, and the general composition; c) with both coats of arm on a single shield, both in the field of one escutcheon or *party per pale*, in various tinctures and arrangements; and d) the coat of arms with a *party per cross* and a central escutcheon with tinctures corresponding to the colours of the national flag. The achievements of the United Principalities' coats of arms came in a variety of shapes and forms, with various supporters (pair of dolphins, lion and Dacian woman), crowns (voivodal, princely or royal) or parasime (cannons, tricolour flags, Roman standards) (Cernovodeanu, p. 141). The symbols of the two countries or arms have been used together before on numerous occasions, on seals of, for example, Michael II

the Brave of Wallachia in 1600, Vasile Lupu in 1639 and Gheorghe Duca in 1674, followed by numerous Phanariotes who ruled in both countries in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, on seals, prints, letterheads, medals, carvings, or books both lay and religious, in various arrangements. Similar combined coats of arms had been used by Romanian patriots in the first half of the nineteenth century as means of propaganda for the prospective union of the two principalities (Cernovodeanu, 140-141). During the time the new coins were designed in Paris, in the Principalities several attempts were made at defining the country's official coat of arms. Several watercolour drafts were presented by Carol Szathmari, at the request of the Wallachian government, but no final decision was reached until 1866. A surviving proof coin of a low denomination, named *para*, coin issued in the autumn of 1860 shows on its obverse the coat of arms in a variant very similar to Szathmari's, with the arms on an escutcheon *party per pale*, with dolphin supporters, and canons and flags parasime (Cernovodeanu, 336-337; Fig. 6). From what we will see below, it becomes apparent that neither Place, nor de Longpérier were familiar these representations, and therefore researched the two coats of arms separately and then joined them together.

The first piece described by Place in a letter to Cuza written on the first of June 1860 is the silver 5 *români* coin which had the same dimensions and weight as the French five-franc denomination (Fig. 2). On the obverse, the coat of arms of the two countries are represented on adjoining escutcheons, on what Place calls a princely mantle topped by a closed crown, topped by an orb and a Greek cross (*les armes des deux Principautés-Unies, dans des écussons accolés, réunis sur un manteau princier et surmontés d'une couronne fermée que termine la croix grecque sur un globe*). This central image is surrounded by the following text in Latin lettering: ALECSANDRU • JOAN • D[omn al] • MOLD[ovei] • SI • VALAH[iei] • ∗. Although the two Frenchmen pointed out that they used historical images from Wallachia and Moldavia, dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the coat of arms and the whole appearance of the coin's obverse is Western in stile and structure, being very similar, indeed, to the French contemporary currency. Historically, the heraldry of the two principalities had been influenced by western models, but was never regulated and never developed on the same lines as in the West. This coat of arms, together with Szathmari's, is among the first to follow a composition using the typical achievements used in Western heraldry. In a letter accompanying his drafts, de Longpérier writes to Place about the model he used for the symbols of the two countries: Constantine Brâncoveanu's coin-medal of 1713, mentioned earlier, and Jacob Heraclid's thaler and half thaler from 1562 and 1563 (*le thaler et le demi-thaler de Constantin de Brankovan, frappés pour la Valachie en 1713, il y a aussi le thaler et le demi-thaler d'Héraclidés, frappés pour la Moldavie en 1562 et 1563*). The choice of model is remarkably interesting and telling. Of all the coins, medals and seals produced or used in the two principalities in the previous centuries, the French numismatist preferred the two models that were the most Western in design and appearance. We have shown earlier that Brâncoveanu's coin was minted in Transylvania, which was then part of the Austrian Empire, while the coins of Jacob Heraclid tell a fascinating story. Prince of Moldavia from 1561 to 1563, he was a Greek Maltese, a political adventurer, men of arms and intellectual, a supporter of Renaissance humanism, Protestant faith and the one credited with the beginning of academic life in Moldavia. His portraits on the mentioned thalers are remarkable, but even more so are his arms, a complex and extravagant composition, showing a fourteen-quarters heraldic seal, imitating the personal arms of emperor Charles V, with the Moldavian aurochs in the centre. It is possible that these extravagant and out of the ordinary coins were not easy to forget, and although de Longpérier admits not having obtained an image yet, which he knew from "an old German book", he promised to send a copy on tracing paper soon.

The coat of arms designed by de Longpérier was very simple, and easy to use on a coin, compared to what Carol Szathmari made at the same time, his designs almost all had a mantle with pavilion, dolphin supporters, and other achievements such as Roman standards or

parasime with cannons. It is safe to assume that the French numismatist had in mind to create arms that were complying to the rules of Western heraldry, which indicated clearly the country's status as a principality by the use of the appropriate mantle and crown, had the correct territorial symbols large enough to be easily recognisable and also simple enough to be used on coins, seals and other heraldic media. The result is remarkable given the difficulties faced by the two Frenchmen in gathering information. Ad. de Longpérier worked using tracing paper copies, and Place wrote to Cuza confessing his confusion regarding the correct elements of the Moldavian arms. He mentions a crescent moon instead of a star placed between the aurochs' horns, and the shape of the horns which he "believed" were different than the ones they designed. The drawing described by Place in this letter are different from the ones illustrated here. Further in the letter he tells the prince that he had already made arrangements for a new design which he hoped to receive the following day. Those are the drawings Iorga received from Place's son and published by Constantin Moisil and illustrated here (Moisil). There is no crescent moon on the field in dexter representing the Moldavian arms, instead there is a six-pointed star between the aurochs' horns. Indeed, historically, the aurochs' horns were curved inwards, like the yokes of a lyre, enclosing the star. Other charges on the Moldavian arms were a dexter rose and a sinister crescent moon, with the rose sometimes mistaken for the sun (Cernovodeanu, 82-83). Place's confusion regarding the charges might have been made possible by the use of crescent moon in dextra and a sun in sinister, flanking the aurochs' horns on the seal used by the Department of Foreign Affairs at the beginning of the century (Cernovodeanu, 87). The French consul names the main charge on the Moldavian arms, by its Romanian name "*zimbrul*" (Iorga, p. 76), which means European bison (Bison bonasus), although the aurochs (Bos primigenius) was the animal used on the arms of that country since at least the fourteenth century. It was around that time that the aurochs disappeared from the Moldavian fauna, becoming extinct in Poland during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. While the last bison was hunted or poached in Moldavia in the first half of the eighteenth century, it survived until today in Poland. For reasons which are not completely clear, but which might have to do with the presence or the fading of those animals from collective memory, or simply by confusion or invention, during Mihail Sturdza's and Grigore Alexandru Ghica's reign, at the beginning sporadically, then more frequently, the bison began replacing the aurochs on Moldavian arms. Dan Cernovodeanu estimates the proportion of the bison's presence on the dexter of the arms of the Unites Principalities between 1859 and 1866 to a figure as high as 80% (Cernovodeanu, 87). It is little wonder then that the Frenchman was not able to distinguish between two animals which he was not familiar with and probably never saw. In the letters mentioned above, Place writes that, for the arms of Wallachia, a portrait of an eighteenth-century prince (*un portrait d'Hospodar*) was used, which he found in the Imperial Library, while de Longpérier indicates Constantine Brâncoveanu's piece from 1713. The French consul points out that, compared to the historical arms, the one in the design presented to the prince did not have the sun in dexter and crescent moon in sinister, flanking the cross the eagle holds in its beak. This indicates that the Frenchmen had access to arms of Wallachia that depicted the astronomical charges, which were most often dropped during the Organic Regulation regime and only much later reintroduced in the arms of Romania. On the various projects made during Cuza's reign, the mentioned charges were not present (Cernovodeanu, 60-63, 328-345). Place further writes that he opted for eliminating the two astronomic charges because it was believed that for a coin it would have crowded the field too much. This remark shows that the main concern of the Frenchmen was not to create a coat of arms which was the accurate reproduction of an official image – which did not, in fact, exist –, but to create a design that, being based on historical precedents, would best fit on a coin.

The coin's reverse, although simple in design, has an interesting story to tell. The value and the year are placed horizontally at the coin's centre, 5 / ROMANI [*sic!*] / 1860, surrounded by a wreath of wheat ears. The legend consists of the official name of the union, PRINCIPATELE UNITE and a motto: PRIN UNIRE LA PROPASIRE [*sic!*] (Through unity

to prosperity). In de Longpérier's letter to Place from 30 May 1860, he explains that he chose to introduce a wheat wreath because it was a national produce and would confer the coin originality. The following day, in his letter to Cuza, Place explains in a more elaborate manner that they have been looking for the best wreath to be placed on the coin and finally arrived at the conclusion that a wheat wreath would be the best because it would indicate both the abundance and the nature of the country's own wealth, adding that the wheat wreath had the advantage of being entirely new in numismatics. He then mentioned that the text of the inscriptions was provided by Cantacuzéne, but from the letter it is not clear whom is he referring to, maybe Alexandru, the future minister of foreign affairs and of finance, or some other member of the family who could have provided the Romanian language translations. Place writes the motto on the legend in French as *L'union fait la force* (Unity is strength) which is a rather loose translation of the Romanian wording. He also mentions that there would be an inscription on the coin's edge which is only given in French: *Dieu protége la Roumanie*. This last information is remarkably interesting, because it represents one of the first instances of official intended use of the country's name in this form. This text was inscribed on the gold medal struck in late 1857, on the occasion of the establishment of the Ad-hoc Assemblies that year in October (Cernovodeanu, 141, 151, 330-331). That medal was not an official issue, while the coins would have been. Thus, the inscription on the coin's edge is important because it would have been sanctioned by the state's authorities and, as such, an early use of the name Romania in coinage. This inscription should have been in Romanian because Place refers to inscriptions, in the plural, when referring to the coin's legend and edge, and all the other inscriptions on the coins are. The word Romania, in this form, with variants in different languages was relatively new, although some earlier examples exist, the word is documented from 1816 in the works of Daniel Philippidis who wrote two books, about the history and geography of the lands inhabited by Romanians which he refers to as *Ρουμουνία* (Rumunia) (Stoicescu, 149-150; Arvinte, 28-34). The name began to be used by Romanian intellectuals and patriots, supporters of the union, in the following decades, and there are several examples of the use of the name on medals, such as the so-called "Norma" medal, the legend of which read *RUMANIA*, or the medal from 1857 mentioned above, in French, as *Roumanie* (Cernovodeanu, 22, 140-141, 328-331). It is interesting to note that in these cases the name was almost always associated with a representation of the arms of the countries brought together in various ways. The country's name officially became Romania (*România*) in 1866, before that the official name being United Principalities (1859-1862) and after the formal union of the two, Romanian United Principalities (1862-1866). During this last period the name Romania began being used (Pop, 3), but not always openly, because the country formally remained under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire until 1877 and, because of that, the Porte was extremely sensitive to any changes brought to this status and any manifestation that would infringe on its status as suzerain power. This is the reason for the precautions taken by Cuza and his government in the case of issuing its own coinage, including the visual aspects, and this is one of the reasons, apart from internal animosities among political factions, behind the lengthy process of designing the union's arms. The issue of national currency was a strong affirmation of sovereignty, therefore Cuza and his advisors at home and abroad were cautious because a diplomatic protest coming from the Porte, could have jeopardized the whole project.

An especially sensitive aspect, which Place said he was uncomfortable to bring to Cuza's attention, was the one concerning the presence of the prince's effigy on the coin's obvers in place of the union's arms. He said that "his own taste" would favour the prince's head, but was concerned about the Ottoman opposition, and advised the use of the coat of arms described above, the use of which "would not provoke any objections". He recommended that after the new money would have circulated for a certain time, then the arms could be replaced by the effigy, suggesting that the gold coin should be the first one to reflect that modification. This, Place added, would not be such a big change since the prince's name was already present on the obverse. He then goes on saying that the presence of the name

engraved on a coin without an effigy was not uncommon and offers several examples. He mentioned the coins issued by the late emperors of Russia, Paul, Alexander I, and Nicholas who used their name, "but, given their devoutness" (*mais, par motif de devotion*), chose not to have their effigies engraved, and also points out that the great majority of coins issued by the popes were fashioned in the same way, therefore, the prince's money had illustrious precedents.

In the following paragraph he assured Cuza that, if he desired to begin by issuing coins with his effigy, "nothing would be easier than having his head engraved in order to replace the coat of arms". For this, he would just need a side view photograph of the prince showing his profile. In these two paragraphs of his letter, the French consul seems to be working very hard to convince Cuza that the use of his effigy would not be well received and could lead to a strong opposition from the Ottomans as the union's suzerain power. This makes us believe that the prince wanted to have his figure on the coins as a statement of sovereignty, an idea he never gave up, and this is supported by the existence of a proof coin, probably produced in France, in 1864, showing his effigy (Moisil 1921, 2; Fig. 3). It was a small value coin of only five-*sutimi* (a more Romanian sounding version of the word *centime*), maybe in the hope that placing the head on a piece of a lesser value would not be so offensive as placing it on a large gold coin. Thus, the model designed by de Longpérier and presented to Cuza by Place represents a compromise which would have allowed the coins to be issued without meeting the opposition of the Ottomans, having the name of the *domnitor* engraved, but not his image. Cuza's successor, Charles I, also had difficulties in striking a coin with his effigy. The first issue, of several denominations, from 1867, had on its obverse only the country's official name inscribed, by then Romania, and the country's coat of arms, while on the revers the value and year in a wreath. In 1868 a small issue of a gold 20 lei coin was produced, but never circulated. It was only two years later that the first coins with the prince's name and effigy were struck and circulated, thus ending a long and difficult process of creating a national currency that would also be a vehicle for affirming the Romanians' desire to attain statehood and shaping a new identity (Schäffer, Stambuliu; Iliescu, Radovici).

The other coins which de Longpérier designed are described briefly by Place, who suggests that different designs are advisable because it was easier for users to distinguish among coins of different values. In a letter from June 1860, to which the drawing for the three coins were annexed, the consul noted that gold-covered one-franc pieces have been fraudulently placed as twenty francs coins. We have seen above the proposed design for the five-*români* silver piece. The twenty-*români* gold piece (Fig. 4) and the ten-*centime* coins (Fig. 5), described alternately as copper, bronze or billon, are similar in their general concept. As the five-*români* coin, which was made following the size and weight of the French five-francs piece, the twenty-*români* copied the French gold coin of similar value, and so did the coin of lesser value. Both the legend and the arms are different from the ones on the five-*români* coin, the inscriptions are ALECSANDRU • JOAN • DOMN • [al] MOLD[ovei] • SI • VAL[ahiei] • and, ALECSANDRU • JOAN • D[omn al] • MOLD[ovei] • SI • VALAHIEI •, respectively. On the twenty-*români* coin, the arms of the two countries are placed, under a princely crown, in medallions as it was common in the eighteenth century on seals, prints or even the odd coin, such as the Sadagura piece mentioned above, with the bison (or aurochs) in dexter and the eagle in sinister (Cernovodeanu, 312-325). On the ten-*centime* piece, the two symbols, in the same positions respective to each other, are placed in a *party per pale* shield, having as a background what appears to be a shield shaped scroll, with a flower resembling a lily beneath and topped by a princely crown. Why did de Longpérier produce such different designs of the arms? We have seen above that the United Principalities did not have at the time a standardised coat of arms, as a result of conflicts between various political factions. It may be that the numismatist, possibly together with Place, had the ambition of designing – in the process of developing the coins – also the coat of arms for the new state. Or was that a request from the prince or somebody else in the country? We will never know without the confirmation of a written source.

What we know for sure is that the coins designed by de Longpérier were never issued.

It was the Porte's opposition and internal disputes that put an end to this project (Kirițescu, 125). The loan was suspended and, consequently, the coins were never minted. All what is left are a handful of proof coins and de Longpérier's drawings.

The blueprint for a national currency of the United Principalities is part of a greater effort made during those times by numismatists, heraldists, politicians or enthusiasts to shape the essential elements of a national identity for the country. These images proved to be remarkably powerful, as they provoked the opposition of the Porte and shaped the design of future Romanian coins, of the Romanian kingdom and even of the Communist state. The wreath of wheat ears was used on many coins, thus becoming one of the most distinctive elements of Romanian coinage. In the early 1860's, the country that was to become Romania, began picturing itself as a European nation, through the use of a new heraldry and of the Latin alphabet, and also a country with its own specificity as the wheat ear unmistakably shows. In the future, with the help of new technologies, these features are to be found in a more expressive and subtle way expressed in new coins, but mostly in the banknotes issued by the country's national bank (Buzdugan *et al*.; Dogaru). The visual discourse developed in the last decades of the nineteenth century and continued in the first half of the twentieth is, even if not very evident at first, profoundly indebted to the beginnings of Romanian coinage and to Adrien de Longpérier.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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Fig. 2. A. de Longpérier's design for a 5 *români* silver coin, 1860

Fig. 3. Designer unknown, 5 *sutimi* bronze coin, 1864

Fig. 4. A. de Longpérier's design for a 20 *români* gold coin, 1860

Fig. 5. A. de Longpérier's design for a 10 *centime* copper coin, 1860

Fig. 6. Designer unknown, 5 *parale* bronze coin, 1860

ART HISTORICAL WRITING DURING GHEORGHE GHEORGHIU-DEJ'S REGIME. THE CASE OF ACADEMIC PAINTING IN THE ROMANIAN ACADEMY'S SCHOLARLY JOURNAL

Roxana MODREANU*

***Abstract**: This study follows the way in which Academism was discussed in the pages of the academic journal Studii și cercetări de istoria artei [Studies and Research of Art History] from 1954, the first year the magazine was issued, until 1964. This was the Institute of Art History's academic journal and can be considered the official scholarly publication of the time in the field of art history.*

This paper aims at showing that even in the discourse about Academism there is a loosening of ideological restrictions in the late 1950s and the first half of the 1960s. There is a direct relationship between Socialist Realism and art historical discourse from this time and it can be felt especially in the texts dating from the 1950s.

***Key Words:** Art historiography, art history, painting, Communism, Academism, SCIA, George Oprescu.*

***Rezumat**: Studiul are ca obiect modul în care este discutat în paginile revistei Studii și cercetări de istoria artei academismul începând cu 1954, primul an de apariție al revistei, până în 1964. Fiind vorba despre revista Institutului de istoria artei, aceasta poate fi considerată o sursă științifică oficială.*

Articolul arată că, până și în cazul discursului despre academism, se fac resimțite relaxarea restricțiilor de la finalul anilor 1950 și începutul anilor 1960, existând o corelație directă între realismul socialist și discursul de istoria artei care se poate resimți mai ales în textele de la începutul anilor 1950.

***Cuvinte cheie:** istoriografie de artă, istoria artei, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, pictură, comunism, academism, SCIA, George Oprescu.*

The year 1947 marks the beginning of the Communist regime in Romania. Starting with this year, everything began to change, including the cultural life. While the arts underwent a massive change because of the necessity to engage with the Socialist Realist method, art history also suffered transformations. One by one, artistic movements were sanctioned as bourgeois or, on the contrary, were considered beneficial, thus leading to their shunning or inclusion. In this context what can be considered the official line of art history? The Communist regime established the research institutes of the Romanian Academy – at that point, named Academy of Romanian People's Republic, or Academy of R.P.R.[1] – in 1949. This was when the Institute of art history in Bucharest was founded. Starting with 1954 the Institute had its own academic journal, *Studies and Research of Art History* – in Romanian: *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei* – named *SCIA* after the Romanian acronym. The texts from this journal can be considered the official line of art history because it was issued by the main scholarly authority in the field: the Academy's Institute of art history. The Institute's director, George Oprescu, was the one who founded an art history department at the Faculty of Letters

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[1] R.P.R. stands for Romanian People's Republic, founded in 1947, and was the official name of the state until 1965, when the Socialist Republic of Romania was proclaimed. During the first part of the Communist regime, the name of the Romanian state was very often written using this acronym.

at the Bucharest University and was one of the most respected art historians of his time and remains an influential figure also today (even though he had his detractors, an example is the long lasting conflict with his Transylvanian peer Virgil Vătășianu). Oprescu managed to bring together at the Institute some of the most promising students he had at the university, although not all were former students of his. In the 1950s, when *SCIA* was born, the Communist regime in Romania was still following the Stalinist line, and some of the most promising scholars in Bucharest were beginning to shape art history as a scholarly discipline in the young Communist state. Some of them tried to remain faithful to scholarly practice, while adapting to the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. As such, *SCIA* can be considered the benchmark of ideological guidance for writing art history in Communist Romania.

Whatever the art movement that was being considered, there is no linear approach to the way it has been discussed in the journal. To begin with, there are the historical facts that brought changes to the Romanian society and, at the same time, in this field of scholarship. The most important events that marked this period of time were: the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953, the secret speech of Nikita Khrushchev in 1956, and the withdrawal of the Soviet army from Romania in 1958. The last year covered by our investigation, 1964, is regarded as the year when the Romanian Thaw began. For most of the countries within the Communist bloc, Khrushchev's speech is seen as the event that marks the beginning of the Thaw. Cristian Vasile argues that for Romania's cultural policies, it mostly means that during that year Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the country's Communist leader since 1947, started using Stalinist methods for consolidating the position of the Romanian Worker's Party[2] (Vasile 2011, 254). This paper surveys how these political changes affected – if they did so – the art historical discourse about Academism, having as a main focus the way in which painters of the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century were perceived in relation to Academism. As the text will unfold, common points of Socialist Realism and art historical discourse can be discovered, which were used to legitimate both the use of Socialist Realism in the art of the time and the Communist Party's standpoint.

The main reason for choosing painters from this time frame is that this was the period in which Romanian painting underwent a major transformation, as it sought to adopt and appropriate Western art trends and manners. Therefore, this time frame is generally considered the moment of modernisation of Romanian painting – and art, in general. Handling this particular time proved to be a tricky practice for art historians active during the communist regime: while they had to acknowledge the process of modernization, they could not give too much credit to the adoption of Western styles because it was a part of the process of Romania itself becoming more Western, and this was opposed to the Soviet cultural and political guidelines of the time.

For most of the art movements discussed in the journal, some general type casting can be easily discernible, although this is not fixed throughout the period. To begin with, Impressionism was at first criticised and seen as a questionable influence on art, but it later became, because of political changes, more acceptable. Realism was always appreciated, so much so that it became the yardstick with which a sound work of art could be measured. On the contrary, the Avant-garde was presented as the arch enemy of true art regardless of the year when the article was published. The preference showed to Realism can be understood as a means of legitimising the Communist regime's cultural policy. A strong realist tradition could and was used to prove that Socialist realism – the official artistic approach during the 1950s – was not an alien body imposed by the Party, but the result of a natural development and evolution of the Realist tradition.

While things seem to be relatively straightforward when formulating an official point of view of the journal in the case of the art movements mentioned, the way in which the various authors relate to Academism is more difficult to grasp. Academism is generally depicted in a less favourable light in

[2] In Romanian: Partidul Muncitoresc Romîn.

the journal, but there are some instances in which it is considered a sound artistical practice. The need for its positive evaluation derives from the special role Academism – understood as a late form of Neoclassicism – played in changing the course of Romanian art history. It was the academic training of Romanian artists active at the beginning of the 19th century, that set Romania on a path of westernization and modernization. From the communist regime's official standpoint, this process was an essential stage in the evolutive process for reaching the highest level of artistical mastery which was Socialist Realism. This is the main reason for the existence of a double discourse that can be seen in the fifties and the first half of the sixties of the last century in Romanian art historiography: art historians were caught between the demand of condemning Academism, as the dogma of the period required, and, on the other hand, they needed to praise it because it was the first step to modernisation taken by Romanian artist in Wallachia and Moldavia.

The issues of Academism are not directly approached in papers published in the journal between 1953 and 1964, but in texts that are about various artists or about other art movements. Only at the beginning of the 1960s defining Academism as a form of late Neoclassicism became explicit in the journal's pages. Until that time the discourse would mainly state various formal characteristics of history painting, being the only type of Academic painting accepted and appreciated by the new political regime. As it will be seen further on, there are two types of Academism that are being discussed: the one practiced in Paris – the most frequently encountered because of the large number of Romanian artists that had been trained in Parisian art schools – and the one practiced in Munich – mainly in the case of artists from Moldavia, who may have chosen Munich because the Art Academy in Iași was established having the Royal Art Academy in the Bavarian capital as a model.

Unlike other art movements, such as the Avant-garde or Realism, Academism was not discussed in lengthy papers which tried to define the main characteristics of the art movement and its appropriateness within the newly established artistic order, therefor its standing becomes visible when piecing together fragmentary approaches in texts dedicated to highly regarded Romanian artists. It is the case of Academic painters such as Theodor Aman and Gheorghe Tattarescu, or artists that had a different approach – mainly Post-Impressionist – like Nicolae Grigorescu (the most appreciated Romanian painter, considered even today the 'national painter'), Ion Andreescu, or Nicolae Tonitza.

The position of Academism became a topic of outmost importance mainly in respect with artists active around the middle of the 19th century. Their œvre's patriotic dimension and, in the case of some of them, their contribution in founding Fine Arts Academies in the principalities that latter became Romania, were used in order to highlight their artistic merits and their belonging to the canon. This line of argumentation was followed by Mircea Popescu in his analysis of the historical painting of the 19th century. He emphasised its qualities and the characteristics that can determine its belonging to the canon, following the principles of realism, but there is no mention about them being Academic. Moreover, his arguments tend to show the influence Socialist Realism had in reinterpreting the past:

> "A painter who does history and battle scenes must be able to clearly and expressively construct a composition with many characters and picture planes. At the same time, he must master portraiture and landscape, including those landscapes with vast perspectival spaces. He must be able to record rapid movement and to be a master of psychological characterization because he should paint his heroes in a myriad of situations. Beside knowing the historical facts of the events he will paint, he should, nevertheless, arrive at a superior learning of the significance of these events, of their role and importance for historical development."[3] (Popescu 1954, 118-119)

[3] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Un pictor de istorie și de teme de luptă trebuie să știe să construiască clar și expresiv o compoziție cu personaje numeroase și cu mai multe planuri. El trebuie să fie de asemenea un foarte bun portretist și în același tip să stăpînească în mod desăvîrșit arta de a zugrăvi peisajul și perspectivele spațiilor vaste.

The enumeration of history painting's characteristic is taken from soviet literature. Mircea Popescu is quoting, in this regard, the work of Valentin Yakovlevici Brodsky, titled *Советская батальная живопись* (*Sovetskaia batalnaia jivopis*) (Brodsky, 1950). The scenes described in the quoted fragment seem to have an educational importance. This kind of approach can be often encountered in the art historical writing of the period.

When discussing the characteristics of Academism that are not to be appreciated, one of the main points is that this art movement was praised and appraised by the bourgeoisie and it reflects only its tastes and ideals. Therefore, the artistic taste of the bourgeoisie is considered the main factor that shaped the stylistic language of Academism. There are some rare exceptions. They imply those periods in which the bourgeoisie was that class which could make history evolve in the right direction, opposing the boyars (the Romanian aristocracy). Nevertheless, the relationship between boyars and Academism, and bourgeoisie and Academism is seen as the same. This kind of association between boyars and Academism was emphasized when discussing the historical painting that has as a main theme the Union between Wallachia and Moldavia from 1859. The use of Academism's repertoire is linked to the artistic taste of the bourgeoisie: "Appreciating art only regarding its grade of conventionalism, the mentality of the retrograde boyars who once again became the leading class, for a time have reduced easel painting to official and common portraiture, depending on the commissions placed by those who were paying for it."[4] (Frunzetti 1959, 83)

Even though the subject of the paintings and the painter's technical abilities are appreciated, the conventionalism associated with Academic art seems to be a big issue for the author: "Of a higher artistic level in terms of artistic skill, but still rather conventional because of their Academism, are the allegories showing the Union [*of Wallachia and Moldavia*], made with the same purpose, of showing G. M. Tattarescu's support of the Ad-hoc assemblies' [*Divane ad-hoc*] activities."[5] (Frunzetti 1959, 85) Conventionalism, together with "analytical excesses"[6] (Frunzetti 1959, 90), are the most frequent negative attributes of Academism in the case of each painter whose art falls into this category.

When attempting to define Academism, authors usually construct definitions by opposing this art movement to others. If we take a closer look at this process, we can identify some of those characteristics that made Academic art a contemptible movement. In a paper signed by Amelia Pavel there is a comparison between genre painting and Academism where we can find an example of such an approach:

> "Born from the artists' struggle against Academism, from the need to express concrete reality, without breaking away, as will happen later, from the rich flow of the people's life, 19th century genre painting, in all its major forms as they were manifested in various countries, was linked to the democratic and progressive movements."[7] (Pavel 1959, 97)

El trebuie să poată înregistra mișcările cele mai rapide și să fie un maestru al caracterizării psihologice, întrucît are a-și înfățișa eroii în momente extrem de variate. În sfîrșit, în afară de cunoașterea aspectelor documentare ale evenimentelor pe care are să le zugrăvească, un asemenea pictor trebuie să fi ajuns și la o înțelegere mai adîncă a semnificației acestor evenimente, a rostului și importanței lor în dezvoltarea istorică."

[4] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Apreciind arta doar după gradul ei de convenționalism, mentalitatea conformistă a boierimii retrograde, redevenită clasă conducătoare, restrânge o vreme din nou pictura de șevalet la portretistica oficială și la cea curentă, depinzând de comenzile clientelei platnice".

[5] Author's translation of the following fragment: "La un nivel mai înalt ca pur meșteșug artistic, dar încă destul de convenționale datorită academismului lor, sînt alegoriile având ca temă Unirea, realizate în același scop, al sprijinirii acțiunilor Divanelor ad-hoc, de către G. M. Tattarescu."

[6] Author's translation of the following fragment: "excesele analitice".

[7] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Născută din lupta artiștilor împotriva academismului, din nevoia de a exprima concretul, fără a se rupe, așa cum se va întâmpla mai târziu, de fluxul bogat al vieții poporului, pictura de gen a secolului al XIX-lea, în formele ei majore din diferite țări, a fost legată de mișcările democratice, de curentele progresiste."

The fragment quoted above can be interpreted as suggesting that the main problem with Academism, in what the subject of the paintings is concerned, lies in the type of abstract thinking that is needed in order to depict allegorical and mythological scenes. The recurrence of the two types of scenes unavoidably leads to a gap between art and life: everyday life and history scenes can be seldom encountered in the works of Academic artist[8]. From a Marxist point of view, the preference for allegorical and mythological scenes has a disqualifying character because these were considered to be an expression of bourgeois taste. Only the dominant classes, the educated people could decipher such paintings, while the uneducated lower classes, the peasants and the proletariat, could not understand much and would be frustrated because nothing from their lives resembled what was depicted in those paintings. The link between the bourgeois taste and Academic painting is showed through the fact that the members of this particular social class were the main patrons of that kind of paintings.

The same strategy of comparing art movements was used for showing that Academism from Paris was different and opposed to other art movements from the same period: "[…] in France there were still lingering echoes of the struggles between Neo-classical Academism, Romanticism and the tumultuous beginnings of Realism."[9] (Pavel 1959, 97). This fragment is the first one in the journal to present Academism as a form of a late Neo-classicism. Taking a closer look at the comparison between the three art movements – Academism, Romanticism and Realism – one becomes aware of the stark opposition between Realism and the other two movements. This opposition had a substantial contribution in the way Academic art was perceived as void of any value. While making this comparison, no reference was made to any stylistic influences between any of those movements, therefore indirectly implying that such transfer would not have been possible. Thus, Academism was defined as a bourgeois movement, which should be opposed and even fought against. In such a system of antithetical oppositions in which Academism represents the official art movement, a void space is created that must be filled in by an opposing art form. This space is occupied by dissident artists, heroes who struggled to create true art, while focusing the subject of their paintings on the working class. Because it was implied that the bourgeoisie commissioned almost exclusively Academic paintings, those artists who favoured the new type of painting and who could not find patrons, were being portrayed as penniless and bound to this state of being for an extended period of time[10].

Academism in the Romanian provinces was presented as having its own leader, Constantin I. Stăncescu[11], while being in control of the means needed to dominate the artistic life of the time through official exhibitions. This system included artists perceived as Stăncescu's protégées, and therefore upon those painters was extended the critique addressed to Academism as a whole. The set of characteristics attributed to Academism *a*

[8] Although the term *history painting* includes mythological scenes, allegorical scenes, and historical scenes, in the texts discussed here the same term is used only as a reference to historical scenes. Thus, such oppositions as the one mentioned here are possible.

[9] Author's translation of the following fragment: "[…] în Franța era încă plin de ecourile luptei dintre academismul neo-clasicizant, romantism și debuturile tumultuoase ale realismului".

[10] A few words should be said about this narrative strategy because it is not only a consequence (albeit a constructed one) of who is commissioning what. It is, indeed, a strategy. This type of portraying artists valuable for the Communist regime as poor, follows, in the first place, the Romantic scheme of the ununderstood and lonely genius who is discovered and appreciated only after his death. This scheme is useful for the Communist regime because it makes possible the scenario in which under the old regime, geniuses had been undervalued or ignored, therefore proving the corrupt nature of those regimes manifested also in the field of art.

[11] C. I. Stăncescu was one of the most despised characters of Romanian artistic life, not only because he was seen as a protector of Academic paining, but also because he won a competition for a study scholarship for which Nicolae Grigorescu also competed, the later being regarded even in the present day as the 'National painter'. At the same time, Stăncescu was perceived as an artist without any talent because he gave up painting for art theory: he was a professor of Aesthetics at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bucharest, a position from which the so called control of the official artistic life emerged.

posteriori (obscuring social reality, while being an idealized and lifeless artistic genre) is transferred to those artists who were seen as opposing the progressive artists (meaning those who started practicing a form of Realism) and named "supporters of the leading classes' ideology"[12] (Oprea 1959, 240). Other references from Oprea's paper to Academism show this movement as "based on false principles and having limited achievements"[13] (Oprea 1959, 240). Public taste is another subject which allowed for the opposition between Realism and Academism to be brought into attention. The Academic taste was considered opposed to the Realist values, the latter being defined using what is seen to be the virtues of Realist painters who "considered characteristic motives, meant to test the painter's investigative spirit and his capability to evoke while, at the same time, to assert art's new ideal as the representation of the real world […]"[14] (Oprea 1959, 240). As the other authors who published in *SCIA* at the time had done, Oprea also emphasised the same weak point of Academism: its distance from social truth. Academic taste was also found guilty of the negative treatment Nicolae Grigorescu received form art critics at the beginning of his career (Niculescu 1957, 250). Niculescu's perspective is an interesting and rather different one[15]. He has shown Stăncescu in a different light by bringing forward an instance when the artist turned aesthetician was considerate of Grigorescu and condemned the "Academic naturalism and abstraction."[16] (Niculescu 1958, 160)

From the beginning of the 1960s, a number of papers in *SCIA* attempted to thoroughly define Academism while showing the principles which stood behind the system of artistic education in Wallachia: „[…] Academism stimulated idea painting while subordinating to it disciplines meant to promote it; it also favoured the Neoclassical ideal beauty and rigid norms for painting"[17] (Bogdan 1960, 112). Referring to the subject matter, Radu Bogdan credited Academism with some positive aspects. In the following paragraphs, the movement is redeemed through the example of the type of Academism practiced by Theodor Aman, in which national history is the main theme[18] (Bogdan 1960, 112). However, a curios case is that of Jacques Louis David, who is constantly appraised as a valuable artist, the frame of reference here being not the art movement he represents, but his political creed. This determines the inclusion of a brief presentation of his œvre:

> "It is just that in France under the Second Empire, were the bourgeoisie feared a proletarian revolt, the revolutionary spirit ceased a long time ago to inspirit the studios of art's official coryphaei, as was once the case with Jacques Louis David's studio."[19] (Bogdan 1960, 113)

[12] Author's translation of the following fragment: "susținători ai ideologiei claselor conducătoare".

[13] Author's translation of the following fragment: "bazată pe principii false și slabă în rezultate".

[14] Author's translation of the following fragment: "se opreau adesea la motive caracteristice, menite să pună la încercare spiritul de investigație și capacitatea de evocare a pictorului și, totodată, să afirme noul ideal al artei ca reprezentare a lumii concrete […]".

[15] Remus Niculescu is one of the art historians who suffered during the Communist times. At the beginning of his career he stubbornly refused to take part in the rewriting of art history from a Marxist point of view (a well-known fact for his friends and detractors alike). He faced trial in the Noica-Pillat lot together with Theodor Enescu and was sentenced to seven years in prison, of which he served four, from 1959 to 1963 (CNSAS, d. I195837, vol. 2, 6). After that he regained his position at the Art Institute in Bucharest, mostly thanks to the intervention of George Oprescu.

[16] Author's translation of the following fragment: "naturalismul și abstracția academică".

[17] Author's translation of the following fragment: "[…] academismul stimula pictura de idei subordonîndu-i discipline menite s-o promoveze, și tot el închina aceleași discipline idealului neoclasic de frumusețe și normelor sale rigide".

[18] This kind of painting was essential for the legitimization process of the communist regime. Images created by artists in the 19th century could be used by the communist regime to highlight those historical events that depicted the other regimes in dark tones and could show a need for a new and reforming regime. This was another reason for which Academism could not be so easily dismissed by art historians active during the communist era.

[19] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Numai că în Franța celui de al doilea imperiu, a cărui burghezie se temea de revolta proletariatului, spiritul revoluționar încetase demult să

On the other hand, this allows the portraying of Academic painting as acceptable and worthy of respect if it had a patriotic subject[20], while flawed Academical and Neoclassical painting was described as "unassuming, punctilious and cold"[21] (Bogdan 1960, 113).

This is the context in which Aman was preferred to Tattarescu. Aman's interest in depicting national history in his paintings makes him, from a Marxist perspective, the first one to depart from the Academic principles, while Tattarescu was shown as favouring mythological scenes, which were typical for Academism (Bogdan 1960, 114).

The widespread use of Academism in Romania during the 19th century was sometimes explained using the argument of necessity: this art movement was understood in this line of argumentation as a necessary stage in the development of art. In this context, artists who had done paintings under the influence of Academism were rendered as sound guidance and having a degree of importance in Romanian art's inevitable path to (Socialist) Realism:

> "Academism has been – in the development of Romanian painting – a historical necessity. It fulfilled a positive role through the window it opened upon the facts of reality, and through the ideas it brought forward between 1830 and 1870. In times hostile to the training of talents, while stemming from a novel modern culture that was just budding at the time, its positive influence prevailed over its shortcomings. Nevertheless, as the degree of understanding of the arts increased, its false notes, its stereotypical formulas, its empty cult of technical abilities and excessive attention to details became more and more obvious."[22] (Bogdan 1960, 118)

With this fragment it becomes obvious that the author's main issue with Academism was its mannerism and the lack of inovative ideas. In other words, the conventionalism contested in previous articles also makes the case here. Therefore, not Academism as such was seen as being the problem (in this case understood as a form of Neoclassicism), but its persistence until a later date in Romania, thus not giving space to other art movements to develop. This had serious consequences in the way the activity of some artists was evaluated. Theodor Aman, Constantin Lecca, Carol Wallenstein and Gheorghe Tattarescu were understood as painters having some essential merits – Tattarescu was explicitly called mediocre, though –, but also limitations because of their almost exclusive use of Academism, limitations that will only be overcome by the work of Nicolae Grigorescu (Bogdan 1960, 118). One of the methods used to emphasise Grigorescu's special contribution was that of opposing the Academic finito to his manner of painting (Grigorescu had often been accused of painting in a non-finito manner by his contemporaries). In this opposition, the non-finto approach was considered more valuable for the development of Romanian art.

Before taking a closer look to the way in which Grigorescu's relation with Academism was discussed in the pages of *SCIA*, it is necessary to clarify some aspects regarding the relationship between landscape painting and Academism. The changes landscape painting brought to Academism were considered a consequence of the artist's thinking, who was only depicting some local elements in the painting that was not taking reality as a starting point:

> "[…] loyal to the Academical thinking, they limited themselves to using just their intellect, just what they already knew, not giving way to what they were feeling. In their landscapes there is a lack of atmosphere, nature's objects

însuflețească atelierele corifeilor oficiali ai artei, așa cum însuflețise cândva atelierul lui Jacques Louis David".

[20] In those articles, patriotism is understood as the act of coming to the aid of the lower social classes and militating for their rights and ideals.

[21] Author's translation of the following fragment: "cuminte, minuțioasă și rece".

[22] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Academismul fusese – în dezvoltarea picturii romînești – o necesitate istorică. Împlinise un rol pozitiv prin fereastra pe care o deschisese spre lumea faptelor realității, prin ideile promovate între 1830 și 1870. În condiții vitrege formării talentelor și în mijlocul unei culturi moderne abia incipiente, aportul său a prevalat asupra scăderilor. Totuși, pe măsura sporirii înțelegerii pentru artă, notele lui false, formulele stereotipe, cultul steril al abilității și excesul de amănunt, n-aveau să treacă neobservate".

> being part of a general reality and identifiable just by the outline, colour and relief: sky and water were always the same shade of blue, vegetation the same shade of green and the earth the same shade of brown. The landscape is painted through the eyes of the tourist, through the eyes of the townsman who went for a walk, for whom nature means first and foremost surprise and a change of landscape; diminishing the landscape to picturesque elements, not being able to see the difference between its aspects and give in to rich feelings in the middle of nature, they remained outside nature."[23] (Bogdan 1960, 131)

Other authors, such as Ion Frunzetti, described the difficulties landscape painting encountered in the Romanian lands in terms of popular reception, and believed it to be a consequence of the privileged position Academic painting held at the time:

> "In its early days, landscape painting had to confront the preconceived notion that, on the one hand, it could not be useful in approaching pressing contemporary ideological issues, while on the other (because it was not a part of the Academic painting's traditional subject matter, it therefore refuted the possibility of expressing itself through the ideas of a different genre other than historical, mythological or biblical painting) it would be 'deprived of a thorough investigation', this being the reason for which someone like Aman, who had a pontifical perception of his own art, considered it amateurish painting, worthy of being pushed back to the second plane and be 'embraced by ladies', as he points out in 1860, in such a disdainful fashion that is bound to stun today's reader."[24] (Frunzetti 1961, 84-85)

Considering both Bogdan's and Frunzetti's approach in the articles published in 1960 and 1961 it can be said that, given the lack of references to still life and portraiture, the only accepted type of Academic painting was history painting. Frunzetti's standpoint in this paper's introduction could show only the author's opinions and not the reality of the day. He did not analyse any work from the period he referred to in which the lack of ideological content had been emphasised. Speaking of Aman's activity, George Oprescu portrayed him in a similar way, speaking about his classical training and influences he received, ranging from Romanticism to Realism (Oprescu 1956, 91-109), while Frunzetti chose to exemplify Academism's characteristic features as illustrated by his œvre.

Opposing judgements had been made in the case of Tattarescu's work. This is mostly the result of the fact that his paintings were very much influenced by Academism. Or, in other words, that his works are closer to a pure form of Academism, while the works of other painters show some influences coming from other art movements such as Romanticism (as was the case with Aman). If in the above fragment his work is considered of secondary importance, there are other texts that find some external causes for his not so remarkable achievements. In some sources Romanticism is mentioned as a strong influence, especially when peasant women are depicted (Pavel 1958, 220). In several other cases, the

[23] Author's translation of the following fragment: "[…] fideli mentalității academice, s-au mărginit să apeleze la intelect, la ceea ce știau, nu la ceea ce simțeau. În pânzele lor lipsite de atmosferă, obiectele naturii aparţineau unei realități generale și se voiau identificabile aproape numai prin contur, culoare și relief; cerul sau apa erau pretutindeni la fel de albastre, vegetația la fel de verde, pământul la fel de brun. Peisajul l-au pictat cu ochii turistului, ai citadinului pornit la plimbare, pentru care natura înseamnă întâi de toate surpriză și schimbare de decor; reducând-o la elemente pitorești, incapabili să-i diferențieze aspectele și să încerce în mijlocul ei sentimente puternice, i-au rămas exteriori".

[24] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Pictura peisagistică se va lovi, la începuturile ei, de prejudecata că, pe de o parte, n-ar permite abordarea problemelor ideologice arzătoare pentru contemporaneitate, iar pe de alta (nefiind în programul tematic al academismului tradițional, care nega posibilitatea de a exprima ideea altui gen de pictură decât compoziției istorice, mitologice ori biblice) ar fi «dispensată de un studiu serios», motiv pentru care unui Aman, pictor cu o concepție de pontifice al artei sale, i se părea diletantă, vrednică a fi lăsată pe planul al doilea și «îmbrățișată de dame», cum subliniază la 1860, cu un dispreț ce înmărmurește astăzi pe cititor".

culpability lies in the need felt by some painters to embrace the mainstream artistic taste, which, during that period, was Academism. As a consequence, Tattarescu could not reach his full potential: "[…] he was a nature lover and a good realist painter of landscapes, whom the harsh circumstances of artistic life of his time never allowed to fully demonstrate his skill and talent."[25] (Wertheimer[26] 1956, 191)

If in the case of Aman and Tattarescu Academism was the main issue, things tend to be slightly different when it comes to Nicolae Grigorescu, Ion Andreescu, Nicolae Tonitza, and Iosif Iser. When discussing these artists, Academic painting is mentioned in relation to their formative years, or to present their timely departure from Academism's norms. When the type of draftsmanship and technique used in Academic art was analysed, a more nuanced approach to the matter is noticeable. A good example is Eugen Schileru's text about Iser's graphics: "While Iser does not allow himself to be contaminated by his professor's Academic views, he learns from them instead the love and respect for drawing, and for thoroughly assimilated craftsmanship"[27] (Schileru 1955, 202). In the case of both Academism and Realism the thorough command of drawing was considered by most authors to be of outmost importance.

When presenting the religious paintings from Agapia, which are Grigorescu's early works, Lelia Rudașcu[28] saw it as the expression of solid knowledge of history of painting, manifested through the visible influence received from the old masters such as Rembrandt van Rijn, Tiziano Vecellio, Raffaello Sanzio, Antonio Allegri da Correggio or Michelangelo Buonarroti, and, at the same time, she saw his technique as a proof of a realistic approach because Grigorescu's portrait painting resembles "living people"[29] (Rudașcu 1954, 98). In this paradigm, Rudașcu stressed upon Grigorescu's departure from traditional byzantine models, characterized by hieraticism, and praises this type of Academic approach in the artist's later religious paintings. While in 1955 the term Academism was explicitly used for Grigorescu's works from this stage without formulating value judgements (Oprescu 1955, 161), later on, the same term would be carefully avoided when praising Grigorescu's works from the same period for its realism. Another explicit use of Academism with regard to this painter's work can be found in a paper written two years later by Barbu Brezianu (Brezianu 1957 a, 275).

Focusing on the years during which Grigorescu had studied in Paris, Remus Niculescu described the system of the Fine Arts School as subordinated to a "shallow and despotic Academism"[30] (Niculescu 1956, 128). Niculescu believed that it was precisely the

[25] Author's translation of the following fragment: "[…] era un iubitor de natură și un peisagist bun al realității, căruia condițiile vieții artistice din timpul său nu i-au îngăduit să dea toată măsura priceperii și talentului său".

[26] The reader should be aware that Georgeta Wertheimer was Gheorghe Tattarescu's granddaughter. On the one hand, she had full access to the artist's work, overseeing the museum that bears the artists' name. On the other, it should not come as a surprise that her portrayal of the artist is a more positive one. A similar approach can be found in Jacques Wertheimer Ghika's monography of Tattarescu, where he explicitly contradicts Oprescu in some matters where the professor evaluated in a negative manner some aspects of the artist's biography (Wertheimer-Ghika 1958, 160-161). Jacques Wertheimer Ghika was the husband of Georgeta Wertheimer, quoted in this paper.

[27] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Dacă Iser nu se lasă contaminat de concepțiile academice ale profesorilor săi, el învață în schimb de la ei respectul și dragostea pentru desen, pentru meșteșugul pe deplin asimilat".

[28] Lelia Rudașcu was an illegalist communist during the interwar period (Pavel 1997, 106). After the establishment of the Communist regime, she started to be a very influential figure. The are informative notes from the Securitate that present her as one of the most influential political characters at the Art Institute in Bucharest, where she held a teaching position (CNSAS, R330218, vol. 3, 53). Her fidelity to communism explains her orthodox approach: choosing Nicolae Grigorescu as a main topic of interest, she will persistently bind his work to Realism, finding ties with this art movement even in his religious painting (as seen above) dating from the time before Grigorescu went to Paris and met the artists working at Barbizon. Rudașcu's timely death (1954) does not let us see if such interpretations would have continued after the end of the Stalinist era in Romania.

[29] Author's translation of the following fragment: "oameni vii".

[30] Author's translation of the following fragment: "academism îngust și despotic".

way in which established art education was organised, that made the Romanian painter reconsider the type of painting he practiced up to that moment and abruptly shift his interest towards styles of painting which were flourishing outside the official art system, thus stepping away from Academism and beginning to follow the path of an "art which is not founded on studio formulas, but on a direct experience [*drawn from observing*] life and things"[31] (Niculescu 1956, 130). From this fragment one can conclude that one of the downsides of Academism was its strictness in applying conventional compositional schemes and consequently distancing itself from every-day life. The principles Academic painting was based on are labelled "prejudices" and even "retardations" that should be replaced by a more expressive way of painting (Niculescu 1956, 132). Presenting Academism as an unfortunate influence over Grigorescu's painting, Niculescu sees a proof of Grigorescu's definitive departure from that manner of painting in portraits of Jews he painted in Moldavia:

> "[…] he makes the proof of categorically liberating himself from Academism, and a free and personal interpretation of the human form, in which Grigorescu's experience as a landscape painter finds an unexpected application, resembling Daumier's painted characters from approximately the same time, on a different artistic level, of course, but having the same clear leaning towards the pictorial."[32] (Niculescu 1956, 166)

The same degree of interest for Grigorescu's departure from Academism can be witnessed in the analyses of his history painting. Even though this genre is, as already mentioned above, intimately tied to Academism, in the case of Grigorescu's history painting Niculescu asserted that it was removed from the "Academism's prejudices"[33] (Niculescu 1957, 233).

The emphasis and positive acknowledgement of the artist's personal manner is worth mentioning. This is surprising considering the ideological circumstances of that time, when the strong display of a 'personal manner' will be severely condemned in texts that examine the Avant-garde. At the same time, this is a typical way for Remus Niculescu of ignoring official demands.

Grigorescu was defined as an "independent" Romanian artist because of his departure from the "abstract forms of Academism"[34] (Enescu 1956, 185). As such he is perceived as a model for the generations to follow. In this fragment, the meaning of the term 'abstract' appears to be, when associated with Academism, a form of artistic manifestation that is far removed from reality. In this particular case, the term does not describe a stylistic approach to painting.

Regarding the dispute about finito, the novelty brought by the Barbizonists and Expressionist was preferred to the manner of painting used by followers of Academism. These approaches were being opposed. As most authors from this time, Enescu saw "the pictorial finito opposed to the Academic form finito" (Enescu 1956, 185). Enescu's *pictorial finito* refers to the Barbizonist and Expressionist approach. In this case he is quoting Barbu Delavrancea who described the Academical method as that of abstract perfection (Barbu Delavrancea apud Enescu 1956, 185). Therefore, the Academic painter's approach of finito is a manifestation of abstraction in Academic painting.

The official circles with which Grigorescu interacted in Paris are described as being dominated by Classicism, an art movement perceived by the Romanian authors active in *SCIA* as that of "prudence and mediocrity"[35] (Niculescu 1957, 213). These downsides of

[31] Author's translation of the following fragment: "artei care nu se întemeiază pe rețete de atelier, ci pe experiența directă a vieții și a lucrurilor".

[32] Author's translation of the following fragment: "[…] dovedește o eliberare categorică de academism, o interpretare liberă și personală a formei umane, în care experiența de peisagist a lui Grigorescu își găsește o aplicare neașteptată, amintindu-ne figurile pictate cam în aceeași vreme de un Daumier, la un alt nivel artistic desigur, dar cu aceeași orientare netă spre pictural".

[33] Author's translation of the following fragment: "prejudecățile academice".

[34] Author's translation of the following fragment: "finitului pictural opus finitului formei academice".

[35] Author's translation of the following fragment: "prudență și mediocritate".

Classicism are depicted as such using the ideological framework used at the time in order to judge art movements. Even though some elements of realism were found – stemming from the pictorial technique used in Classicism that linked it to *mimesis* –, they seem not to be enough for the political reasoning of the 1950s. The following fragment sheds light upon what was considered true Realism during those times: "[…] it was trying in vain to make peace between the urgent need for the definite […] and the banking and industrial bourgeoisie's natural inclination towards evasion that was threatened by the proletariat's rise."[36] (Niculescu 1957, 213) Those aesthetical norms that were contrary to the communist party's line will be considered bourgeois, disqualifying them from an ideological point of view as it will become more evident in the following fragments. Academism was considered in the same key as the above-mentioned Classicism when referring to it in a fragment presenting Grigorescu's participation at the Exposition Universelle in 1867. Academism was portrayed as being defeated by Realism, a movement "which meant a true revolution of taste, a resounding defeat of Academism's sterile routines and the acceptance on a broad scale of new artistic and social ideals, which were to emerge everywhere during the following decades"[37] (Niculescu 1957, 232). The way in which the struggle between Academism and Realism was presented, was done in such a way as to mirror class struggle, which was supposedly unfolding in society in general, as its equivalent in the art world. Taking the idealised Marxist scenario of class struggle as a reference point, the aesthetics of the poor (Realism) was pictured as following an irreversible path towards the final victory. Caught in a crossfire in this ongoing battle consuming the art world, Grigorescu did not immediately start painting pure landscapes, and this undecided stance was blamed on the lingering influence of Academic training dating from the early stages of his stay in Paris (Niculescu 1957, 233).

References to Academism can be identified to a lesser extent in texts that have Ion Andreescu as their main subject. Academism is briefly mentioned in this case because Andreescu, as in the case of other painters from his generation and from the generations to come, produced no Academic works at the beginning of his career[38]. This art movement is mentioned just as the one dominating the taste of the period or as the norm at the Fine Arts School. In both scenarios, artists such as Ion Andreescu, Ștefan Luchian, Theodor Pallady, and Nicolae Tonitza were presented as innovators, challenging the conventions of their time, while having an important role in the changing and ripening of Romanian art.

Disputing the established labelling of Andreescu as an Impressionist painter, Radu Bogdan considered it a consequence of the omnipresence of Academism in official circles:

> "The realism of Andreescu's painting was obvious even to his contemporaries, who at first found the plein air painting, the bright light and the broad brush strokes that characterize it, unusual and very bold. This surpassing of customary Academism led some of his contemporaries into mistaking his Realism for the still very noisy at that time experience of the Impressionists."[39] (Bogdan 1955, 195)

In a similar way, Academism's norms were considered limitations for Ștefan Luchian who found himself, while studying in Paris, caught

[36] Author's translation of the following fragment: "[…] încerca zadarnic să concilieze nevoia imperioasă de concret […] cu înclinarea firească spre evaziune a burgheziei bancare și industriale amenințată de ridicarea proletariatului".

[37] Author's translation of the following fragment: "care presupunea o adevărată revoluție a gustului, o înfrângere răsunătoare a sterpei rutine academice și o acceptare largă a noilor idealuri artistice și sociale, care se vor afirma pretutindeni în deceniile următoare".

[38] Andreescu is often presented as a calligraphy teacher until the day he sees a painting by Nicolae Grigorescu. That event is marked as the moment when Andreescu decides he wants to become a painter and starts experimenting in a manner closer to that of Grigorescu, not to Academism.

[39] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Evidența realismului lui Andreescu s-a impus chiar oamenilor din vremea sa, cărora pictura în plin aer, puternic luminată și exprimată în pete largi le-a părut la început ciudată și foarte îndrăzneață. Această depășire a obișnuitului academism îi va fi determinat pe unii să confunde realismul pictorului nostru cu experiența pe atunci încă atât de zgomotoasă a impresioniștilor".

in the middle of "the struggles against the official constraints" (Enescu 1956, 191). While witnessing those struggles, he accumulated understanding and awareness about what independent art was, knowledge that he wanted to share and implement in Romania after returning home. An interesting choice of words is that of *modern painting* used to describe Luchian's painting in order to reflect its departure from Academism. In this case, *modern* was used with a positive meaning, in opposition to the way it was used when associated with the Avant-gardes: "The only modern artist, modern because of the precise tendencies of his art was, inside the Society [*The Society for the development of the arts in Romania – «Ileana»*], no other than Luchian" [40] (Enescu 1956, 203). In this way, *modern* was used as a marker of Luchian's departure from Academism's norms, having nothing to do with the Avant-garde. On most occasions, the artists' associations to which Luchian belonged are portrayed as the main opponents of Academism during that time. This is true in the case of the group named Artistic youth[41] whose members painted in a different manner from the Academic painters who "practised a conventional art, far removed from reality and using formal studio recipes"[42](Oprea 1963 b, 467).

Artists who were revolting against Academic norms were also identified in later generations. Nicolae Tonitza was portrayed as rebelling against Academism. This was illustrated by evoking the tense relationship he had with his professors at the Fine Arts School in Iași – Gheorghe Popovici, Gheorghe Panaiteanu Bardasare, D. A. Atanasiu – whom he often contested and who were seen as the representatives of Academism in the capital of Moldavia (Brezianu 1957 b, 182).

An example of Academism present in areas related to painting is the case of the National Theatre's curtain designed by Camil Ressu in 1920. Victor Eftimiu described it as "not being consonant with the taste of the takist-liberal bourgeoisie who saw with regret the disappearance of Romeo Girolamo's heavily decorated curtain consonant with the tastes of the time with little angels, rose garlands and the goddess Fortuna blowing her trumpet."[43] (Eftimiu 1960, 48) The same bourgeoisie is described a few lines bellow as a "clique" (Eftimiu 1960, 48). This story was also used as a pretext for downgrading the political class of the Interwar times, thus complying with the ideological requests of the 1950s and 1960s.

A few mentions of Academism can be found in articles that discuss Pallady's work. His painting is described as radically different from Academism, but being impregnated with "anecdote, descriptivism and sentimentalism"[44] (Schileru 1956, 218). This kind of descriptions show that Pallady's work was treated at that point as a toned-down, and therefore acceptable, version of the Avant-garde. Academism gets another mention in an article about Constantin Artachino, whose work is described as breaking with "Academical convention"[45] (Oprea 1957, 342).

The Munich version of Academism takes less space. Some references to it can be found in a paper about Ipolit Strâmbulescu. The main characteristics of this type of Academism were identified as the prevalence of genre painting dominated by a type of mannerism of the painting technique:

> "Their purpose is depicting an occurrence, an interesting case, a subject better suited for literature or already treated by it, – and executed in a glossy technique, much appreciated by everyone, following a colouring recipe inherited from times long gone and using a tedious brushwork; this is the so called Academic trend, taught by ageing

[40] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Dar singurul artist modern, modern prin tendințele precise ale artei sale, nu era, în sânul societății [*Societatea pentru dezvoltarea artelor în România –„Ileana"*], decât Ștefan Luchian".

[41] Tinerimea artistică.

[42] Author's translation of the following fragment: "profesau o artă convențională, depărtată de realitate și utilizând rețete formale de atelier".

[43] Author's translation of the following fragment: "n-a fost pe placul burgheziei takisto-liberale, care vedea, cu regret, dispărând vechea cortină a lui Romeo Girolamo, asezonată după moda vremii cu îngerași, ghirlande de trandafiri și zeița Fortuna cântând din trompetă".

[44] Author's translation of the following fragment: "anecdotic, descriptivism și sentimentalism".

[45] Author's translation of the following fragment: "convenționalismul academic".

> artists and [*observed in*] all official academies.
>
> "Their art does not stem from a direct study made from nature; the picture, for instance, a landscape, is drafted from nature in pencil sketching its most basic outlines, thereafter colour is added from memory in the studio, with more or less fidelity; or a figure from a landscape is painted using studio light, not taking into account the laws of colouring in plein-air."[46] (H. E. Kroner apud Oprea 1963 a, 283)

This manner of painting was also identified in Strâmbulescu's paintings and became a matter of criticism in the pages of *SCIA*. Apart from this case, the Munich Academism is largely overlooked because it was believed it did not have the same influence in the Romanian countries as the French Academism had.

In most of the papers from *SCIA*, Academic painting – the version from Paris or the one from Munich – is painted in dark colours and it is blamed for the limited space allowed for new artistic movements to develop on the official art scene, while being sanctioned as hurtful for the artistic act. To a lesser extent it is worthy of respect. This happens only in those papers which aimed at developing a more complex analysis of the Romanian artistic phenomenon. From that standpoint, Academic painting's contribution to the modernisation of Romanian art is presented as a necessity. At the same time, most of the papers suggest, from an ideological standpoint, that by implementing studio formulas learned from their masters, artists were inclined to having a lack of knowledge of contemporary social reality. Therefore, they illustrate the taste of the bourgeoisie and ignore the difficulties encountered by disadvantaged social classes: the proletariat and the peasants. Because of these, Academism, unless used in the form of history painting, was considered undesirable by the communist regime. This interpretation of Academism influenced the way in which the works of artists from the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century was understood.

Even though this article followed the way in which the relationship between Academism and painters from the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century was seen, when looking deeper into texts published during the years analysed in this paper, it becomes apparent that during the 1960s (until 1964, considering that 1954-1964 is the time frame of the article) gradually lesser attention was given to Academism because of the increasing number of papers dedicated to Post-Impressionist painters. Academism was an important topic only in the first years when the journal was issued, when Romania faced one of the most aggressive forms of Stalinism. When analysing the painting phenomenon in Romania in general, Academism even turned out to be a necessary step for the linear development of Romanian painting, from primitive local approaches to Socialist Realism. After Socialist Realism ceased to be the mandatory official art movement, the necessity for such a construction of historical discourse disappeared and there was more room for other interests. While the historical events unfolded and R.P.R. started, little by little, to be more open to other cultural paradigms, the art historians' interest began shifting towards Post-Impressionism. This only shows that the political change is reflected in the pages of *SCIA* in the changing discourse about Academism.

[46] Author's translation of the following fragment: "Scopul lor e reprezentarea unei întâmplări, a unui caz interesant, a unui subiect pentru literatură, ori deja tratat de dînsa, –și încă executat într-o tehnică linsă, pe placul tuturor, după rețete de colorit moștenite de demult și cu o conducere a pensulei plicticoasă; e așa numită tendință academică, învățată de la artiștii îmbătrâniți și în toate academiile oficiale.
"Arta lor nu reiese dintr-un studiu direct după natură; tabloul, de pildă, un peisaj, e desinat în fața naturii cu creionul și în conturele sale cele mai sumare, iar pe urmă culoarea e completată din memorie în atelier, cu mai multă sau mai puțină fidelitate; sau o figură dintr-un peisaj e pictată în lumina de atelier, fără considerație de legile coloritului în plin aer."

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THE NEED FOR CREATING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT INSTRUMENTAL CLASS TUITION IN ROMANIAN NON-MUSIC SPECIALISED SCHOOLS

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Abstract: *The following article identifies a field in which Romanian music education might be improved to increase its quality and inclusivity. Due to the enormous benefits instrumental tuition can bring in students development, the creation of strategies and resources to implement the instrumental class tuition in Romanian non-music specialist schools has now become a pressing need. With access to classroom-based instrumental programs, schools can enrich the student's life quality by stimulating children mental, social and emotional development. Instrumental tuition should be implemented to improve children's cognitive skills, spoken language, self-confidence and memory, forming a generation with excellent abilities to work effectively as part of a team and with the ability to learn on the go from and with each other.*

***Keywords*:** music education, musical instruments, music technologies, support resources, benefits

Rezumat: *Acest articol identifică o secțiune a educației muzicale românești care ar putea fi îmbunătățită cu scopul de ai crește calitatea și inclusivitatea. Datorită beneficiilor enorme pe care educația muzicală instrumentală le poate aduce în dezvoltarea elevilor, crearea unei strategii și a unor resurse pentru implementarea educației instrumentale la clasă în cadrul școlilor generale devine o nevoie presantă. Prin accesul la educație instrumentală la nivel de clasă, școlile românești pot crește calitatea vieții elevilor stimulând dezvoltarea lor mentală, socială și emoțională. Cântul instrumental ar trebui implementat în școlile generale românești pentru îmbunătățirea abilităților cognitive ale elevilor, dezvoltarea abilităților de comunicare, a memoriei, a stimei de sine și a încrederii în fețele proprii. Astfel dar putem forma generații cu excelente deprinderi de lucru în echipă și capacitatea de-a învăța din mers.*

Cuvinte cheie: educație muzicală, instrumente muzicale, tehnologii muzicale, resurse suport, beneficii

INTRODUCTION

Although Romania has a considerable number of music specialists, only children identified as 'musically talented' who pass the initial musical aptitude test before the reception class (age 5-6), get the opportunity to have instrument tuition during school classes. The testing is organised according to the regulation for the art education organisation, approved by the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, through the ordinance no. 5569 from 2011, which tests: musical ear, rhythmic sense and musical memory. (MEN, 5569 /2011, 3/18)

All children who pass the test are allowed to attend specialist music schools. The number of weekly individual instrumental lessons start with two for the first four years increasing thereafter. There are many other specialist subjects studied in groups or as a whole class, which complete the students music education at a music-specialist schools. (MEN, 3371/2013, 4; 3590/2016, 3; 3608/ 2009, 1-2).

Vocational schools are a great opportunity provided by the Romanian government to those who want to pursue a career in music.

In line with the government's required syllabus, children in Romanian non-music specialist schools are generally allocated one

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hour of music classes weekly. According to the statistical analyses of the Romanian education history made by Anghelescu et al. in the book "The centenary evolution of education in Romania", the number of children who benefit of instrumental tuition during the school classes it's worryingly small. (Anghelache *et alii,* 2018, 243-270). The national syllabus for non-music specialist schools refers to body percussion, improvised musical toys, and instrumental accompaniment performed only by the teacher for Year 1 to Year 4. For Years 5 to Year 8, the government music syllabus includes interpretation of simple instrumental fragments according to the non-music specialist school's resources and instrumental skills of their music teachers. (MEN 3371/2013, 1; 3590/2016, 4).

There are only general references to instrumental tuition without any plan, support or strategies offered. The teacher's only chance to develop their skills for more instrument teaching is in self-tuition, a personal plan/strategy and resources for implementing instrumental tuition in the school they teach in. In the current situation, we need a national framework to empower teachers to be able to accomplish instrumental class tuition.

The action of implementing instrumental tuition in Romanian music non-specialist schools represent a major need for the future evolution of the music education system, which will increase not only its quality but also its inclusivity and must be done as soon as possible.

In her book *Music in school today* prof. Dr Loredana Muntean speaks about the domination of vocal singing in Romanian schools and the limited instrumental one. Children explore and enjoy vocal music and the limited instrumental toys they can access. (Muntean 2013, 26-33).

There is evidence that some Romanian music teachers notice the lack of resources, limited knowledge and the need for adopting new methods in music education. In her article *Integrating Multimedia Resources into Music Education: a D.I.M.A. Experiment,* Prof. dr. Nelida Nedelcut speaks about the need of adapting online resources to music education and mentions as benefits of using them; "the possibility of individualised instruction, improved and efficient assessment" and also the increase of "pupil motivation." (Nedelcuț 2011, 19-29).

Class instrumental tuition benefits

Instrumental tuition helps students to develop excellent abilities to work effectively as part of a team, developing their ability to act in the moment through ensemble playing. Organisational and leadership skills, as well as the ability to learn on the go with access at different forms of peer learning, are other benefits that instrumental ensemble tuition can bring to new generations (SPC 2019, 20). Boud et al. speak in their book *Peer Learning in Higher Education. Learning from and with Each Other,* about the mutual benefits gained throught the **sharing** of knowledge, ideas and experience,all elements that class instrumental tuition involves (Bound et alii 2014).

Once the students start instrumental tuition and ensemble playing, they start learning innumerable, lasting skills that can help them develop into intelligent, well rounded adults. For instance, playing solo parts or melodic lines involves leading the rest of the group who are playing the accompanying part for that section.

In addition to this playing the accompaniying part children will learn to follow the solo line and to support the other(s) who are playing the melodic line for a specific section. Both these situations that students encounter during instrumental class tuition develop leadership qualities and self-confidence, as well as collaboration with the team/band. Learning the language of music gives the student opportunity to operate with the most widespread language of the world that is significantly more complex than any other language being able to express ideas, feelings and moods in a single sentence. We can say that the language of music starts when the words finish, or they are too poor to express our thoughts or feeling.

The language of music communicates both with the intellect (through the rational auditory perception of the frequency, duration, intensity that generate it) and with the affective system (through the sensory perception of the moods

and the atmosphere that music transmits through its character). Emotional relevance of music has been investigated by Hans-Eckhardt Schaefer and described in his article *Music-Evoked Emotions - Current Studies.* He cites musical elements which can activate the emotion as tempo (music speed), consonance (peasant harmonies), and dynamism (loud/quiet). The article brings information about the way the music tempo can influence cardiovascular dynamics, consonance can affect the cortical brain areas, and the dynamics lead to specific modulation of cardiovascular activity (Schaefer 2017).

The formative and informative character of the music is undeniable, that's why Plato rightly states that "we cannot talk about music without considering education generally". (Bezdechi 1995, 59).

Erick Clarke at all also speaks about music benefits in their book *Music and mind in every life.* They present music as a great human achievement in terms of the combination of skills that it requires; physical, cognitive, social, and emotional, emphasising that in the reality of instrumental performing, these separable components are entirely interconnected. (Clarke et alii 2010, 21-31).

Therefore, the opportunity to learn a musical instrument through a whole class ensemble tuition should be given to every child, to ensure the great benefit that instrumental tuition can bring to their development.

Children's preference for instrumental tuition

Professor dr. Diana Elena POP-SÂRB ~~mentions~~ cites in her article "Instruments in Musical Education. Between Tradition and New Technologies", the importance of traditional instruments in music education and children preference for instrument playing. (Pop 2016, 23-32).

In her research experiment during the music education classes, she filled a questionnaire with 90 children aged 6 to 9 from two primary schools in Zalău. The results show that a percentage of 94% of children included in the research study, considered the involvement of instruments in music classes as being "excellent" or "very good." Only 6% found the involvement of the instruments to be of "medium importance" and 0% opted for the "not at all pleasant" choice.

Loredana Muntean also speaks in her book *Music in school today* about the children desire and preference for musical instruments. She observed that children invent and improvise musical instruments, and often they pretend to play an imaginary one. (Muntean 2013, 26-33).

A brief history of the Romanian music education system

Looking back at the Romanian music education history, we can deduce that instrumental music education has remained a prerogative of music schools since 1860, the year that marks the official beginnings of the Romanian music school. This was established in *Iași*, by decree no. 45 of Aug 13, 1860, signed by the head of state, Alexandru Ioan Cuza (Bolovan et alii 2018, 753).

Spiru Haret marked one of the most spectacular leaps in Romanian music education. As Minister of Education, he passed on Aug 28, 1902, the law no. 9445, regarding the introduction of music classes in Romanian primary and secondary schools (Aurel 2013, p2). The purpose of introducing music in Romanian education was to teach children to sing national music that had the power to transmit national values. In fact, the vocal and choral music was the one introduced in Romanian schools, present still stands to this day.

George Breazul's merits in the development of Romanian music education system through his work as a high school music teacher, inspector in the Governmental Department of Education, university teacher, and author of school music programs and textbooks are also uncontestable. Truly appreciated is his campaign started in 1926, for a new department of "Music Pedagogy", to ensure the pedagogical, psychological and academic skills of those who were going to train the new generations (Vasile 2010, 142-182).

Yet, all these jumps in the music education system, did not bring instrumental tuition in non-music specialist schools.

Usage of Music technology for instrumental tuition

Music technology represents a strong and exciting additional tool for both students and teachers in the introduction of instrumental music education stipulated in the framework plans for general pre-university education. The creation of digital platforms in the Romanian language to provide strategies, methods and resources for achieving an updated music education has now become an urgent need.

The ideal solution would be to create digital platforms which can be accessed both in schools and at home. Musicians can then take advantage of both musical folklore and western music culture.

In this way, the two great sources of inspiration of the famous Romanian composers mentioned above can continue on their way as ambivalences of our musical culture, as they have done so far. Creating an original way of introducing instrumental education by the re-evaluation of the national tradition, maintaining at the same time a policy of permanent openness to communication with the outside, will expand the possibility of external knowledge and appreciation of the culture and spirituality of the Romanian people. Thus, music will continue to be a dynamic factor in promoting national cultural values abroad, action facilitated by multimedia.

For the beginning of instrumental tuition, until we have a digital music platform in our language, we can use already existing ones. Most of them use an international language and can offer a jumpstart instrumental journey. Instrumental learning platforms address well-known songs for the current generation and will make the process of instrumental tuition class not just easy but also extremely attractive.

Instrument learning app

The advantages of using instrumental applications are multiple. We can list a few:

- the existence of a portable teacher
- the possibility to decide the place and time of practice
- the existence of immediate feedback
- the continuous monitoring of the progress,
- the presence of harmonic support that can also have the role of metronome via backtracks of the studied songs,
- the possibility to choose the melodies you learn.

All these work together as a strong stimulant in the process of assimilating instrumental skills, helping students to understand how music works.

The list of current existing app for instrumental tuition is extensive, and there is a variety of instrument that can be learned through the online apps.

Apps for mobile devices and also for PCs include;

- **PlayAlongRecorder** a mobile app for learning to play Recorder. The app gives the facility of listening as you play and receiving guidance through the melody of a selected song. The music library of the app includes 250+ songs and scales.
- **Kala Ukulele** a mobile app for learning to play the ukulele. The app gives the facility of displaying the songs in a play-along style with easy chords, lyrics, and adjustable backing tracks.
- **JamPlay** a great mobile app to start learning guitar as a beginner. The app offers over 450+ On-Demand courses and over 6,500+ lessons catering for beginners right the way through to advanced players.
- **Yousician** an interactive online music service which currently supports guitar, piano, ukulele, bass, and voice learn and play. The application is available on iOS, Android, Windows and macOS platforms.
- **Trala** combines video lessons from world-class violinists with instant pitch and rhythm feedback. It is a learning tool in the pocket.

More information about these apps can be found on their website. There are also a significant number of digital platforms for listening to music, including YouTube, Vimeo, Spotify, Google Play, etc. A fantastic

audition platform is **"Classical 100"** a collection of 100 classical recordings with learning activities and information relating to each piece. The platform was made by UK Classic FM in collaboration with ABRSM and Decca Classics and permitted the exploration of the songs by mood, instrument, tempo or historical period (Classical 2020).

For the assimilation of music notation and music theory concepts, we can use another type of music app and games created for children starting with Reception class. We can enumerate **Tenuto, Theory Works and Music Theory Basics, Music Theory Pro, Music Tutor, Note Teacher, Music Reading Trainer, MuseScore, Read Music, Music Theory Helper, Learning Notes** and the list continues. The app must be chosen according to the device and its operating system. To these applications, teachers can add posters, videos, recordings, worksheets, arrangements / accompaniments / backtracks of some Romanian well-known folk songs and also songs from the international repertoire, created at the beginning by the class teacher.

There is evidence that Gheorghe Dima, the Music Academy of Cluj has already started to use (with success) music technologies, especially for distance learning programs (AMGD 2020).

This evidence that the process of adapting to the existing requirements and techniques in the current world's music context has already started. The awareness of needs brings the solution after a while.

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THE BEAUTY OF NATURE, THE REFINEMENT OF THE DINNER TABLE FEASTING WITH CERES, BACCHUS AND VENUS. THE CONCEPT OF AN EXHIBITION

Iulia MESEA*

Abstract: *Temporary exhibitions organised by museums often come to complete local, national or international events, when their theme can be adapted to the patrimony and to the space of the museum. It is a means by which both the significance of the event and its attractiveness are enhanced. The exhibition we present was connected to the event "2019 Sibiu, European Region of Gastronomy". The concept of this exhibition was elaborated keeping in mind the interrogation expressed by the researcher Carolyn Korsemeyer: In what way the artistic representation of taste can be compared with the act of tasting? How elegant and refined is it to refer to a philosophy of taste? And yet, in addition to the gratification of physical appetites, food and drinks, and habits and events connected to them are bearers of symbolic and aesthetic values of human experience and a generous source of inspiration for artists. The essay presents some parts of the thematic project, namely the concept and the structure of the exhibition, and the works included, which belong to 17th–20th century European and Romanian painting and decorative art.*

Keywords: *Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, exhibition, European and Romanian painting, harmony, gastronomy, dinner table, mythological and genre scene, still-life*

Rezumat: *„Frumusețea naturii, rafinamentul mesei. Alături de Ceres, Bacchus și Venus". Expozițiile temporare din muzee se alătură evenimentelor locale, naționale sau internaționale atunci când temele acestora pot fi adaptate patrimoniului și spațiului de muzeu. E un mod de a da amploare evenimentului și de a atrage spre expoziții un public nou. Expoziția al cărei concept este prezentat a fost conectată evenimentului anului 2019, când Sibiul a avut calitatea de Regiune Gastronomică Europeană. Elaborarea conceptului a avut ca punct de referință problema ridicată de cercetătoarea Carolyn Korsemeyer: în ce măsură reprezentarea artistică a domeniului gustului poate fi comparată cu actualitatea exercițiului degustării în sine. Cât de elegant, rafinat sau potrivit este să te referi la o filosofie a gustului? Căci alături de rolul de a oferi supraviețuire și plăcere fizică, mâncarea și băutura poartă valori simbolice și estetice ale experienței umane, fiind o sursă de inspirație generoasă pentru artiști. În expoziție au fost incluse lucrări din colecțiile de pictură și artă decorativă europeană și românească secolele XVII–XX.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Muzeul Național Brukenthal, pictură europeană, pictură românească secolele XVII–XX, armonie, gastronomie, rafinamentul servirii mesei, scena mitologică și de gen, natura moartă*

Motivation: Temporary exhibitions organised by museums often come to complete local, national or international events particularly when their theme can be adopted, or adapted to the patrimony and to the space of the museum. It is a means by which both the significance of the event and its attractiveness are enhanced. At the same time, new categories of public can be "enticed" towards the museum spaces.

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In 2019, Sibiu was the European Region of Gastronomy. The complexity of the project – which launched the flavours and tastes of the area onto the gastronomic stage of the world – allowed for interesting correlations in kindred, or even in unrelated areas. Placed at the confluence of culture and sustenance / nourishment, gastronomy is such a vast field that it can encompass, or be in congruence with natural sciences (botany, biology, etc.), with human sciences (history, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, etc.), even with art (painting, graphics, sculpture, theatre, dance,

music, literature, etc.). This polyvalence generated the idea of an art exhibition which brought together paintings and works of decorative art, thus helping the subject move beyond its limits towards an abstract and aesthetic level.

Organiser: Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu
Manager: Professor Sabin Adrian Luca
Address: Sibiu, 4-5 Piaţa Mare, 550163; Tel. no.: 0269/217691
Venue: Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu / Casa Albastră (Blue House), no. 5, Piaţa Mare (Big Square)
Coordonator: Iulia Mesea Ph.D.
Colaborators:
Co- curators: Alexandru Gh. Sonoc Ph.D., Daniela Dâmboiu Ph.D.
Collection administrators: Iulia Mesea Ph.D., Alexandru Gh. Sonoc Ph.D., Adrian Luca Ph.D.
Conservators: Alexandra Gălăbuț, Daniela Moroșan
Painting restorers: Cristina Fău, Celestina Albișor, Andrei Popa, Ilie Mitrea Ph.D., Ioan Muntean
Wood restorer: Victor Grecu
Graphics & design: Chris Balthes
Installation: Ioan Brai, Bogdan Runcan
PR: Bogdan Runcan, Alexandru Chituta Ph.D., Ramona Nica
Photos: Alexandru Olănescu
Other contributions: Dorin Barbu Ph.D., Robert Strebeli, Cristina Mihu, Alina Foamete, Dana Crețu, Sergiu Chideșa, Călin Bobic, Gheorghe Buleteanu, Mihai Iancovescu, Eugen Frunză, Sorin Denghel, Nicolae Cernica

Thematic concept: Since the theme is not so usual for an art exhibition, the concept was meant to bring out the relationship established between man and nature in the most important aspect of survival /life, namely food which had to be conceived.

Pythagoras taught us that "Nature is in all that exists, indelible, repeating itself"; being in harmony with nature induces beauty – in a philosophical approach – to all that man does; following the teachings of ancient philosophers we centred the theme of the exhibition within the generous boundaries of the concept of harmony. The Greek philosopher Epicurus (342–270 B.C.) advocated a hedonism adjusted by a balancing of pleasures, the life of the sage being moderate, given to contemplation and righteousness. The philosopher considered that the delights of the spirit exceed those of the body and both should be satisfied with prudence, in a rational manner, avoiding indulgence, in order to attain the state of ataraxia, "untroubledness", in other words, harmony. Based on the Epicurean philosophy, the French philosopher Michel Onfray comes to the conclusion that people should be in harmony with themselves and with nature: "to each his own place in nature, in the world, in the cosmos for a fulfilling life – a life we would like to live again, should such a thing be at all possible."

In a world dominated by technology, where science has reached levels not long ago deemed unthinkable, it comes to pass that certain sciences are unable to offer plausible explanations to the phenomena they study. Or, to be more precise, cannot answer questions which pertain to the individuality of the human being, to the subjectivity of the personal perception of reality: why is it that we like a flower, a scenery, a smell, a certain dish, so much? While it is obvious that these are wonderful, the reason behind the verdict: *sublime* or *unpleasant* is quite sophisticated from a biological as well as from a psychosocial point of view. In this context, the syntagma "We are what we eat", based on the philosophical idea that food is the mirror of the consumer, should be nuanced as follows: We are "HOW" we procure food, "HOW" we prepare our meals, "HOW" we eat (including here such aspects as the aesthetics of food, the manner in which the table is set) all these rooted in personal decisions and living conditions which determine us to eat in a certain manner. If we pay closer attention to the various aspects which determine certain diets and eating habits they can help us in the process of self-awareness.

And this is how, while elaborating the concept of this exhibition, we came upon the interrogation expressed by Carolyn Korsemeyer, American author and professor of philosophy, in her study dedicated to food and philosophy: In what way the artistic representation of taste can be compared with the act of tasting? (Korsemayer 2013). How elegant, refined or respectable is it to refer to a philosophy of taste, perhaps the most intimate

of the five senses, which has traditionally been considered beneath the concern of philosophy, too bound to the body, too personal and idiosyncratic? And yet, in addition to the gratification of physical appetites, food and drinks are bearers of symbolic and aesthetic values of human experience and a generous source of inspiration for writers and artists. Interestingly enough, things are not so different in the manner in which we consume art. The visual impact – with the shape, colour and style proposed by the artist – is subjective, something we call "a matter of taste". The theme, the subject of the creation or, in the case of contemporary art, the title leads us towards the process of "digesting", understanding or even seizing the message. (Onfray 2001, 33-45).

Food can be a fountain of pleasure from the moment we obtain it and all through its preparation. It engages taste, smell and sight and triggers the pleasure of eating in the brain. The ritual of bringing food to the table is a celebration of senses, from the visual to the olfactory, and to the gustatory; even the hearing can be regaled by the music which often accompanies such feasts – "because music was invented to keep spirits happy, as does wine" (Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* [1593]) – or, at least, by the clatter of the flatware, porcelain or glassware. Then, there are certain habits and rules, not only aesthetic principles, but also social and sometimes ritual norms, all of which bring into discussion behaviour, mentalities, mythology or religion. All these bear testimony to beliefs, to an individual lifestyle or to communal living with everything that they entail. In approaching these themes, art goes beyond the boundaries of the beauty of the visual representation and of a certain style characteristic of a certain period of time and mirrors societies, epochs, philosophies and moral standards.

The effort of obtaining and serving food includes a variety of habits, attitudes, actions and concepts sometimes quite antithetical from diligence and skilfulness, harmony and love of nature (producing crops and raising livestock) to the cruelty of hunting; from the science of cooking to that of setting the table, of refined tastes and the art of serving to simplicity and even grobianism, from the modest meal eaten in solitude to the lavish – outdoor or indoor – banquet, from avarice and selfishness, to generosity, elegance and hospitality.

From an apple held by the Infant Jesus (to signify his role as Redeemer from sin and death as the apple is considered the fruit of evil) in a religious painting full of religiously symbolic senses, to an unconventional Dutch party were food and drinks accompanied by dancing, joking and more or less decent ways of having fun, food and drink appear in a lot of contexts in European painting, from ancient Greece to contemporary art. (Meagher 2000; Von Schönheit und Tod 2011, 45-48)

What is it that turns a specific food, or the way of procuring, preparing and serving it into a subject of a work of art apart, of course, from the general principle according to which any aspect of reality can be turned into art?

In the course of history, the right, the freedom as well as the possibility to consume a certain food depended on the seasons, on geography and underlined the social differences of the time, aspects displayed in the painting of the time. (Barocke Sammellust 2003, 86-93). In 1783, on the occasion of her nuptials, Mrs. Papenieck, the wife of a modest English civil servant, wrote: "The tea and coffee services were made of ordinary Indian porcelain, our dinnerware was the finest crockery, befitting our status, since Chelsea porcelain and the delicate Indian tableware were the apanage of the wealthy. We could have used Delft, but it is inferior." (Nichols 1996) Silver, gold, Sèvres and Meissen porcelain – which were destined for royalty and aristocracy – were not even mentioned, probably because they were not part of Mrs. Papenieck's daily experience.

Food and ingredients varied from season to season, and according to the calendar of the Church. Early spring, summer and autumn were times of plenty, while winter meals were scant. All these can be identified in the paintings of the time. The Age of Discoveries and the trade in goods and spices meant that new exotic foods were brought to the aristocratic tables at great expense to complete the traditional, more accessible sources (agriculture, livestock, hunting, fishing). They became part of the repertoire of the artists who selected them and tell us a lot about those who commissioned the paintings. Towards the middle of the 17th century, goods imported from all over the world found their places on

the tables of the Dutch, and the Haarlem painters led by Pieter Claesz and Willem Claesz of Heda, introduced the so called "banquet tables" in sumptuous compositions which reflect and celebrate the prosperity of their country.

In the 18th century the pleasures of the table were taken to the next level with the discovery of new foods and spices and with the creation of new recipes. Visually, the table became more interesting, more elaborate, with new serving dishes such as tureens, sauceboats, and centrepieces to present the new recipes. New porcelain factories, founded everywhere in Europe, competed with silver and goldsmiths and supplied elegant dinner and dessert services to the courts of Europe. Also, a growing number of glass factories flourished as their creations were in great demand.

With these in mind, the exhibition combined the idea of offering a sequential illustration of snapshots of the past, associating it with that of elevating the message to the already introduced concept, that of harmony. This was, in fact, the challenge the organisers had to face: the most satisfactory and harmonious display of works which are so different in style and covering an extended period of time.

Although difficult to illustrate, we relied on the power of art, on the energy of each work, and on the capacity of the paintings to support and upgrade each other. The visual harmony was accompanied by intellectual challenges: suggestions, symbols, signs, parables and metaphors found in the paintings, as well as their contextual relation, invited the public to an exercise of imagination through which the past would be recomposed from fragments and snapshots of life: sumptuous, aristocratic dinners preceded by hunting parties, exotic imported goods, the simple table of the ordinary man, a frugal meal or a delicious coffee savoured in solitude, social dining.

Of the approximately one hundred paintings originally considered for the exhibition, my colleagues Alexandru Sonoc Ph.D. and Daniela Dâmboiu Ph.D. as well as collaborators from the departments of conservation and restoration, and I ended up selecting fifty-seven creations painted between the 18th and 20th century, belonging to the Flemish-Dutch, German-Austrian, Italian and Romanian schools and twelve pieces of decorative art.

Principles of the exhibition

The exhibition was structured on the following principles: individuality, comparability, scientific (including thematic coherence), objectivity and communicative (informative, educational), accessibility and attractiveness. The comparative and communicative criteria generated the five section structure of the exhibition: thematic grouping of paintings and decorative art, accompanied by explanatory panels. The sections were not strictly separated, so that subjects, themes, artists, styles and techniques correlate and complement each other.

The visual diversity of the exhibition was given by the variety of styles and genres, by the plurality of relations /correspondence /connections we proposed starting from sources and ways of procuring food, variant manners of setting and adorning the table and of serving the food, the space destined for eating, details which, either spectacular or modest, meager even, open a window on the life, habits, emotions and taste of the people and of the space they inhabited long ago.

Structure of the exhibition

The exhibition was organised on six sections, each containing sub-sections, but the limits of each section are not rigid, on the contrary, they are fluid, mobile and permissive, so that the themes relate to each other, ideas and suggestions flow and unite all the exhibited works, building a strong feeling of the message.

The direction of the construct develops form the basic concepts: nature and the feast of gods as staring points, and develop as a network for all the entire structure of the exhibition.

The exhibition opens with a *Feast of Gods* as featured by Abraham Janssens (reproduction) and ends with an "invitation" to a romantic intimate dinner conveyed by Elena Popea's *Still-life with Candlestick.*

A large text board presents the concept of the exhibition and each section is opened with texts presenting the general idea of the section and information on the most important artists and works.

Sections of the exhibition

- The mythological theme – core and metaphor of the entire exhibition
- Sources of food: hunting, fishing, the raising of livestock, agriculture, crops
- Eating in nature versus banquet / the poor man's table versus the rich man's table
- Religious scenes as a background for genre scenes (in the kitchen)
- Interior scenes with gastronomic connotation
- Still life with game, flowers and fruits (as well as other elements, such as vegetables)

The mythological theme

Myths are the oldest form of imparting knowledge coded in images and symbols. Taking its models from people and facts of the past, the myth becomes a means by which the present is explained; it describes a system of values and contributes to creating cultural values so that, together with the religious theme, it was vastly exploited in literature, music and art.

Either as encouragement to "enjoy life and make merry" or as a guide to moderation and temperance, ever since antiquity, both in literature and in art, the serving of food was associated with drinking, music, dancing and love. In his play *The Eunuc*, Publius Terentius Afer, wrote: *Sine Cerere et Baccho (Libero) friget Venus* (Without Ceres and Bacchus, Venus Freezes). (Barocke Sammellust 2003, 126-127; Hrib 2007, 64-65; Kocks 1979, 117-142) The theme was favoured by Italian painters of the Renaissance, by Dutch painters and it was approached by all European schools of painting. It even diversified (*Banquet of the Gods, Marriage of Amor and Psyche, of Neptune and Amphitrite, of Peleus and Thetis, The Judgement of Paris, The Triumph of Bacchus*, etc.), offering the artists the possibility to create ample compositions, to depict nudes, to render paradisiac nature scenes or even spectacular still lifes. (Barocke Sammellust 2003, 108-109; Bruegel, Memling 2009, 104-105; Hrib 2007, 70-71; Ungureanu 2014-2015, 150-152). The gods party at banquets or in pastoral scenes, sitting. Abraham Jansens' brilliant composition *Ceres, Bacchus and Venus* is a veritable ode to the joy of living, to the delights of life and to love. (Brueghel, Cranach 2012, 138-139; Bruegel, Memling 2009, 132-133). In the European Renaissance painting the first major depiction of the subject was Givanni Bellini's *Feast of the Gods*.

Although they receive the offerings of the mortals, consisting of the fruits of the field, the gods feast on Nectar and Ambrosia, in other words food destined exclusively to the Olympians. Eating the food of gods could bring radical changes to the life of mortals. Legends offer many examples: a semi-divine hero, Hercules becomes immortal after he suckles milk from Hera's breast; a single pomegranate seed condemns Persephone, abducted by Hades, to eternity in the underworld; no more than one single seed from the fruit sealed her fate. Proserpina's cyclical descent to Hades and rise to Earth that followed her mistake, was believed to bring about the changing of seasons, and the pomegranate was thus seen as a symbol of resurrection and immortality. In Christian imagery, the pomegranate embodies much the same symbol.

Nature's generosity was influenced by gods, and the relationship between them and the mortals' needs were very close. Triptolemus was also a beneficiary of the mercy of gods; when sick Ceres fed him her breast milk. Later on, he was taught by Persephone helped by her mother, Ceres (or Demeter, goddess of the harvest and agriculture) the art of agriculture: to plant and reap crops. In turn he educated the whole of Greece in the art of agriculture. According to Porphyry of Tyrea (233–305), a Neoplatonic philosopher, Triptolemus taught the Greeks three things: to honour their parents, honour the gods and the fruit of the fields and spare the life of animals! Thus, Porphyry, together with Pythagoras (580–495 B.C.) was among the first to promote vegetarianism on spiritual and ethical grounds.

Certain fruit, vegetables or dishes relate in strange unexpected way the world of gods with that of the earthlings. The vine is the attribute of Bacchus (Dionysus), who represents the power of nature. He discovered the culture of the vine and the mode of extracting wine, but jealous Hera struck him with madness. In turn, he punishes those who refuse to recognise his cult and accept the vine in the same way.

The apple played an unexpected role at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis when the goddess Eris tossed it in the midst of the feast of the gods. This ignited the first beauty contest and Paris, the Trojan mortal, was to judge the case of the three goddesses. Thus, The Judgment of Paris came to ignite the Trojan War.

All these legends with their teachings, from life in harmony with nature under gods' protection or guidance, to the gods' parties and banquets offered the painters numerous subjects and inspiration for their art. The banquets of gods were depicted more or less sophisticatedly, but often very similar to a depiction of a rustic picnic eaten on the ground.

Sometimes expensive refined objects displayed in the rich parties of the gods connect them with the rich life of the aristocrats. In the famous *Banquet of Gods* (*The Feast of the Gods*) by Giovanni Bellini (1514) (Nalezyty 2009) a spectacular China tureen (blue and white Ming type china) is depicted in the centre of the composition making a relation between gods' life and rich rare goods, people used to trade from distant places. It is the earliest depiction of Chinese porcelain in European painting, in an epoch when china barely started to appear in Europe not by trade, but as diplomatic gifts (this one in the property of Duke Alphonso I d'Este, Bellini's patron and commissioner of the mentioned painting). In the 16th century, as a consequence of the trade from China to Europe, that brought large quantities of porcelain, numerous other painters would use Chinese porcelain in their paintings, especially the Dutch, as some of the works in the exhibition show.

Gods' parties were almost always opportunity for the painters to combine genres and show landscape fragments, genre scenes, nudes and even still lifes, in large refined, sophisticated compositions. (Ungureanu 2014–2015, 58-63). Some painters like Hendrik van Balen and Frans Francken II specialized in this genre and are known above all for these subjects. (Bruegel, Memling 2009, 84-85; Brueghel, Cranach 2012, 140-145).

Exhibited works and works on the subject to be found in the permanent exhibition

Abraham Janssens ca.1576–1632, *Ceres, Bacchus and Venus*, inv. 577 (EAG);
Dutch Anonymous 18th c., *Vertumnus and Flora*, inv. 829;
Joachim Wtewael c. 1566–1638, *Ceres, Goddess of Crops*, inv. 1275;
Joachim Wtewael c. 1566–1638, *Bacchus*, inv. 1276;
Frans Wouters 1612–1659, *Diana and her Nymphs after Hunt*, inv. 994;
Frans Francken II 1581–1642, *Neptune and Amphitrite*, inv. 393 (EAG);
Frans Francken II 1581–1642, *In front of the Cave (The Banquet of Gods*), inv. 400 (EAG);
Hendrik van Balen 1575–1632, *Judgment of Paris*, inv. 48 (EAG) ;
Cornelis Van Haarlem Cornelisz (1562–1628), *The Wedding of Peleus and Thetis*, inv. 202;
Francesco Zugno 1709–1787, *The Allegory of Virtue (Bacchus and Ariadna*), inv. 192;
Michele Rocca, called Young Parmigianino, (1670?–1751), *Bacchus and Ariadna*, inv. 1115;
Sava Henția 1848–1904, *Amor and Psyche*, inv. 2389 (RAG).

The aristocratic banquets / Simple people's parties

The aristocratic, rural, or peasant feast as a sub-genre derived from the mythological scene of the banquet of gods. These genre scenes do not tell us much about what the participants in the party were eating but rather about the manner in which they did it: free of restraint, they enjoyed lavish food and expensive wine, music and dancing.

While most of the aristocratic scenes show refinement in this kind of events, at the opposite side artists depict parties dominated by rude, ill-bread behaviour, absence of manners or self-control, with moralizing allusions.

Sources of food: hunting, fishing, livestock rearing, agriculture, crops

Nature has always been man's main source of food. Usually people were interested in obtaining all necessities from nature, but they did not forget to consider this source as Mother-Earth that has to be loved, admired, enjoyed and taken care of. Strong connections with nature are also suggested in paintings with the theme of the four seasons (Andreea Celesti 1637–1711, *Spring, Summer, Autumn*,

Winter, exhibited in the permanent exhibition of the European Art Gallery) (Barocke Sammellust 2003, 86-93).

More than any other means of procuring food (hunting, fishing, livestock rearing, agriculture, crops), hunting, followed by a merry party, was a source of inspiration for artists who rendered them in spectacular compositions. Very popular in the 17th century with artists belonging to all European schools of painting, the hunting scene was rendered either as a mythological scene or as a genre scene: the aristocratic hunting party, or the poor man hunting for food, resulted in ample, dynamic compositions.

The ordinary man who hunts for his food is depicted in harmony with nature; such genre scenes are more meditative than spectacular, resembling the pantheist fishing scenes or bucolic scenes where the artist renders the beauty of nature and man's natural communion with the environment (Mureșan 2007, 59-60).

Aristocratic hunting parties are a display of high social position, hunting attire, beauty of horses and of the hunted animals, of the agitation and restlessness which precede the hunting, the tumult of the action itself, the satisfaction, or of the noisy party, following the hunt.

Moving past the stage when hunting was a means of survival and then a symbol of social hierarchy, the hunt expresses, already in some mythological stories, man's longing for the time when he was a hunter-gatherer who enjoyed unlimited freedom, condition he abandoned to become a shepherd or a tiller of the soil, his yearning for return to a time when the encounter with the divine was possible. Thus, hunting may also be a symbol of the quest for a spiritual path (Ferrari 2003).

Diana, the goddess of hunting, famous for her power, athletic grace and beauty, was the patroness of the countryside, fields, wild woodland, wild animals and miraculous healings. She is usually depicted nude in fabulous natural settings. After the hunt she sometimes parties with her nymphs in a manner resembling the genre scene *Diana and Her Nymphs after Hunt*, painted by Frans Wouters.

Fairs are places were all kind of goods, mostly food have been traded. Baroque painting exploited in this kind of works the rich decorative potential of the moment and the dynamism of the scenes. The picturesque atmosphere of fairs inspired artists throughout centuries, up to modern times (Barocke Sammellust 2003, 72-73). Sometimes unexpected emotion is caught in the discovery of a colour, shape or scent of an unknown fruit, as it is displayed in the *Lemon Merchant* of an unknown Flemish painter, in the permanent exhibition of the Brukenthal European Art Gallery (Barocke Sammellust 2003, 194-195; Hrib 2007, 85-87).

Exhibited Works

Joseph Heintz jr. 1590–1678, *Venetian Feast*, inv. 550;
Nicolaus Pangel 18th c., *Arrival of the Hunting Party*, inv. 874;
Frans Xavier H. Verbeeck 1686–1755, *Merry Party with Game*, inv.1207;
Frans Xavier H. Verbeeck 1686–1755, *Merry Company with Game*, inv. 1208;
Jan Carel Vierpeyl 1697–1717, *Dancing Party*, inv. 1216;
Jan Carel Vierpeyl 1697–1717, *Party*, inv. 1217;
Pieter van Bloemen, called Standaart 1657–1720, *Small Herd near the Rocks*, inv. 80;
Frans Wouters 1612–1659, *Diana and Her Nymphs after Hunt*, inv. 994;
Jan Fyt 1611–1661, *Game Watched over by Dogs*, inv. 412;
Peter Rijsbrack 1655–1729, *Still Life with Wild Ducks*, inv. 1003;
Peter Rijsbrack 1655–1729, *Still Life with Wild Hens*, inv. 1004;
Johan Baptist Govaerts ca. 1701–1745, *Game and Hunting Horn*, inv. 434;
Johann Martin Stock 1742–1800, *Still-life with Rooster*, inv. 1135;
Hermine Hufnagel 1864–1897, *Still-life with Hunting Trophies*, inv. 589.

Still-life (with game – symbolic significance of still life with hunted animals – an allegorical narrative/with flowers and fruit and other edibles, especially vegetables)

While god, aristocratic, rural, or peasant feast displayed how people of the time used to eat and party, still lifes let us learn more about what they ate, how appetizing the food, and how refined the taste in laying the table was.

The passion to depict the natural world was equalled to that to depict objects connected to "the source of life", to food such as fruits, sweets, and wine vessels, as well as flora and fauna, in both devotional and secular images. They were great opportunities for artists to display their skills of observation and description of colour, shape, and texture which were often accompanied by symbolic or metaphoric meaning (Von Schönheit und Tod 2011, 51-75).

After having been on the lowest step of the genre hierarchy, by the end of the sixteenth century, still life became a cherished subject. Leonardo da Vinci's contribution to this change was fundamental. His study drawings of trees, plants, and fruits, encouraged careful description of the subject from nature. He was followed by artists who challenged this convention, and a new generation of painters brought a greater naturalism, and with it an elevated esteem, to the genre. Around 1600, Caravaggio's naturalistic description of objects based on direct observation had a profound impact on painting.

Still-life painting as an independent genre flourished in the Netherlands during the early 1600s and then spread throughout Europe's painting schools. It was the result of the increasing urbanization of Dutch and Flemish society, which brought with it an emphasis on the home and personal possessions. Foodstuffs and serving vessels depicted with exquisite realism and detail enjoyed enormous popularity among rich patrons for whom expensive delicacies and hunting trophies of game were associated with an exquisite privileged lifestyle. Though often embodied with symbols and hidden meaning, comestible items serve no obvious allegorical purpose, or may be viewed as general reminders of the transient nature of luxury, the virtue of temperance, or the perils of gluttony. Moralizing meanings are also common in still-life paintings of the seventeenth century (Mureșan 2007, 68, 126, 132,159, 172-175; Von Schönheit und Tod 2011, 93-103, 123-130, 194-201).

Floral still lifes especially flourished in the early 1600s. Their sophisticated arrangements, refined execution, symbolism and messages were addressed to a cultivated audience. An attentive analyse of such a floral still life will reveal many sorts of flowers coming from all over the world and specific to different natural conditions and seasons. This subgenre was very popular in Antwerp and the Hague, while Harlem society would rather exhibit rich tables with food and expensive dishes and vessels; vanitas still life was popular in Leiden (Liedtke 2000).

This genre peaked in the 17th century in The Netherlands in synchronicity with colonialism which brought unprecedented prosperity to Europe, especially to The Lower Countries. As already mentioned, the aristocracy and the rich bourgeoisie (stronger after The Thirty Years' War which ended in 1648 with the peace of Westphalia) not only enjoyed a luxury they could afford, but also wanted to immortalize the characteristics of such a way of life. Luxury imported goods are introduced in still life compositions which, initially, were small, but later became large, sumptuous and elaborate. The table, adorned with compositions of fruits, flowers, flatware, expensive hollowware made of precious metal or glass, lamps, Oriental rugs and expensive textiles, sometimes even musical instruments, is an invitation, a sign of hospitality, the mark of an opulent lifestyle. Interesting mentioning in this context is the fact that breakfast sets were only introduced into the repertoire of still lifes by a paintress, Clara Peteers (active between 1607 and 1621), one of the few female artists of that time. She was also the one to use fish and hunted animals in her creations five, ten years before other artists did (Brusati 1990, 172-175).

A table with flatware and grandiose services reveal the taste for certain foods, even exotic, hard to procure delicacies but it can also hint to a philosophy of life and/or to a "vanity of vanities". Symbolically, oranges, apples and melons (especially the sliced ones), plums and peaches enhance the idea of pleasure, of savour and indulgence and are also symbols of fertility, regeneration, love and sensuality; a piece of fruit half eaten, or peeled, an extinguished candle or the presence of an insect hint towards the ephemeralness of life; the caterpillar and the butterfly are symbols of metamorphosis, of the cycles of life and rebirth; the snail, the moth, and the spider are symbols of decay and of the night, the grapes

and the grains are symbols of the Eucharist, of liturgical offerings (Barocke Sammellust 2003, 176-177, 110-111; Bruegel, Memling 2009, 115-128; Von Schönheit und Tod 2011, 93-101).

Symbols are elusive: a broken vessel may be the sign of depravation, of a constant battle between vice and virtue, but it can also be a sign of wealth. The art historian, Michel Faré in the studies he dedicated to the type, meaning and role of the still lifes, asserts that the role of a still life is not so much to stimulate the appetite, but rather to give food for thought, to raise the appetite for spiritual food. Again symbolically, once painted, freed from their frailty and from the danger of decaying, the food becomes enduring/ perennial (Korsemeyer 2002, 183).

The game, always present in banquets and feasts, alludes to the ephemeralness of pleasure, to disappearance, to death. Death is implicit in still-lifes, but decorativeness, enhanced in the detriment of the significance, lowered in time the status of the genre, which came to be considered a "minor genre" (Korsemeyer 2002, 178; Von Schönheit und Tod 2011, 95-99).

For the neo-clasical painters, still lifes were opportunities to prove their skills in organising large compositions, in rendering their richness, the textures of different materials, the brightness, transparencies and other physical characteristics of different objects (Mesea 2012, 96-99). Modern painting courageously changes even this aspect of painting injecting again still life with force and changing it in the freest land of pictorial experiments. The presence of special dish used in the kitchen are incredible suggestive and they lay a comfortable intimate emotion to the paintings. The grinding mortar, next to a stew pan and some vegetable, in Ștefan Dimitrescu's still life builds all around the work an entire idea of a simple but pleasant and peaceful life. The same feeling is generated in the presence of the broken egg. In a leap over time, as the arrangement of the works of the exhibition often proposed to the public, we find that in the creation of the interwar painter Theodor Pallady, incorporates in his still lifes not only the decorative-aesthetic dimension, but also a symbolical one. Attributes of femininity (fruit, plate, mug/cup) and of masculinity (knife, nargileh, pen), of life and its ephemeralness (flowers, pomegranate, apple) are invoked. The content of the still lifes is ambivalent, each object being endowed with timeless significance being both the expression of a passing moment and the artist's testimonial (Mesea 2016, 89-91, 137-143, 177).

Ion Țuculescu, Hans Eder and Hermann Konnerth, artists of the 20th century, induce unsuspected expressiveness to objects of daily life appealing to surprising compositions, exaggerated shapes and strong chromatic contrasts. Sabin Popp on the other hand invites to moments of intimate and pleasant relaxation bringing to our attention pieces of a tea set, a lemon, two books, apples, a bottle of wine – attributes of the „good life" – everything in bright colours and delicate touches of warm hues. The two works signed by the young painter remind of the cézannian lesson and the pursuit to assure his own conception of order and harmony to the surrounding reality reconstructed on canvas.

Exhibited paintings

Peter Snyers 1681–1752, *Still Life with Fruits and Onion*, inv. 1111;
Peter Snyers 1681–1752, *Still Life with Fruits and Flowers*, inv.1112;
Franz Werner von Tamm zis Dapper 1658–1724, *Birds and Capercaillie*, inv. 1154;
Franz Werner von Tamm 1658–1724, *Flowers and Blue Morning Glory*, inv. 1155;
Franz Werner von Tamm 1658–1724, *Bouquet of Flowers with* Anemones, inv. 1157;
German anonymous 18th c., *Grapes and Caterpillars*, inv. 32;
Franz Snyders 1579–1657, *Flemish Cook*, inv. 773 (EAG) ;
Jan Davidsz de Heem (manner of) 1606–1683, *Fruits and Crashed Melon*, inv. 512;
Carl Dörschlag 1832–1917, *Still-life with Birds*, inv. 317;
Rhea Silvia Radu 1900–1989, *Still Life with Grapes*, inv. 1763;
Max Arnold 1897–1946, *Still Life with Lemons*, inv. 2683;
Lucian Grigorescu 1894–1965, *Still-life with Fruit and Flowerpot*, inv. 2262;
Grete Csaki-Copony 1893–1990, *Flowers*, inv. 3111;
Theodor Pallady 1871–1956, *Natură moartă cu narghilea*, inv. 2155;

Theodor Pallady 1871–1956, *Still-life with Rabbit*, inv. 2301;
Ion Țuculescu 1910–1962, *Still-life with Pheasant and Crayfish*, inv. 2360;
Ion Theodorescu-Sion 1882–1939, *Still-life with Autumn Fruit*, inv. 2237;
Ion Theodorescu-Sion 1882–1939, *Still-life with Autumn Fruit*, inv. 2245;
Lotte Goldschmit 1871–1925, *Still-life with Apples*, inv. 1385;
Walter Widmann 1891–1966, *Still-life with Bananas*, inv. 2768;
Adam Bălțatu 1889–1979, *Still-life with Pheasant*, inv. 2365;
Francisc Șirato 1977–1953, *Still-life with Carafe and Crayfish*, inv. 2823;
Aurel Jiquidi 1896–1962, *Still-life (in the Kitchen)*, inv. 2367;
Ștefan Dimitrescu 1886–1933, *Still-life with Grinding Mortar*, inv. 2478;
Hans Eder 1883–1955, *Still-life with Carrots*, inv. 2569;
Sabin Popp 1896–1928, *Still-life with Apples*, inv. 2973;
Sabin Popp 1896–1928, *Still-life with Red Teapot*, inv. 2974;
Elena Popea 1879–1941, *Still-life with Candlestick*, inv. 1737.

Genre scenes – fairs, interiors, kitchen

Sometimes the religious subject is an opportunity to describe earthly places and habits, as in *The Rich Man and Poor Lazarus (*After Jacopo dal Ponte Bassano) were a kitchen full of goods and frantic activity are displayed. The painting and its theme connect the exhibition with the kitchen subject which is presented in the permanent exhibition of the Brukenthal Palace. In Frans Sneyders' *Flemish Cook*, the bunch of grapes allude to the Last Supper, when Jesus gave wine to his disciples and said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20). This intention of the symbol is supported by the scene with Jesus at Emmaus in the background of the painting (Brueghel, Cranach 2012, 144-145; Hrib 2007, 68-69).

The scenes with people eating and drinking outdoors or in poor pubs with dim light are very popular in Flemish painting of the 17th century. Sometimes displayed with aristocratic distancing or with ironical moralising attitude, painters show these moments with realism; people eat, but mostly drink, play cards, smoke, sing and search the presence of easy ladies. These paintings are the bourgeois replica to the spectacularly rich aristocratic parties (Barocke Sammellust 2003, 62-65); Bruegel, Memling 2009, 106-108).

Kitchen or saloon scenes are also common and fully exploited in 19th and even 20th centuries painting. A genre scene in which coffee is enjoyed, or a still life with fruit and nargileh, a tea set which has just been used or a glass of lemonade (most certainly drank on a hot summer's day) radiate savour, intimacy, sensuousness and describe a way of life (Mesea 2016, 150-151, 170-171).

Full of suggestion, revealing a special, even mysterious atmosphere, is the group of genre scenes with odalisques and women in interiors. The painting of this period does not deny itself a dose of sensuousness and "forbidden" pleasures associated with the act of eating and drinking. Theodor Aman's *Odalisque*, Iosif Iser's *Turkish and Tartar women* who sip coffee, the refreshing lemonade and the hot tea – or the glass of wine – in the compositions of Francisc Șirato and Sabin Popp, the fragrance of the hookah (Th. Pallady) and the sounds of the mandolin played by the characters of Iser and Catargi are all invitations to indulge (Mesea 2016, 89-91, 137-143, 177).

We propose to end this perilous full of olfactory, visual and gustatory impressions with a romantic moment, Elena Popea's *Still Life with Candlestick*: sheltered from the chill of the night we are invited to sit at a table delicately lit by the candles, which is not only the re-creation of a festive moment, but also the promise of a romantic evening (Mesea 2010, 21-23).

Exhibited paintings

Andries Both 1609–1650, *Sailors Having a Party*, inv. 94;
After David Teniers cel Tânăr 1610–1690, *People Drinking in a Country Pub*, inv. 1167;
Max Krusemark 1852–1905, *Women in a Kitchen*, inv. 1961;
Franz von Defregger 1835–1921, *Scene in a Pub*, inv. 2233;
Jan Frans van Son 1658–1701, *Fruits with Broken Melon*, inv. 1067;
After Jacopo dal Ponte Bassano 1510–1592, *The Rich Man and Poor Lazarus*, inv. 909;

Pieter van Bredael 1629–1719, *Fair near Saint Angelo Bridge in Rome*, inv. 131;
Arthur Coulin 1869–1912, *Woman with a Samovar*, inv. 3228;
Theodor Aman 1831–1891, *Odalisque*, inv. 2072
Theodor Pallady 1871–1956, *Odalisque*, inv. 1999;
Iosif Iser 1881–1958, *Interior with Two Turkish Women*, inv. 2557;
Aurel Băieșu 1897–1928, *Peasants Working the Field*, inv. 2404;
Vasile Popescu 1894–1944, *The Fish Seller*, inv. 1966;
Hermann Konnerth 1881–1966, *Pumpkin Vendor*, inv. 1483;
Samuel Mützner 1884–1959, *Vegetable Garden*, inv. 2185.

Notwithstanding the style of the paintings, from mannerism, baroque, rococo, neoclassicism all the way to the styles of modernity (impressionism, fauvism, expressionism), the exhibition was an opportunity to reiterate the concept of harmony: man with nature, with the small or wide circle he is a part of, of the individual with society, of each with his own self, and with each aspect of life, including food.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS / LISTA ILUSTRAȚIILOR

Fig. 1-5. Images of the exhibition / Imagini din expoziție


MUZEUL
NAȚIONAL
BRUKENTHAL
FRUMUSEȚEA
NATURII,
RAFINAMENTUL
MESEI.
ALĂTURI DE
CERES, BACCHUS ȘI VENUS
7 AUG - 29 SEPT 2019
VERNISAJ: 7 AUGUST 2019, ORA 13:00
CASA ALBASTRĂ, SALA MULTIMEDIA, PIAȚA MARE NR. 5
Parteneri:

A NEW WAY TO SEE THE ROMANIAN REVOLUTION AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF TRANSYLVANIAN HISTORY IN CLUJ-NAPOCA. DECONSTRUCTING AN EXHIBITION

Ioana GRUIȚĂ-SAVU, Ioana COVA*

Abstract: *This collaborative article is concerned with a different way of designing an exhibition dealing with a dramatic event in Romania's recent history, i.e. the Revolution of December 1989. The paper shows the curator's (art historian) and co-curator's (textile conservator) perspective and input on how a conceptual, interdisciplinary and interactive exhibition is mounted. The main topics this article deals with are concerned with the novelty our exhibition brings in terms of design concept, approach and objects display, with our choices in exhibiting objects and our innovative display techniques, all of them employed in order to bring a selective and exigent public to the museum.*

Key words: *exhibition, history, concept, museum studies, revolution, interactive, interdisciplinary*

Rezumat: *Articolul nostru colaborativ prezintă, din punct de vedere al curatorului – istoric de artă și al co-curatorului – restaurator, conservator, modul în care se poate pune în scenă o expoziție de concept, interdisciplinară și interactivă, referitoare la un subiect sensibil din istoria recentă a României, Revoluția română din Decembrie 1989. În acest articol vrem să punctăm noutățile pe care expoziția le aduce prin concept, prin abordare și design, care au fost strategiile noastre de expunere și soluțiile inovatoare astfel încât să atragem un segment de public selectiv și exigent.*

Cuvinte cheie*: expoziție, istorie, concept, muzeografie, revoluție, interactiv, interdisciplinar*

Nowadays, the museum must be much more than a simple custodian of artifacts, or an institution that exhibits and exploits them scientifically. The contemporary museum is even more oriented towards the need of the visitors; it must be a source of knowledge for its public, but also a generator of experiences, emotions, to be an active part of society and its barometer. The museum must play a formative role and, at the same time, must be entertaining, spectacular, a place where the visitor alone, or together with his/her family can spend quality time. Numerous studies have emerged in recent years on how new exhibitions need to be designed to respond to an increasingly demanding, technology-based, visual audience that is accustomed to receiving information quickly and easily.

The exhibition "Cluj 1989.21.12"[1] was meant to commemorate 30 years from the 1989 Revolution, emphasizing the drama of all those who participated, directly or indirectly, in the revolutionary events of December 1989. The topic was very difficult to approach, and we offer several reasons. First of all, the theme is extremely delicate, survivors of the revolution and the relatives of the victims are still marked by the events in December, secondly, there are numerous question still unanswered related to what happened, and thirdly the artifacts related to the event are rare and most of them are interesting for research but not so spectacular as exhibits. The community reacts extremely emotional to this subject; everyone has a personal opinion over the events. This was, is and will be a hot subject and we had to determine the best way to approach it. We had to be historically accurate, but there aren't numerous scientific sources on the subject

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[1] The exhibition "Cluj 1989.21.12" was officialy opened to the public on November 21st, 2019. Project team: Ioana Gruiță-Savu, Ioana Cova, Diana Iegar, Manuela Marin, Ana Maria Gruia, Sanda Man, Victoria Barabas.

matter, and we had to tell a coherent story of the Romanian revolution in December, and accentuate the particular story of Cluj-Napoca, without numerous artifacts to sustain it.

Several studies published by museum specialists all over the world underline the importance of the story behind museum artifacts, and the participatory factor, to actively involve the visitors, and to offer him/her the opportunity to identify oneself with the exhibition. (Simon 2010)

When we started planning our temporary exhibition, in March 2019, the draught for the future event raised some important questions that needed an answer: Do we want a conceptual, a narrative, an esthetic, or a taxonomic exhibition? What artifacts do we have in our collection? What are our strong points? What is our message? Why was the subject relevant for the community? Who are we addressing to - what is our targeted public? Do we prepare additional materials, like a catalog, or a brochure? Are we thinking about organizing some additional, post opening events? Is our exhibition static or dynamic?

We started from the idea of constructing a different kind of exhibition, built upon our heritage, but not exclusively, adapted to our exhibition spaces and our financial resources and most importantly to our public's need and expectations. Consulting with the members of our team, with potential visitors, with those who lived the revolution in adulthood, and with young people who had no idea about the revolution, we decided that we need a new way in approaching recent history, a new and risky way to present this subject; we needed a conceptual exhibition. More and more the museums all over the world organize consultations with their community, with the goal of reaching new audiences, and this reflects over the exhibition development (Koke, Ryan 2017, 51).

We aimed at having an emotional impact through the stimulation of the senses and our strong point were some artifacts identified in our collection, dated 21 of December '89, with an extraordinary story behind. The concept was contemporary, of installation type, interactive, interdisciplinary and co-participatory; it was based on contemporary technical means, with the help of which we managed to transmit, in an easy and direct way, the prepared informative material.

We knew right from the start that we did not wish to narrate events or testimonies, exhibit newspapers documenting the event or revolutionary statements and declarations, we did not wish to interpret the events of December 1989 from a political point of view, but rather focus, in a subjective, sober, and decent manner, on personal drama, stimulating critical thinking, and stirring inner debates on the topic of civic duty during the contemporary period. Keeping in mind that we can start a unique type of communication with visitors of our museum, we took into consideration that, according to Berry Lord and Maria Piacente, there are five modes of visitor apprehension: contemplation, comprehension, discover, but also interaction and even participation (Lord, Piacente 2014, 15).

The exhibition was constructed around several smaller projects. Each of the seven exhibition rooms to convey a certain state of mind, generated by the manners in which people were involved in the historical events of that December: the Hall of the Past (Fig. 1.1), the Hall of Heroes (Fig. 2.1, 2.2), the Hall of the Street (Fig. 3.1, 3.2), the Hall of the Television Sets (Fig. 4.1 – 4.6), the Hall of Introspection (Fig. 5.1 – 5.4), the Hall of the Future (Fig. 6.1 – 6.2), and the Hall of Conclusions. They engaged the public in an emotional travel into the past from the perspective of three groups of inhabitants of Cluj-Napoca: those who lived the events in the street, those who watched the Revolution on TV, and those born in the year of the Revolution who only heard stories of the events and lived its consequences.

The exhibition received an additional dimension by collaborating with visual artists: Alina Andrei, Eugen Moritz, Alexandru Rădulescu, Călin Ilea and members of the Brush Factory community: Șerban Savu, Cristian Rusu, Teodora Cioca, Radu Cioca.

We aimed at organizing a relevant exhibition to our community, the inhabitants of Cluj-Napoca, and mostly to the young generation, not actively involved in the Revolution (the

18-45 years age group).[2] We established our priorities and Cluj-Napoca as our case study, knowing that this particular situation, with the same blueprint for the development of the events of December, was available for almost all Romanian towns participating in the revolutionary events, thus making this exhibition relevant for all Romanian citizens and visitors from abroad, for a wider range of public.

We decided that recalling and reconstructing the line of events that happened in 21st of December must become the core of the exhibition. We presented the evolution of the events in Cluj-Napoca from multiple perspectives: that of the direct participants in the street events and that of the indirect participants, spectators, who experienced the revolution in front of the television sets. Around this nucleus we tried to create a pre- and a post-event context. We wanted to offer the visitors a unique experience, like a journey, so we visually built the exhibition along a central axis, with two strong poles: death and life, past and future, darkness and light, black &white – bright colors, phenomenon and consequences (Fig. 3.1).

Our concept unfolded with every hall, in a directed visit, built, traced, and adapted in concept, as well as in design, to the specific architecture of the museum. The XIX century building, with rooms in enfilade, requires a linear route, with a single visiting direction, which, in this case, perfectly served our purpose - to create an exhibition similar to a time travel experience, from the past to the future, from black & white to bright colors, and back again. As D. Dierking and J. Falk have noticed the physical content, the building itself, is amongst the factors that influence how visitors move throughout the museum (Falk, Dierking 2016, 27-28).

The key elements of the whole project were the clothes that a young participant in the events of 21st of December, in the Unirii Square (former Libertății) in Cluj-Napoca, wore at the moment of his death (Fig. 2.1, 2.2). The whole concept was built around these heritage items, which have a strong emotional and visual impact, due to the historical testimonies of authenticity they preserved (blood, mud) (Falk, Dierking 2016, 109; Caple 2000, 93). We chose to display his personal items on a mannequin, in central stage, up on a pedestal, and we decided to use a well-fitted mannequin, rather than simply displaying his clothes behind a display case, thus bringing the human, the individualized element into the exhibition, and helping the visitor connect on a more intimate level with the events of December 89 through the displayed garments. The clothes were meant to be displayed on a full-size, museum mannequin, so that their shape, blood and mud can be easily distinguished, thus becoming a vivid, lively piece of information, rather than lying lifeless behind the glass of a display case. And in order to safely display the objects on the mannequin, we had to make sure that we take into consideration the conservator's requirement, therefore a condition inspection was conducted, issuing that the objects were structurally stable, and a mannequin display will not provide further damage. The textile conservators decided that only cleaning treatments of a less invasive nature would be conducted, in order to preserve the authentic blood, stains and dirt (Flecker 2007, 8). The items were, therefore, displayed on a museum, custom-made mannequin, which fitted the garments correctly, providing the proper support and reducing the stress, so that they would be mounted relaxed and tension-free. Extra care was given to the environment in which the mannequin was displayed, since the garments were not exhibited in a display case (periodical chekings of the objects' condition).

The objects symbolically concentrate the spirit of the revolution; hence they were the most important elements and our greatest assets, next to the two flags with the coat of arm ripped off, to convey our message. In numerous studies dedicated to museum exhibitions, the authors underline the intrinsic power in seeing "the real thing", whether artifacts, images, or original documents (Lord, Piacente 2014, 12). Displaying the clothes on a mannequin also provided a deeper meaning to exhibiting them, an intensely individual experience, particularly because for the public there is of great importance in seeing something rare, an artifact or photograph that one cannot see anywhere else, hence the selection of things the museums display is very

[2] The project was not aimed at young people under 12, due to its emotional impact.

important, because the objects and images help tell the story. (Museum on Main Street, 5)

On the other hand, we knew that we take a great risk in exhibiting these items, but at the same time this hero, Călin Mihai Țiclete an 29 years old engineer who decided to take the streets in solidarity with other heroes in Timișoara, enabled us to reach the most difficult and demanding public category and to address to those who were not actively involved in the Revolution. We wanted to transform Călin Țiclete into a symbolic image of all those who protested, who were injured or who lost their lives in December 1989 in Cluj-Napoca, in the name of freedom. We did not give him a face because we wanted the visitors to identify with his story; they could have been him, his daughter, his wife or his parents. Our main purpose was to convince the young generations to become interested in the topic and to help them find their own answers about the revolution, without imposing a certain point of view (Fig. 2.1). For the visitors who lived the revolution we hoped for a Proustian reaction, we hoped these items will have the power of evoking the recall of a strong forgotten memory. This strategy was applied also in other halls of the exhibition, namely the Hall of the Television Set.

For the Hall of Heroes we chose a dramatic theatrical claire-obscure display. The room was completely in the dark, with most of the walls covered with black cloth and the only source of artificial light directed towards the main display (Fig. 2.2). Placed in the foreground, on a podium, was a faceless mannequin, accentuating the possibility of self-identification with the hero, with open arms, in a gesture that remained a symbol of the Cluj revolution, wearing Țiclete's original stained and blooded clothes, which thus became the bearers of the exhibition's main message. We designed a minimalist foreground, consisting of vintage photographs, some of them in a very poor condition, with portraits of people killed in Cluj, projected on the wall, alternating on the sound of automatic rifle model 1986, used by Romanian army during the events of December 89. The images were unprocessed and meant to complete the atmosphere of the 80's and reinforce the message we chose as a motto for our exhibition: "*What do you remember from the Revolution? Me: the gunshots heard from outside, the streaks of blood on the street, the confusing images on TV and, towards the end, passers-by showing the sign of victory. What I don't remember: the faces of the people who were shot.*" (Alina Andrei). Țiclete's portrait is lost among other faces, it does not play a special role in the presentation, but for experienced and analytical visitors, his image returns along the exhibition, in the TV room, in a portrait and a double-portrait, with his daughter, in typical communist stucco frame (Fig. 4.3). We played with this recurrence of motives all along the exhibition, a way of reminding the visitor some of the most important elements or information, but also an attraction for the visitors who enjoy a good quest to finding connections in our visual discourse. Younger visitors expect that the museums will provide them the opportunity to explore and to determine the meaning by themselves (Lord, Piacente 2014, 14)

On the same exhibition axis, at the opposite pole, in the Hall of the Future (Fig. 6.1, 6.2), but still addressing to the same targeted public, we exhibited a photography project, named *Children of Hope*, made in optimistic notes by Călin Ilea. We invited the photographer to participate with a project with portraits of young people, born in 1989, who did not experience the Communist Period and represent Romania's future. They did not live the Revolution but have directly experienced its consequences. These *children of the revolution* live in a colorful world and enjoy rights and liberties. Taking part in this project they become aware of the tragic manner in which the fundamental rights we enjoy today – freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of the press – have been won.

For this project, Călin Ilea used digital storytelling, he exhibited six, oversized, color studio portrait photographs with people born in 1989, but the photos were in fact QR Codes, becoming videos, if accessed with a smart device and using ARTIVIVE, an easy to download application. With the help of multimedia technology we hoped to reach a segment of public connected to nowadays realities.

Using this approach, we wanted young people to better understand and be aware of the repressive dimension of the communist regime and its role in limiting individual freedom, to support a balanced discourse on the communist period and to create a favorable context for talking about the importance of civic involvement (personal involvement in the fight for freedom, the need for active contribution to the defense of democracy and civil rights). At the same time, we hoped that the discourse of the young participants, who have been challenged to relate to prior generations, have aroused the curiosity of young people to start a dialogue with their parent and grandparents, resulting in an act of communication with transfer of information between different generations. The revolution of 1989 led to the gaining of freedoms and universal rights that transcend by their nature the particularities of different social groups, being an element of cohesion. By getting involved in the project the participants became our ambassadors for their generation, enabling a direct communication with the public.

One of the most important players in our exhibition design was the light. We only used cold artificial low intensity and directed light – for the safetyness of organic objects aswell as for aesthetic reasons (Boggle 2013, 239). When necessary we directed the light to fall on the mannequin in order to reproduce and ephasize the drama of the event, on the large printed photos we focused the light in the main points of interest and highlighted the important elements, in other cases we made sure we had extra light, to change the entire setting and make it brighter and more possitive (Fig. 2.2, 4.2, 4.5, 5.2). Therefore, we used light to emphasise and reveal the objects on display, but also to create a certain ambiance; but we had to be sure that lighting, together with temperature and relative humidity, would not interfere with the condition of the objects. For one thing, there is no natural light in exhibition areas, since daylight is one of the most damaging agents of deterioration for museum objects. We had to find the right ballance between the duration, intensity, type of lighting employed, between keeping the optimum parameters for displaying museum objects, while taking into consideration the visitors' experience.

As previously mentioned, we needed a general and a particular context for our main heritage objects.

For the general context we introduced the Hall of the Past (1.1), where we contextualized and explained, with posters and audio-visual archive materials, the communist regime, focusing on Nicolae Ceaușescu's dictatorship, the causes and the beginning of the Romanian Revolution. The content was written by our colleague, Dr. Manuela Marin, specialist in the communist period. We considered important to have multiple levels of text for the visitors who want to know more, thus we prepared a bilingual catalogue to guide them throughout this historical period, with a more elaborate material about the beginnings of the communist regimes, the repression, the resistance, and the social, political, economic and cultural consequences, enabling them to access details into the content. (Lord, Piacente 2014, 277). This material was distributed freely and was used also in our educative programs, in collaboration with schools and Babeș-Bolyai University and in our guided tours.

We didn't opt for long explanatory texts inserted in the exhibition, most of the information was offered with the help of photo-video presentations, not longer than 5 minutes, concentrating the necessary data in order for the visitor to learn the general context fast, and in a visual manner. (Lord, Lord 2001, 403). The short explanatory texts for each project were placed at the beginning of each hall, and the entire concept, with the map of the most important cities participating in the revolutionary events in Romania, were placed at the beginning of the exhibition. Each patrimonial object exhibited had a short description and all texts were bilingual, Romanian and English.

In order to reconstruct the particular context of December 21st 1989 events in Cluj-Napoca, we exhibited the images that proved to be some of the most dramatic testimonies of those days. Răzvan Rotta's black and white photographs are amongst the most significant visual sources included in our exhibition (Fig. 3.1, 3.2). They capture the shooting of the heroes who took part in the Revolution in Cluj-Napoca and were used during the official investigation of the events of December 21st. We exhibited

them in a very large scale, accompanied by Rotta's comments during those moments of maximum tension (Domșa, Lungu 1998; Eyewitness, 1990). This section of the exhibition completed the Hall of Heroes and created a contrast with the Hall of the Future (Fig. 6.1), assuring the coherence of the past-future axis, we had in mind.

In order to offer a different point of view of those days, when most Romanians lived the critical moments of '89 watching the first full broadcasted revolution in television's history, we created the Hall of Television Sets (Fig. 4.1–4.6). National Romanian Television was the main source of information for Romanians during the revolutionary events and our intention was to capture the atmosphere and to reconstruct it in the museum. The entire exhibition room was an installation; in one corner we rebuilt a communist interior and exhibited common objects dating from that period (small coffee table, armchairs, a Persian carpet, bookshelves, Flacăra magazines and Meridiane books collection, porcelains, a telephone) recreating a comfortable environment and evoking strong memories and reactions for everyone who lived in Ceausescu's time (Fig. 4.3). We put our faith in the evocative power of the exhibited objects to convey our message, without further explanation. We introduced the idea of televised revolution with the group of five vintage TVs, with lace aprons and glass fish on top, suggesting that each house was connected to the same information source (Fig. 4.4). Empty wooden chairs, quite uncomfortable, were waiting for the visitors to sit and watch the two video montages projected on opposite walls. Each of the videos consisted in five key moments (denounce of Timișoara street manifestation on public TV, Ceaușescu's speech on 21st of December, the beginnings of the street protests in Bucharest, protesters singing Deșteaptă-te române! Ceaușescu's helicopter run, the first free live broadcast, Ion Iliescu on TV, the announcements of Ceaușescu's process and execution, famous actors singing carols on Christmas day), chronologically selected, from the original broadcasted materials, from 21 to 25th of December (Fig. 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5). In some parts both projections seem to communicate the same message, but if one tried to follow the story line, one could easily notice the sound switching on and off and different images disappearing and reappearing on the other wall. In order to recover coherent information, one had to jump from one projection to the other. Our purpose was to induce the feeling of confusion, similar with the real situation, and discomfort, in spite of the false feeling of safety, stimulated by the entire set. We tampered with our visitors' minds, inviting them with a friendly sign above the chairs and armchairs, to fell like home, to sit and to accept, without knowing, to watch the videos. In this manner we tried to make sure that they receive our message (Fig. 4.3).

We reconstructed a communist interior with original objects, true to the time, though not museum items, because we wanted our public to interact, we wanted them to sit, to read the magazines, to touch the porcelains, to dial the phone, to feel like in the 80's. This was very important for us, in order for the exhibition to bear the message we wanted it to deliver.

We had a pleasant surprise when arranging the exhibition. Members of the team, colleagues, people participating in the revolution that knew about our exhibition, offered to help us with personal objects dated in communist period, enabling us to complete the task. Some of the objects were donated to the museum, enriching our contemporary collection. In addition, we exhibited a photo collage with some unique photo-documents, never published before, taken offered by Radu Mureșan between 21 and 25th of December, with the hottest places of protests in Cluj-Napoca (Fig. 4.2. 4.6). Other inhabitants of Cluj-Napoca send us their memoirs, objects with a special significance, even bullets found on the streets during those dramatic days. After the official opening, the objects received a special showcase, at the entrance of the exhibition, and the stories were placed next to the objects, in a small brochure, to be consulted (Fig. 7.1). In this manner we received a fast and strong feedback from our public, and their involvement in our exhibition was even more obvious. Their contribution answered one of the questions we asked at the beginning of the project: is our exhibition static or dynamic? Our exhibition was

definitely not static; it changed with the help of our visitors. In the Hall of Introspection the panel for thoughts became insufficient day by day (Fig. 5.3, 5.4). We had other additional small projects we wanted to implement, but unfortunately, due to coronavirus pandemic, we had to temporary close the exhibition.

We started from the premise that the largest part of our visitors are accustomed to receiving information rather by visual means and, at the same time, they are familiar with contemporary art, video and alternative means of expression, so we decided to give the exhibition a supplementary dimension by collaborating with contemporary visual artists. This attempt is not the first of its kind for our museum, and collaborative interdisciplinary projects are in the latest museum trends **(**Ward 2019**).**

We have previously mentioned some of them intervention: Călin Ilea's photo project played a crucial role in the implementation of our concept (Fig. 6.1), Alina Andrei's graphic project, the collective character, became one of the leitmotifs of our exhibition – graphic silhouettes capturing the specific attitudes of the protesters. Transferred directly on the walls, they were used as a constant reminder of the human sacrifice in December '89 (Fig. 4.1). Our museum had a partnership with the Brush Factory community, within the project „*The Museum Affair. Grafting Exercises in the Museums of Cluj*".[3] This collaboration aimed at inserting contemporary works in several museum exhibitions, and in terms of our exhibition, these works were adapted to our theme, visually balancing, completing and adding another layer to our historical content. Şerban Savu and Cristian Rusu inserted the contemporary art work *Reenactment. A-Reconstruction for the Past* (Fig. 1.2), a large mural painting that rebuilds the decorative mosaic "Truck Builders" from the Red Flag Factory in Brasov and discusses the issue of "*selectivity of memory and history*", and the "*infusion of meaning or emptying of meaning that certain regimes political impose on artistic creations*"[4]. Another artistic insert is *Samples of presence* an installation, signed by Teodora and Radu Cioca, made of concrete and steel, a work that aims to be a "*reliquary of a golden period*". It includes samples from the floor of the Brush Factory building, "*capsules that refer to the conversion of a communist factory (as an architect's project with its own history) into a space of today's artistic creation*."[5] In the last exhibition hall, Radu Cioca returns with an installation *My First Coke 1989* [buying history], a work about "*awareness of a decisive moment in personal history, with a major impact on collective history* (Fig. 6.2)."[6]

Another interesting project is the *Time machine* installation technically programed by Andrei Diaconu, which overlapped four of the 21 photos taken by Răzvan Rotta in 1989, in Unirii Square, with four photos taken in the same place, from the same angle, in 2019 by the photo artist Alexandru Rădulescu (Fig. 5.1). They perfectly overlay, and with a switch of a button one can travel back and forth in time, the colorful places we know today, become scenes of the bloody events of December '89.

A photo, taken by Eugen Moritz in Unirii Square on December 22, transformed the exhibition space into a commemoration room, his shots, made with a camera hidden in a bag, captured Libertății Square on December 22, before Nicolae Ceaușescu's escape (Fig. 5.2). Traces of the previous day's aggression could still be seen on the streets and sidewalks, and people, though frightened and insecure, hoisted the tricolor on the statue of Lupa Capitolina and mourned their deaths, bringing candles, bread, flowers, and fir branches. The exhibition room became a sidewalk, we placed flowers, burned candles and fir tree branches for visual and olfactory stimulation. All the scenography up to this point of the exhibition had crescendo notes, following the development of the events almost chronologically. Just as the people of Cluj-Napoca felt the need to commemorate their heroes, we recreated an appropriate setting for the visitors to share their thoughts on a white magnetic board, either drawing on the board, or striking post it messages. We felt that on one hand this could serve as a barometer of

[3] https://fabricadepensule.ro/en/events/the-museum-affair-guided-tour-w-artcrawl/.

[4] We quoted from the work's statement. The work gave us the opportunity to bring into discussion the 1987 protests in Brașov.

[5] We quoted from the work's statement.

[6] We quoted from the work's statement.

reactions, a way to see what visitors had to say about the project, about the subject, but on the other hand we made the visitor part of our exhibition (Fig. 5.3, 5.4).

Moritz captured the state of mind of that period, and the same emblematic messages photographed on the streets of Cluj-Napoca in 1989 summarize the general message of our exhibition. We exhibited them in the Hall of conclusions, and like in a computer game, like in a quest, they are the main connectors between the past, the present and the future and they invite you to start or restart your journey:

> *THE HEROES NEVER DIE; THEY HOLD A PLACE OF HONOR IN THE COUNCIOUSNESS OF THEIR PEOPLE, OF THE ENTIRE WORLD. PRAISE THE HEROES!*
>
> *LONG LIVE FREE ROMANIA!*
>
> *WE NEVER WANT COMMUNISM AGAIN!*

Conclusions

We had a unique story to tell throughout an interactive experience that could allow the visitors to engage with the story we were about to tell. It was difficult to come up with the right content and means of expression for this extraordinary journey in history. We knew that is was impossible to satisfy everybody, and right from the beginning we knew what the project will not be, we targeted a specific audience and we hoped that also others will enjoy the experience. The essential thing was to establish what will not be shown, what to let out from our display. Each projected room played a specific important role, like a stage in our development, connected with the previous, like a piece of the puzzle. The design was really an important part of our project, and during the visual discourse we try to engage the visitor with different type of storytelling. We drastically selected the information, because we wanted the visitors to make up their own impressions and ideas, to experiment/interpret/understand the events from their perspective, since the presented subject is a recent one and very controversial. We decided to offer the visitor a genuine museum experience all the time not trying to be encyclopedic, but rather present them with a subject of research, even after leaving the museum halls. We consider the exhibition space a learning space, but also a creative space activating the affect, not just the intellect.

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RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE ART COLLECTIONS OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM (JULY 2019 – JULY 2020)

Iulia MESEA*

Administrators of the collections: Adrian Luca, Iulia Mesea, Cristina Mihu, Valentin Trifescu

***Abstract**: Showing permanent attention to the patrimony, to 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 2019, up to now, July 2020, a number of 170 works of painting, graphics, and decorative arts entered the collections of the museum. Following the tradition of the last years, many donations come from contemporary artists who had the opportunity to exhibit their works in temporary exhibitions organised in the museum.*

The donors of the previous twelve months are (in alphabetic order): Jesús Algovi (painter), Juan Sebastián González (artist), Peri and Philip Hartman, Dana Roxana Hrib Ph.D., Constantin Ilea (painter), Claudia-Florentina Kusznirczuk (artist), José Maria Larrondo (artist), Lawrence O. Lupash Ph.D., Jan de Maere Ph.D. (art historian), Constantin Pele (painter), Irmgard Sedler Ph.D., Alexandru Trifu (artist).

***Keywords**: Brukenthal National Museum, donations, art collections, contemporary art exhibitions*

***Rezumat**: În perioada iulie 2019 – iulie 2020, probând același interes în dezvoltarea patrimoniului pe care îl administrează, conservă, cercetează și valorifică expozițional, Muzeul Național Brukenthal și-a îmbogățit colecțiile de pictură, grafică și artă decorative cu 170 de piese. Urmând tradiția ultimilor ani, o mare parte a pieselor intrate în colecții au fost donații ale artiștilor contemporani care au organizat expoziții în muzeu. O serie de piese provin din donații ale unor colecționari, iar altele din partea unor particulari.*

Donatorii ultimelor douăsprezece luni sunt (în ordine alfabetică): Jesús Algovi (pictor), Juan Sebastián González (artist), Peri and Philip Hartman, dr. Dana Hrib, Constantin Ilea (pictor), Claudia-Florentina Kusznirczuk (artist), José Maria Larrondo (artist), dr. Lawrence O. Lupash, istoricul de artă dr. Jan de Maere, Constantin Pele, dr. Irmgard Sedler, Alexandru Trifu (artist)

***Cuvinte cheie**: Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal, donaţii, donatori, colecţii de artă, colecţionari, expoziţii de artă contemporană*

The Brukenthal National Museum continued all through 2019 to add to its collections. As it has happened in the last years, the source of developing the collections has been the donations. The prestige of the museum attracts both collectors and artists who are willing and proud to offer their works to a cultural institution of such importance. The effervescent activity in the field of contemporary art brought many artists in the aura of the museum. They exhibit their works in temporary events, then offer the museum at least one of their works, so that organizing contemporary art exhibitions is the most important source for the Museum to enrich its collections of contemporary art. The pandemic of this spring (Covid 19 pandemic) totally upset the exhibitional activity of the museum. The gates of the museum, remained closed for almost three months and the exhibitions planed for March, April, May and June were postponed. This situation also affected the donation activity.

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In the following pages, the donations are being presented in the alphabetical order of the donors.

1. **Donation of the painter Jesús Algovi**, September 24th 2019

Inv. no. 3462 Jesús Algovi, *The black garden 1* / *Der schwarze Garten / Grădina neagră 1* (acryl on canvas, 50x50 cm, with frame 60x60 cm); entered the contemporary painting collection

Inv. no. 3463 Jesús Algovi, *Der schwarze Garten / The Black Garden 2* (acryl on canvas, 50x50 cm, with frame 60x60 cm); entered the contemporary painting collection

2. **Donation of the artist Juan Sebastián González**, November 20th 2019

Inv. no. 3464 Juan Sebastián González, *Some perfect chords to save some appearance of tonality* (oil on canvas, 65x81 cm, signed and dated on the verso of the canvas: Juan Sebastián González 2019); entered the contemporary painting collection

3. **Donation of Peri and Philip Hartman**, August 26th 2019

Inv. no. 3479 Mary Lou Kostal, *No title – donation of the sons in the memory of their mother, the artist Mary Lou Kostal* (oil on canvas, no frame, 91,5x97 cm, not signed, not dated [2016?]); entered the contemporary painting collection

4. **Donation of Dana Roxana Hrib Ph.D., Deputy Director of the Brukenthal National Museum**, November 5th 2019

Inv.no. S 633 Theodor Hrib, *Steel Angel / Înger de oțel 2*, wood sculpture with metal insertions, processed through hardware and fretted, 121x15x16 cm, not signed, not dated; entered the contemporary sculpture collection

5. **Donation of the painter Constantin Ilea**, November 1st 2019

Inv. no. 3461 Constantin Ilea, *Purpose* / *Rost 03%* (oil on canvas, 100x120 cm, signed verso, bottom right: Ilea); entered the contemporary painting collection

6. **Donation of the artist Claudia-Florentina Kusznirczuk**, November 25th 2019

Inv. no. 3520 Claudia-Florentina Kusznirczuk, *New York* (oil on canvas, signed bottom right: Claudia K., not dated, no frame, 100x80 cm); entered the contemporary painting collection

7. **Donation of the artist José Maria Larrondo**, November 20th 2019

Inv. no. 3465 José Maria Larrondo, *Encuentro entre dos mentirosos* (oil on canvas, 89x130 cm, signed and dated on the verso of the canvas: Larrondo 2009)

8. **Donation of Lawrence O. Lupash Ph. D**., donation no. 4272 / October 30th 2019

Inv. no. 3447 Dimitrie Berea, *Portrait of a woman sitting in an armchair* (oil on cardboard, 58x48 cm); entered the Romanian painting collection

Inv. no. 3448 Dimitrie Berea, *Portrait of a man sitting on a coach* (oil on cardboard, 62x46 cm); entered the Romanian painting collection

9. **Donation of the art historian Jan de Maere Ph.D**.

Inv. no. AD 660 Persian rug (Kushan), (wool, 207x137 cm, late 19th c., bought in Iran by the doner in 1972); entered the decorative art collection

Inv. no. AD 661 Fragment of a camel bag (wool, 50x54 cm, late 19th c., provenience: South of Iran); entered the decorative art collection

10. **Donation of Valentin Mureșan**, Ph.D., art historian

Inv. no. S 632 Eugen Săvescu, *Composition*, relief în ciment cu mozaic, 63x38 cm

11. **Donation of Constantin Pele** (painter)

Inv. no. PC 1 Gabriela Florescu, *Portrait of a worker* (oil on cardboard, with frame: 75,5x56 cm; 68x48 cm, signed bottom left: G Florescu, not dated); entered the contemporary painting collection

12. **Donation of Irmgard Sedler Ph.D**., President of the Transylvanian Museum, Gundelsheim

Inv. no. AD 663 Oriental woman costume (coat and cap), second half of the 20th c.; entered the decorative art collection

Coat, 115x50 cm, purple velvet and blue greyish brocade, embroidery, metal sequins

Cap, 17 cm (diameter), 10 cm (depth), silk embroidery, metal sequins, tassel

13. **Donation of the artist Alexandru Trifu**, Donation no. 5323 / December 18th 2019 (all the works entered the graphic arts collection)

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BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM IN 2019: 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 2019.*

Keywords: *Brukenthal National Museum, visual arts, 2019.*

Rezumat: *Articolul de faţă constituie o prezentare sintetică a ofertei culturale a Muzeului Naţional Brukenthal în domeniul artelor vizuale, pe parcursul anului 2019.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal, arte vizuale, 2019*.

1. Permanent exhibitions: new permanent exhibitions on the 2nd Floor in Brukenthal Palace [1]

On the 4th of September 2019, the refurbishment of the permanent exhibition of European art in the Brukenthal Palace (a process started in 2015) was completed by the addition of the last thematic rooms presenting:

_The landscape

The room presents 17th – 18th c. works by painters from the Flemish, Dutch, French, Italian, German and Austrian schools. The selection illustrates the complexity of the genre during the Baroque period, from simple representations of a natural setting, to real or imaginary views. Some landscapes are created during the voyages taken by the artists, during which significant details were retained. A special mention must be given to the marines, for the realism in illustrating the unleashed nature and the reflection that it determines with regard to human fragility, the unreliable fate and the ephemerality of the material goods acquired with great risks. There are landscapes that present documentary importance, through the realistic representation of some monuments or of the natural setting. Also on display is a pendulum clock with painting (cca. 1850).

_The allegory

The works on display have an allegorical content, being dated in 17th – 18th c. and made by Italian and German Baroque painters. The compositions include, in symbolic forms, philosophical, moral, religious and even political ideas or reflections on the natural cycle of creation and destruction, on the destiny of man, of states and of the world. These are elaborate, sometimes large, compositions designed to be displayed in large spaces that allow a physical distance from the viewer. In addition to the decorative role, the works urge reflection on the message they convey and exert a strong psychological impact, the allegories being powerful tools of the Baroque visual discourse.

_The representations of saints

The room displays 17th – 18th c. works by painters from the Flemish, Dutch, French, Italian, German and Austrian schools. Generally, the representations of the saints are based on vague data on their physiognomy and information on their life and deeds, transmitted by the hagiographic works. Artists used to choose anonymous models whose appearance or character traits best matched the traditional information. For more recent times, there are even contemporary portraits. An element of modernity is

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[1] 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 Strebeli) for public information.

the representation of saints in compositions that can reach a high degree of realism, either by the emphasis placed on the truthfulness of the anatomical rendering, or by integrating them into secular compositions (landscapes, genre scenes, etc.) or allegories, to determine their participation in the circumstances of the daily life.

_*The portrait* (Fig. 1)

The room presents 17th – 18th c. works by painters from the Flemish, Dutch, French, Italian, German and Austrian schools. Using gestures, props, chromatic effects and lighting, the Baroque portrait aims to portray, in the most impressive way, the character's appearance, with an emphasis on social status and physiognomy, capturing aspects of their personality and psychological profile. In addition to the portraits meant to impress through the attributes of the prominent state, we also encounter realistic works, depicting common people. Many portraits have great documentary value, as they convey information about the appearance of certain personalities and even about how they were perceived by their contemporaries.

_*The hunting scene*

Are exhibited 17th – 18th c. easel-works representing hunting scenes, made by artists appertaining to the Flemish, Dutch, Italian, German and Austrian schools of painting. The compositions illustrate an epoch when hunting was not only a means of acquiring materials of animal origin (for consumption or marketing) but also a activity specific to the social elites. The hunt generated social rituals related to departure and return, the game or the initiation of the hunter. In painting, the hunting scenes are of documentary interest for representing techniques and utensils less used nowadays in the European countries or of species, now extinct, from the regions where the painters worked. Also on display there is a Jugendstil bow pendulum clock (cca. 1930).

2. Temporary exhibitions at the Museum locations[2]

38 temporary exhibitions were organized at the Museum's premises during 2019, of which 21 displayed selections of works in various fields of visual arts along exhibitions dedicated to library and cartography:

a. Exhibitions presenting Brukenthal National Museum's heritage:

_*The beauty of nature, the refinement of dinning. Along Ceres, Bacchus and Venus* (Casa Albastră / Blue House, Multimedia Hall, 07.08 – 29.09): nature is in all, permanently, self-similar (Pythagoras), so that harmony with nature induces beauty (in the philosophical sense) to any of the human activities. Through paintings (18th -20th c.) from the European and Romanian collections of Brukenthal National Museum, the public was invited to discover the "beauty of nature", as well as aspects and moments related to the various ways of dining. Among the artists who signed the works on display there are Jacopo da Ponte Bassano, Jan Fyt, Franz Werner Tamm, Peeter Snyers, Carl Dörschlag, Elena Popea, Sabin Popp, Lucian Grigorescu, Theodor Pallady, Ion Țuculescu etc. (Fig. 2)

_*Features of grace: from natural to decorative* (Brukenthal Palace, Prints cabinet, 4.09 – 31.10): the exhibition presented works of art signed by Salomon Gessner (1730–1788), Gottfried Daniel Berger (1744–1824), Kilian Ponheimer cel Bătrân (1757–1828), Benedikt Piringer (1780–1826), Franz Neuhauser (1763–1836), Theodor Glatz (1818–1871), Theodor Aman (1831–1891), Hermine Hufnagel (1864–1897) etc.: prints and paintings representing German, Austrian and Romanian art school during 18th to the early 20th c., illustrating the harmony of the natural features in landscapes and still lives, part of a decorative trend ennobled by symbolic meanings.

_*Joseph Ritter von Scheda* (Brukenthal Palace, Cartography Cabinet, 18.09 – 3.11): a General Map of Europe in 25 pieces, made by the Director of the Department of Lithography from the Military-Geographical Institute of Vienna, Joseph Ritter von Scheda, between 1845 and 1847, heralded a new era in Cartography, as well as in the scientific breakthroughs made in the German speaking heartland. Visibly different from its predecessors in the 18th century, Scheda´s work impresses by its precision.

[2] The short descriptions of temporary exhibitions are selected from the texts given by the curators for public information.

By introducing new typographical instruments and techniques into the Military-Geographical Institute of Vienna (such as color lithography and galvanoplasty), he enhanced the accurateness of maps produced there, which from then on contrasted with the general hand drawn look characterizing almost all maps made just a few decades before.

_Maps of the Romanian Principalities and of Romania from the Brukenthal Museums' collections (Brukenthal Palace, Cartography Cabinet, 13.11.2019 – 5.01.2020): as Sibiu and Transylvania became part of the Romanian kingdom only in 1918, earlier maps were made especially by foreign cartographers. During the 19th century the Romanian Principalities were at the intersection of Habsburg, Tsarist, and Ottoman areas of interest, a fact that affected territorial integrity itself. As a consequence, the principalities were the subject of special maps or part of maps that covered a wider geographical area. Immediately after the accomplishment of the union of all Romanian historical provinces in 1918, the new authorities of Romania decided to commission the cartographers with the mapping of the new whole state. After 1947, during the Communist period, efforts were made to erase from public consciousness the fact that Bessarabia and North Bukovina once formed part of the Romanian state. As to the maps themselves, they entered in the museum collection by way of donations, assets and legacies.

_Pie Jesu (Brukenthal Palace, Prints Cabinet, 28.11.2019 – 15.01.2020): choosing dozens of Italian artworks from the Brukenthal National Museum's collection is an exciting but also extremely distressing endeavor. Names, places, images that arouse suggestions, emotions, and memories pass before your eyes. For this reason you would never want to set aside one work, privileging another. Any exhibition and anthology, even of medium proportions, such as the present one, can only give a partial idea about the richness of the Italian work, in our case of the religious graphic source. Entitled *Pie Jesu*, after a text of the anthem *Dias Irae* of the "Requiem", the exhibition of Italian religious prints came during the Christmas season to welcome visitors with an important collection of bible-themed works.

b. Exhibitions presenting other museums' or collectors' heritage:

_Bolesław Biegas. When art meets politics (Casa Albastră/Blue House, Multimedia Hall, 23.03 – 2.06.2019): having as partners the Gdańsk National Museum, the Bolesław Biegas Museum in Warsaw and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute in Warsaw the exhibition presented two attitudes of the artist towards politics. The first (pre-war paintings), full of commitment, with a clear journalistic focus, where symbolism intertwines with humor and even satire, while everything is subordinated to expressing their own views of the artist-patriot concerned with the consequences of wars and international conflicts. And the second, from 1945/1946: a dispassionate observer. A nearly 70-year-old artist portrays politics with a distance, surprisingly, given the fact that he is aware of the terrible tragedy of the past years. There are no winners or losers, no saints or monsters. There are only politicians.

_Japanese Prints of Kabuki Theater: (Brukenthal Palace, Cabinet of Cartography, 12.04 – 30.06): the exhibition presented Japanese prints made in the 18th and 19th centuries, illustrating actors and kabuki theater scenes, from the collection of George Şerban. Visitors were invited to an imaginary journey into Japan in the time of the shoguns, to familiarize with an artistic universe of great originality. The prints on display are depicting the favorite subjects of the ukiyo-e artists, interpreted in a wide range of stylistic approaches, which often rely on either parody or metaphors: the exciting world of the kabuki theatre, the picturesque pleasure quarters, themes of literary and historical inspiration, the legends and traditions of old Japan, alongside later additions to the standard repertoire of the genre such as landscapes as well as compositions with flowers and birds. The prints were selected based on artistic merit, the accuracy of the printing, their relevance within an artist's body of work and, last but not least, their rarity. (Fig. 3)

_The art of giving: Picasso, Matisse, Dali, Klimt (Brukenthal Palace, Engravings Cabinet, 14.06 – 30. 08): the exhibition adjoined prints signed by four great artists of the world: Picasso, Matisse, Dali and Klimt, following the idea that arts are good cultural translators; they put together common experiences, thoughts, concerns, interests and thereby bring to people the gift of closeness.

c. Exhibitions of contemporary art:

_*Temporary Shelters* (Artist: Szabó Tímea, Museum of Contemporary Art, 6.03 – 7.04): introspection has led Tímea to a defining feature of her work: chromatic minimalism. She experimented, browsed specialized literature and palettes and tried to get acquainted with the influence of chromaticity on personality. The courage and impulse that characterizes her have led to the most dangerous and vivid color: RED. The dominance of red accentuates the chromatic sensuality in order to bring to light the opulent or wholly desired expression of the compositional details of minimalism. The photographs and installations presented in the exhibition, in a pertinent summary, represent a contrast between voluptuous, rich compositions as in Baroque art and minimalist frames of unease and aggression. The motivation of this kind of thematic contrast is the willingness for escaping, characterized by the lack of interest in society's monotony.

_*Artistic Confessions* (Artists: Rita Schuerweghs / Belgium/ – sculpture and Ilie Cioartă / Romania/ – painting, Museum of Contemporary Art, 11 – 27.04): the exhibition presented paintings and sculptures, in a visual language dominated by emotion, adjoining the natural features of colour presented by the sculpted material, to the bright and vibrant compositions of painting.

_*Strolls / Flâneries* (Artist: Louis Guermond, Brukenthal Palace – Engravings Cabinet, 23.04 - 30.05): the photography exhibition was organized in partnership with Romanian Government, French Embassy in Romania, Romanian Cultural Institute, Institut Français, the event being part of the Opening of the Romania – France Season in Sibiu. It is a well-known fact that art in general and photographic art in particular are some of the most direct and accessible forms of communication for people of different nationalities and cultures. In his "wandering" through the world, the Frenchman Louis Guermont settled in Sibiu during the preparations for Sibiu European Capital of Culture 2007. Due to its openness and professionalism, Louis easily integrated into the artistic and cultural life of Sibiu. His photos show another way of looking at the city, through the artist's vision highlighted by a relevant documentary importance.

_*Contemporary Painting from Nicolae Vrâncean Collection* (Brukenthal Palace, Temporary Exhibition Hall, 31.05 – 28.07): the exhibition presented an impressive selection of paintings by contemporary artists. All the pieces on display came from the art collection owned by Nicolae Vrâncean, a true Maecenas of the Romanian art scene, during the last two decades.

_*Transience* (Artist: Daniel Munteanu, Museum of Contemporary Art, 5 – 30.06): the exhibition presented a photographic project done by intentional camera movement (ICM), which involved moving the device in various ways during a longer exposure than normal. More than 80,000 images have been created in this way, resulting in a database of more than 40,000, of which the most remarkable were selected for display. The images brought into the public attention themes such as: city, water, fire, experimental, conceptual, abstract and archetypal characters, staged by the photographer who often plays the role of director.

_*Sibiu painters and guests in FITS 2019* (Blue House / Multimedia Hall, 15.06 – 31.07): organized by UAPR Sibiu Branch, Radu Stanca National Theater and Brukenthal National Museum, the exhibition was part of the International Theater Festival in Sibiu 2019, the main theme being *the giving*. Self-aware and impressive – most of the time – the artists, no matter what they create, cannot do their job without being generous. Following a selection done by a jury, on display were to be found works of painting, graphic, sculpture, glass and textile. Among the consecrated artists, as Constantin Ilea, Marius David, Radu Aftenie, Stefan Orth, Gheorghe Dican, Ioan Tămâian, Eugen Dornescu, Dan Frăticiu, Ioan Cândea, etc., participated in the project emergent artists as Raluca Oros, Crina Oprean, Florin Viorel, Andrei Nagy, Daniela Bădila, Ioan Muntean, Ilie Mitrea and Andrei Popa.

_*Josef & Josef. Two artists back home for a visit* (Artists: Dieter Josef / lithography, Austria and Horst F. Josef / painting, Germany, Museum of Contemporary Art, 3 – 31.07): the exhibition was organized in partnership with the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bucharest, the Austrian Cultural Forum, the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania and Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung für Rumänien. The lithography and painting exhibition offered not only a meeting with two artists from Transylvania but told two life stories about space and time respectively. Dieter Josef (graphic artist

with studies in Austria, Poland and Japan, author of many individual exhibitions or participant in numerous graphics triennials organized in Europe, America, Asia and Australia) defines his art as an embassy, the result of his travels around the world and photographic documentation of different lifestyles and civilizations. His artistic philosophy is reflected in lithographs produced in limited editions, created by painting in and over the film material, copied on a metal plate and combined with the classical lithography technique, in the printing process. Dieter Josef's specific style results from overlapping multiple layers of culture, a global perception, embodied in mixed printing techniques. Horst F. Josef is an architect by profession; he started his studies of architecture in Cluj, finalizing at the University of Munich. Initially an intimate endeavor, doubled by the visiting of museums and galleries and also by attending Alfred Darda's seminars at the Academy of Art, Horst F. Josef's work evolved for a while without the public and art experts. More recently, the artist chose to step in the unknown, with the opening of each exhibition where the meeting with the audience can provide the confirmation of his creative efforts.

_*The Eternal Return* (Artist: Dumitru Radu, Museum of Contemporary Art, 2.08 – 31.09): a craftsman inspired by the ethos of tradition but also an artist deeply involved in contemporary and late modernity, Dumitru Radu knows how to work with the wood but also with the fire in which he melts and shapes the metal, reading humanity not only in terms of Christian tradition, but also as a caravan of people driven by the trumpet of heaven, trying to walk on the sinuous road of happiness and eternity. (Fig. 4)

_*Spain in Transylvania* (Artists: Jesús Algovi, Juan Sebastián González and José María Larrondo, Brukenthal Palace, Temporary Exhibitions Hall, 2.08 – 1.09): university professors in the field of fine arts, concerned with the plans and models that art history offers, the artists presented works that immediately reinvest the data from the outside. Everything plays in favor of subjective, mutant and capricious perceptions: the space in which the work is perceived, the changes of light, the visual or acoustic contamination to which each work is subjected, depending on the environment.

_*Paradise Lost* (Artists: Ioana Antoniu, Elian, Andor Komives, Radu Pulbere and Radu Șerban, Museum of Contemporary Art, 5 – 29.09): situated in a creative stage that follows some consistent conceptual and stylistic experiments and refinements, the artists proposed to the public a selection of their recent works, gathered under a problematic generic that reveals diverse and complementary discourses. From the perspective of the title, the association of works queries the creative sequence in which their creators are set.

Paradise is generally a utopian projection that each of us imagines more or less conventionally. It is generally a promise, sometimes an augmented reality and sometimes the result of some hallucination projections or episodes of dreaming, an ideal realm that tends toward balance, calm, and perfection.

_*Waves of the Sublime* (Artists: Alexandru Cînean / painting), Raluca Elena Coșăreanu / designer, Brukenthal Palace, Temporary Exhibition Hall, 20.09 – 2.12): as a result of a study at specialized breeding farms in Belgium and France, Alexandru Cînean, an artist from Sibiu, developed a sensitiveness not only towards the beauty of the exotic birds, but also to the experience of his close interaction with them, and to the ecological and ethic aspects concerning the impact of human intervention on the existence and the perpetuation of the parrot species. Thus he proposes an art exhibition inspired by the observation of six species of parrots coming from South America (*Ara ararauna*, *Ara chloropterus*, *Anodorhynchus hyacinthus*), Australia (*Calyptorhynchus banksii*), Oceania (*Probosciger aterrimus*) and Africa (*Psittacus erithacus*). The artist proves an exquisite accuracy in expressing the anatomical details and the movement of the birds developed on the basis of direct observation, obviously accompanied not only by laborious drawing exercises and study compositions but also by a careful study of photographic documentation, allowing the rendering of the chromatic effects of the feathers in different conditions of light.

_*Echoes through the never* (Artist: Costin Chioreanu, Contemporary Art Museum, 1 – 24.11): the exhibition was designed to explore the versatility manifested by the artist who uses various mediums of expression in unique ways, redefining mixed-media techniques. The dynamic of the graphic designs signed by Costin is related to the constant motion between conventional and unconventional, between the standard visual identity of the music and what today, thanks to Costin, we know in the terms of the

visual of the unseen world. The themes approached by Costin Chioreanu stand within the parameters of magic realism, horror-oriented surrealism and the oneiric.

_*Photography School 2019 Show* (Museum of Contemporary Art, 6 – 29.12): organized in partnership with Image Art Photography School in Sibiu, Epson, Deko Rame, Pixel Contrast and Photosetup, the 6th edition of the show presented the new Romanian photographers who completed their training. The selection of works was made by Fred Nuss, who is an emblematic figure of Sibiu photography, along with Daniel Bălțat, the head of Image Art Photography School.

3. Online exhibitions:

_Project exhibition: "The palace with two kitchens: Baroque culinary experiences at the residence of the Governor of Transylvania"[3]

Inside the presentation, are to be mentioned:

a. Document digitization – Manuscript 731:

Entitled *Koch-Buch worinn Verschiedene gute Kalt- und warme Speisen Bakereyen Eingemachtes Zukerwerk und sonstige Delicatehsen aufgezeichnet* (Cookbook containing good cold and hot dishes, cakes, preserves, sweets and other delicacies), the Manuscript 731 from the Brukenthal Library is a personal collection of recipes, probably belonging to Theresa Holzer, the house keeper of Brukenthal Palace around 1785.[4]

b. Project catalog:

"The palace with two kitchens: Baroque culinary experiences at the residence of the Governor of Transylvania"[5]

c. Service à la française culinary show

The event took place in Brukenthal Palace on July 26, 2019, on the occasion of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal's birthday. The presentation inspired by 17th – 18th c. recipes comprised the three-parts dinning protocol launched in the 17th c.[6]

4. Travelling exhibitions presenting Brukenthal National Museum's collections[7]

In 2019, 9 exhibitions based exclusively on Brukenthal National Museum's heritage were organized at cultural institutions in Romania; 5 of the exhibitions displayed selections of works in various fields of visual arts.

_*Sibiu 100* ("Corneliu Baba" Gallery, Caransebeș, 5 – 24.04)

_*Pages of Romanian art. Paintings from the collections of Brukenthal National Museum, 19th – 20th c.* (Bucovina Museum, Suceava, 12.04 – 30.06)

_*Sibiu 100* (Banat Museum, Timișoara. 4.07 – 4.08)

_*Sibiu 100* (Oradea Museum, 18.09 – 3.11)

_*Masterpieces of the universal painting from the collection of Brukenthal Museum* (Museum of Țara Crișurilor, Oradea, 4.12.2019 – 25.01.2020)

5. Participating in temporary exhibitions

[3] http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/gastro_baroc/index_en.html
[4] http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/gastro_baroc/manuscris_en.html
[5] http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/gastro_baroc/catalog_en.html
[6] http://www.brukenthalmuseum.ro/virtuale/gastro_baroc/festin_en.html
[7] The short descriptions of the temporary traveling exhibitions are selected from the texts given by the curators for public information.

In 2019, Brukenthal National Museum participated in 15 exhibitions in Romania and 4 abroad, of which 12 exhibitions in Romania and all exhibitions abroad displayed selections of works in various fields of visual arts.

a. In Romania

_*Tonitza. Images of childhood* (Mureș County Museum, 1.03 – 1.06)

_*Fluo immersion* (National Museum of Unity, Alba Iulia, partner Cultural Association Painter Octavian Smigelschi, 18.04 – 30.05)

_*Angels and demons. Ioan Munteanu* (Oradea City Museum, partner Greek-Catholic Bishopric, 4.06 – 30.08)

_*Full colours* (Bistrița Năsăud Museum, partner Cultural Association Painter Octavian Smigelschi, 11.06 – 30.08)

_*Faust, vanity and despair* (Artist: Alexandru Cînean, Bistrița Năsăud Museum, partner Radu Stanca Theater Sibiu, 6.09 – 30.10)

_*Christian spirituality on the low Danube* (Museikon, National Museum of Unity, Alba Iulia, partners Cultural Association Painter Octavian Smigelschi, Museum of History of Culture and Christian Spirituality on the Low Danube, 12.09 – 4.11)

_*The Art of Giving: Picasso, Mattise, Dali, Klimt* (Bistrița Năsăud Museum, partners Radu Stanca Theater Sibiu and George Șerban & Associates, 12.09 – 30.10)

_*Minorities from Romania* (Bistrița Năsăud Museum, partner Cultural Association Painter Octavian Smigelschi, 15.09 – 30.10)

_*Christian spirituality on the low Danube* (Bistrița Năsăud Museum, partners Cultural Association Painter Octavian Smigelschi, Museum of History of Culture and Christian Spirituality on the Low Danube, 15.09 – 30.10)

_*The Art of Giving: Picasso, Mattise, Dali, Klimt* (Oradea City Museum, partners Radu Stanca Theater Sibiu and George Șerban & Associates, 7.11.2019 – 30.01.2020)

_*Christian spirituality on the low Danube* (Oradea City Museum, partners Cultural Association Painter Octavian Smigelschi, Museum of History of Culture and Christian Spirituality on the Low Danube, 12.11.2019 – 4.01.2020)

_*50 years of Romanian graphic art* (Oradea City Museum, partners Cultural Association Painter Octavian Smigelschi, 13.12.2019 – 4.01.2020

b. Abroad

_*Tizian und die Renaissance in Venedig* (Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 13.02 – 26.05)

_*Antonello da Messina* (Palazzo Reale, Milano, Italy, 21.02 – 2.06)

_*Ombres, de la Renaissance à nos jours* (Fondation de l'Hermitage / Donation Famille Bugnion, Lausanne, Switzerland, 28.06 – 27.10)

_*Tezaur Episcopia Tulcii/ Diocese of Tulcea's treasures / Kirchenschayze aus Tulcea* (Siebenburgisches Museum Gundelsheim, Germany, 12.07 – 30.10)

6. Events

a. Book launches:

_Volume: "Palatul cu două bucătării: experiențe culinare baroc la reședința Guvernatorului Transilvaniei / The palace with two kitchens: Baroque culinary experiences at the residence of the Governor of Transylvania", RO/EN, authors: Dana Roxana Hrib, Raluca Maria Teodorescu, Maria Raluca Frîncu (Brukenthal Palace, 26.07)

_Volume: "Noblețe și rafinament în încălțăminte" [Nobility and refinement in footwear], author**:** Irmgard Sedler (Brukenthal Palace, 28.08)

_Volume: "Românește. Punct și de la capăt" [The Romanian way. Back to square one], author: Chef Florin Dumitrescu (Brukenthal Palace, 2.09)

b. Culinary events associated to Sibiu European Gastronomic Region program:

_Baroque Chocolate Launch (Partner: Chocolate Delice, Brukenthal Palace, 31.05)

_Baroque culinary show after 17th and 18th c. recipes (Partner: Jules Restaurant, Brukenthal Palace, 26.07) (Fig. 5)

_Breakfast with little Sophia (education activity on table etiquette and menu in Baroque period, partner: Elijah Association, Jules Restaurant, Brukenthal Palace, 26.07)

c. Concerts and recitals:

_Elven Bird: voice recital (Museum of Contemporary Art, 5.06)

_Huniades Catores: Baroque music concert (Brukenthal Palace, 26.07)

_Raul Răzvan Guțu: guitar recital (Brukenthal Palace, 26.07)

_ARAC concert: electronic music (Museum of Contemporary Art, 1.11)

7. Events during Romania's holding of the rotating Presidency of the European Union's Council

_*The Informal Summit in Sibiu* (9.05): in the context of Romania's exercise of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Informal Summit of the Heads of State or Government of the European Union took place in Sibiu, from the program of which some of the activities were organized at Brukenthal National Museum.

_COREPER [Committee of the Permanent Representatives of the Governments of the Member States to the European Union] visits (Brukenthal Palace, 25.05)

_Informal visit of the permanent representatives of the EU Political and Security Committee (Brukenthal palace, 6.06)

8. Scientific Symposiums

_National Symposium of Art and History of Culture "Along Bacchus, Ceres and Venus"

(Conference Hall, Brukenthal Palace, 14 – 15.09): the symposium aimed to constitute an opportunity for interdisciplinary debate, without a strict chronological, geographical and ethno-cultural limitation, about the history of culinary art and conviviality, about landscapes, still lives and genre scenes, about botanical, zoological and ethnographic illustration, about artistic anatomy, about approaching mythological and erotic themes in the fine arts or old literature and about culinary instruments, kitchen furniture, etc.

9. Published materials related to art exhibitions and events

a. Books

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Octavian Smigelschi, Tradiție și inovație în pictura bisericească,* 100 p., Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, ISBN 978-606-8815-55-8

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Octavian Smigelschi promotorul unei viziuni artistice naționale / the promoter of the artistic vision,* 120 p. Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, ISBN 978-606-8815-35-0.

b. Exhibition catalogues

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, Markus Lorz, *Tezaur Episcopia Tulcii, Diocese of Tulcea's treasures, Kirchenschayze aus Tulcea*, Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, Siebenburgisches Museum Gundelsheim, 2018, 78 p, ISBN 978-606-8815-46-6, ISBN 978-3-9821131-0-4

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *50 de ani grafică românească*, 86 p., Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, ISBN 978-606-8815-60-2.

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Minorități din România*, 80 p., Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, ISBN 978-606-8815-59-6

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Pie Jesu*, 90 p., Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, ISBN 978-606-8815-53-4.

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, Diana Iancu, *Îngeri și Demoni, Ioan Muntean*, 52 p., Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, ISBN 978-606-8815-44-2

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, Alina Berbecaru, *Full colours*, 76 p., Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, ISBN 978-606-8815-42-8.

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Kabuki, ukiyo-e japonese theatre prints: colecția George Șerban*, 120 p., Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, ISBN 978-606-8815-37-4.

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Andrei Popa, Fluo immersion*, Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2018, 48 p, ISBN 978-606-8815-39-8

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Eterna întoarcere, Dumitru Radu*, Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2019, 48 p, ISBN 978-606-8815-47-3

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, *Hoinăreli/Flaneries*, Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, 2019, 84 p, ISBN 978-606-8815-38-1

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, Marius Matei, Mihaela Bolog, *Port cu mândrie*, 70 p., Ed. Armanis, ISBN 987-606-9006-69-6.

_Alexandru Constantin Chituță, Marius Matei, *Nestemate Bănățene, Gems from Banat*, 80 p., Ed. Eurostampa Timișoara, ISBN 987-606-32-9774-7

_Adrian Luca, Ilie Mitrea, Diana Morar Oancea, Ioan Muntean, Andrei Popa, Cătălin Precup, Robert Simon, Albert Sofian, Alexandra Stoica, Robert Strebeli, Florin Viorel, *Rural Guerilla Reloaded*, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, Sibiu, 2019, 31 p. ISBN 978-606-8815-51-0

_Iulia Mesea, *Pagini de artă românească. Lucrări de pictură din colecția Muzeului Național Brukenthal – secolele XIX-XX*, Editura Karl A. Romstorfer a Muzeului Bucovinei și Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, Suceava, 2019. *ISBN 978-606-8698-30-4, ISBN 978-606-8815-41-1*

c. Brochures

_Iulia Mesea, Pagini de artă românească. Lucrări de pictură din colecția Muzeului Național Brukenthal, secolele XIX–XX, Suceava, 2019

10. Projects

a. Museum projects

_Thematic framework "Sibiu European Gastronomic Region" (2019): throughout 2019, the cultural agenda of Brukenthal National Museum was thematically aligned with the Sibiu European Gastronomic Region framework program, both in terms of heritage exhibitions or scientific communication (symposia, studies, etc.) and events for the general public.

b. European projects

_E-culture: Digital Library of Romania (since 2018)

Funding: Competitiveness Operational Program 2014-2020, Priority Axis 2, Action 2.3.3

The Ministry of Culture, through the Project Management unit, started the implementation of the E-culture project: Digital Library of Romania project financed within the Competitiveness Operational Program 2014-2020, Priority Axis 2, Action 2.3.3. The project involves 29 institutions in Romania, including Brukenthal National Museum.

c. National projects

_"The palace with two kitchens. Baroque culinary experiences at the residence of the Governor of Transylvania" (May – September)

Co-financing: National Cultural Fund Administration

Partners: SC Gastro Rama SRL, Elijah Association

The role of the institution in the project: coordinator

Purpose: To promote intercultural dialogue through an interdisciplinary approach of the Baroque period, in order to attract a new audience within the museum institution.

d. Participating in other projects

_Romania – France Season Opening Program in Sibiu

Participation with: the exhibition Hoinăreli / Flâneries (co-organizers: Government of Romania, French Embassy in Romania, Romanian Cultural Institute, Institut Français) of the artist Louis Guermond. (Fig. 6)

_Rural Guerilla Reloaded

Organizer: Brukenthal von Studio Association

Museum participants: Ilie Mitrea, Ioan Muntean, Adrian Luca, Andrei Popa, Robert Strebeli

An action co-financed by the Local Council and the City Hall of Sibiu

_NAG (White Night of Galleries) 2019

Museum participants: members of the Brukenthal von Studio Association (Ilie Mitrea, Ioan Muntean, Adrian Luca, Andrei Popa, Robert Strebeli)

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Fig. 5. Eveniment culinar asociat programului Sibiu Regiune Gastronomică Europeană: *Service à la française*, show culinar cu rețete din secolele XVII și XVIII (Palatul Brukenthal)

Fig. 6. Participări la alte proiecte: Deschiderea Sezonului Romania – Franța la FITS

Fig. 1. Brukenthal Palace, *The portrait*, new permanent exhibition on the 2nd floor

Fig. 2. Temporary exhibitions presenting Brukenthal National Museum's heritage:
The beauty of nature, the refinement of dinning. Along Ceres, Bacchus and Venus

Fig. 3. Temporary exhibitions presenting other museums' or collectors' heritage: *Japanese Prints of Kabuki Theater* (George Şerban collection)

Fig. 4. Temporary exhibition presenting contemporary art: *The Eternal Return* (Artist: Dumitru Radu)

Fig. 5. Culinary event associated to Sibiu European Gastronomic Region program: *Service à la française* culinary show on 17th and 18th c. recipes (Brukenthal Palace)

Fig. 6. Participating in other projects: Romania – France Season Opening Program in Sibiu

MUZEUL NAȚIONAL BRUKENTHAL

PUBLICAȚIILE PERIODICE APĂRUTE DE-A LUNGUL TIMPULUI
(INCLUSIV PRECURSORII)

CRONOLOGIE	ISTORIE, ARHEOLOGIE	ARTA PLASTICĂ	ŞTIINȚELE NATURII	RESTAURARE	ETNOGRAFIE
Ante 1950		Mitteilungen aus dem Baron von Brukentalischen Museum 1931-1937 - Neue Folge I-VII 1941 - Neue Folge I-VIII 1944 - Neue Folge IX-X 1946-1947 - Neue Folge XI-XII	Verhandlungen und Mitteilungen der siebenbürgischen Vereins für Naturwiessenschaften zu Hermannstadt 1849-1945 95 de numere		
1959-1989	Studii şi comunicări Muzeul Brukenthal, Sibiu 1956, nr. 1 1965, nr. 12 1967, nr. 13 Volum omagial, Anuarul Muzeului Brukenthal, 1817-1967 1969, nr. 14 1973, nr. 18 1975, nr. 19 1977, nr. 20 1981, nr. 21	Studii şi comunicări Muzeul Brukenthal, Sibiu 1956, nr. 4, 5 1956, nr. 7 Istoria culturii 1978, nr. 1 1979, nr. 2	Studii şi comunicări Muzeul Brukenthal, Sibiu 1958, nr. 10, 11 1970, nr. 15 1971, nr. 16 1972, nr. 17 1973, nr. 18 1975, nr. 19 1976, nr. 20 1977, nr. 21 1978, nr. 22 1979, nr. 23 1980, nr. 24 + Supliment 1983, nr. 25 + Supliment 1984, nr. 26 1998, nr. 27 2003, nr. 28 2004, nr 29 + Supliment		Studii şi comunicări Muzeul Brukenthal, Sibiu 1956, nr. 2, 3, 6 1958, nr. 8, 9 Cibinium, Studii şi materiale privind Muzeul tehnicii populare din Dumbrava Sibiului, Sibiu 1966, vol I 1967/68, vol II 1969/73, vol III 1974/78, vol IV 1979/83, vol V
După 1989	2006, I, 1 2007, II, 1 2008, III, 1 2009, IV, 1 2010, V, 1 2011, VI, 1 2012, VII, 1 2013, VIII, 1 2014, IX, 1 2015, X, 1 2016, XI, 1 2017, XII, 1 2018, XIII, 1 2019, XIV, 1	2006, I, 2 2007, II, 2 2008, III, 2 2009, IV, 2 2010, V, 2 2011, VI, 2 2012, VII, 2 2013, VIII, 2 2014, IX, 2 2015, X, 2 2016, XI, 2 2017, XII, 2 2018, XIII, 2 2019, XIV, 2	2006, I, 3 2007, II, 3 2008, III, 3 2009, IV, 3 2010, V, 3 2011, VI, 3 2012, VII, 3 2013, VIII, 3 2014, IX, 3 2015, X, 3 2016, XI, 3 2017, XII, 3 2018, XIII, 3 2019, XIV, 3	2010, V, 4 2011, VI, 4 2012, VII, 4 2013, VIII, 4 2014, IX, 4 2015, X, 4 2016, XI, 4 2017, XII, 4 2018, XIII, 4 2019, XIV, 4	

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